

He Who Began a Good Work

Scripture Reading — Philippians 1:1-11

He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. — Philippians 1:6

My grandfather died some years before my parents were married. He was a lifelong worshiper but never joined the church. “Grandpa never felt he was good enough to take communion,” Mom said. He was a fine man, but he failed to appreciate grace—that we don’t come to the Lord’s Supper because we’re worthy but because Christ has made us righteous.

Lent teaches us that we who believe in the Son of God “have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10). Grandpa was a hard-working, Scottish Presbyterian immigrant from Nova Scotia. He settled in New England and made a good life for himself and his family. But he didn’t think himself good enough for God’s company.

Grandpa was right. Nonetheless, God wants us in his company forever. But as Paul and Grandpa agree, we can’t get there on our own.

God must make us acceptable. Christ took away the offense of our sin against God, and now the Spirit is at work reshaping us to be like Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). We are God’s imagebearers (Genesis 1:26-27), and he is making us whole. The good news of Lent is that “he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.”

Can you believe that?

Prayer

Father, complete the work you began in us when you gave us faith in Christ. And if we have doubts and struggle to believe, assure us of your grace and forgiveness. Work on us today, we pray, for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

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