



NEW LIFE

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

Vol. 13 No. 24

LORD'S DAY 14 JUNE 2009

The Believer's Confidence

*By Rev Charles Spurgeon, A sermon delivered on Sunday Morning, January 2nd, 1859
(Part 2 of 4 of "Faith in Perfection")*

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." I think, perhaps, the best way to preach upon a text, if we would have it remembered, is to take it word by word. Let us spell it over then, as Uncle Tom did, when he was on board of the steamer, and could not read the long words, but sucked more sweetness out of the text by spelling it over, than he could have done in any other way.

"The Lord." Well then the Psalmist's confidence was a divine confidence. He did not say, "I have grace enough to perfect that which concerneth me;" "my faith is so strong that I shall not fail;" "my love is so warm that it will never grow cold;" "my resolution is so firmly set that nothing can move it;"—no, his dependance was on the Lord—*"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."* And O Christian, if thou hast any confidence which is not grounded on the Lord and rooted in the rock of ages, thy confidence is worse than a dream; it shall deceive thee, pierce thee, wound thee, and cast thee down to thine own future sorrow and grief. But here, our Psalmist himself builds upon nothing else than upon the Lord's works. Sure I am the Lord began the good work in our souls, he has carried it on, and if he does not finish it, it never will be complete. If there be one stitch in the celestial garment of my righteousness, which I am to insert myself, then I am lost. If there be one drachma in the price of my redemption which I am to make up, then must I perish. If there be one contingency—one "if," or "though," or "but," about my soul's salvation, then am I a lost man. But this is my confidence, the Lord that began will perfect. He has done it all, must do it all, he will do it all. My confidence must not be in what I can do, or in what I have resolved to do, but entirely in what the Lord will do. *"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."* "Oh," says unbelief, "you will never be able to purify yourself from sin. Look at the evil of your heart, you can never sweep that away: look at the evil fashions and temptations of the world that beset you, you will surely be lured aside and led astray."

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Ah! yes, I should indeed perish if it depended upon myself. I am but as clay upon the wheel. If I had to fashion myself into a vessel of honour, fit for the Master's use, I might give up the work in despair. I am but as a little lamb; and if I had to travel through the wilderness by myself, I might indeed lie down and die. Yet if I be clay, he is my potter, and he will not suffer me to be marred upon the wheel; and if I be a lamb he is my shepherd, and he carrieth the lambs in his bosom—he wardeth off the wolf, he smiteth the destroyer, and he bringeth every sheep into the fold upon the hilltop of glory. The Lord, then, is the Christian's divine confidence. We can never be too confident when we confide in the Lord. "Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me."

Take the next word, "*will*." So the Psalmist's confidence was a confidence for the future; it is not only what the Lord does, but what the Lord will do. I have heard people say that they could trust a man as far as they could see him; and I have often thought that is about as far as many professors trust God, so far as they can see him, and no farther. They believe God is good when the meat is on the table, and the drink is in the cup, but would they believe God if the table were bare, and the cup were empty? No; they have good faith when they see the ravens coming, that they shall have their bread and meat; but if the ravens did not come, would they believe that even then their bread should be given them and their water should be sure? They can believe the thing when they get it, but until they get it they are doubting. The Psalmist's faith, however, deals with the future, not merely with the present. The "Lord will," says he, the "Lord will." He looks on all through his life, and he feels sure that what God has done and is doing he will carry on even to the end. And now you that are afraid about the future, rest with us in this sweet promise. How often do you and I stand star-gazing into the future, and trembling, because we think we see divers portents, and strange sights, which portend some future trouble. O child of God! leave the future to thy God. O leave everything that is to come in the hand of him to whom the future is already present, and who knows beforehand everything that shalt befall thee. Draw from the present living water with which to moisten the arid desert of the future; snatch from the altar-fires of to-day a torch with which to light up the darkness of that which is to come. Depend on it, that He who is to-day thy sun, shall be thy sun for ever—even in the darkest hour he shall shine upon thee; and he who is to-day thy shield shall be thy shield for evermore; and even in the thickest part of the battle he shall catch the dart, and thou shalt stand unharmed.

Let us turn to this word "*will*" once again. There is a little more in it; it does not say the "Lord may," it does not say, "I hope he will; I trust he will," but it says he will; "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." A few months after I first sought and found salvation, I enjoyed the sweet privilege of full assurance, and in talking with a godly Christian I expressed myself very confidently concerning the great truth that God would ne'er forsake his people, nor leave his work undone.

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I was at once child, I was told I had no right to speak so confidently, for it was presumptuous. The longer I live, the more I feel persuaded that confidence was proper, and the chiding was not deserved. I believe that the happiest of Christians and the truest of Christians are those who never dare to doubt God, but who take his word simply as it stands, and believe it and ask no questions, just feeling assured that if God has said it it will be so. The Psalmist in our text had no more doubt about his own ultimate perfection, than he had about his existence. He says, "the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." There are many things that may or may not happen, but this I know shall happen,

"He shall present my soul,
Unblemish'd and complete,
Before the glory of his face,
With joys divinely great."

All the purposes of man have been defeated, but not the purposes of God. The promises of man may be broken, many of them are made to be broken, but the purposes of God shall stand, and his promises shall be fulfilled. He is a promise maker, but he never was a promise breaker: he is a promise-keeping God, and his people shall prove it so. Come then, ye that are always hoping amidst trembling, and fear, but are never confident, for once take that doubting note out of your mouth, and say assuredly "the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me." If I be really his child, though full of sin, I shall one day be perfect; if I have really set my heart towards him, I shall one day see his face with joy; and let whatever foes obstruct, I shall conquer through the Lamb's redeeming blood. He "will perfect that which concerneth me." I like to hear God's people speak diffidently of themselves, but confidently of their God. Doubts are the greatest of sins, and even though Christians have doubts, yet doubts are unchristian things. The spirit of Christ is not a spirit of doubting, but a spirit of believing. Doubts may exist in the hearts of spiritual men, but doubts are unspiritual, carnal, and sinful. Let us seek to get rid of them, and speak confidently where God's word is confident.

Now, take the next word, "*The Lord will perfect.*" That is a large word. Our Wesleyan brethren have a notion that they are going to be perfect here on earth. I should be very glad to see any of them when they are perfect; and if any of them happen to be in the position of servants and want a situation, I would be happy to give them any amount of wages I could spare, for I should feel myself greatly honoured and greatly blessed in having a perfect servant; and what is more, if any of them are masters and want servants, I would undertake to come and serve them without wages at all if I could but find a perfect master. I have had a perfect master ever since I first knew the Lord, and if I could find that there is another perfect master, I should be greatly pleased in having him as an under-master, while the great Supreme must ever be chief of all.

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Did you ever see a perfect man? I did once. He called upon me, and wanted me to come and see him, for I should get great instruction from him if I did. I said, "I have no doubt of it, but I should not like to come into your house; I think I should be hardly able to get into your room." How is that? "Well, I suppose your house would be so full of angels that there would not be room for me." He did not like that; so I broke another joke or two upon his head; whereupon he went into a perfect furor. "Well friend," I said to him, "I think I am as perfect as you after all; for perfect men get angry?" He denied that he was angry, although there was a peculiar redness about his cheeks that is very common to persons when they are angry; at any rate I think I rather spoiled his perfection, for he evidently went home less satisfied with himself than when he went out.

I met another man who considered himself perfect, but he was thoroughly mad; and I do not believe that any of your pretenders to perfection are better than good maniacs, superior bedlamites; that is all I believe they are. For while a man has got a spark of reason left in him, he cannot, unless he is the most impudent of imposters, talk about his being perfect. What would I not give to be perfect myself! And you can say also, what would you not give to be perfect. If I must be burnt in fire, or dragged through the sea by the hair of my head; if I must be buried in the bowels of the earth, or hung up to the stars for ever—if I might but be perfect, I would rejoice in any price I might have to pay for perfection. But I feel perfectly persuaded, that perfection is absolutely impossible to any man beneath the sky; and yet, I feel sure, that to every believer future perfection is an absolute certainty.

The day shall come, beloved, when the Lord shall not only make us better, but shall make us perfectly good; when he shall not merely subdue our lusts, but when he shall cast the demons out; when he shall make us not only tolerable, and bearable, and endurable, but make us holy and acceptable in his sight. That day however, I believe, shall not come until we enter into the joy of our Lord, and are glorified together with Christ in heaven.

Say, Christian, is not this a large confidence? "The Lord will make me perfect." He will most assuredly, beyond a doubt, bring to perfection my faith, my love, my hope, and every grace. He will perfect his purposes; he will perfect his promises; he will perfect my body, and perfect my soul. "He will perfect that which concerneth me."

And now there is the word "*that*"—"that which"—"*The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me.*" Very indefinite, it seems; but how broad it is. What a broad faith the Psalmist had! "Whatever concerns me," says he, "the Lord will perfect." Once pardon of sin concerned me; that he has perfected. Then imputed righteousness concerned me; that he perfected. Now, sanctification troubles me; that he will perfect. One day, deliverance was my fear; now it is support. But whatever is laid upon my heart to be concerned about, this comprehensive term, "*that*" embraces all, be it what it may, if I have a spiritual concern upon my soul about any heavenly thing, that will God perfect.

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Go on a step further. Here is a trial of faith. *"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."* Alas, beloved, we cannot say we have any good thing without having concern for it. I suppose God never gave us a blessing, but we doubted whether we should have it before we obtained it. Somehow or other, our doubts always go before God's mercies; whereas we ought to believe, and not to feel any anxiety and distrustful concern. My faith is sometimes tried and concerned about heavenly things now. But though that faith be tried by an inward concern about the things of God, yet it surmounts even its own doubts, and cries, "The Lord will perfect even this." Have you learnt this lesson aright—being troubled about a thing and yet believing about it? A christian man will find his experience to be very much like the sea. Upon the surface there is a storm, and the mountain-waves are rolling, but down in the depths there are caverns where quietude has reigned supreme ever since the foundations of the earth were digged; where peace, undisturbed, has had a solitary triumph. Beloved, it is so with the Christian's heart. Outwardly, he is concerned about these things. He doubts, he fears, he trembles; but in his inmost heart, down in the depths of his soul, he is without a fear, and he can say confidently, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."

But I hasten to dwell upon the last word. The faith of our text is a personal faith. *"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me."* Here is the loudest note of all; this is the handle whereby we must lay hold of this sword if we would use it aright—*"that which concerneth me."* Oh, it is a sweet truth to know and believe that God will perfect all his saints; 'tis sweeter still to know that "he will perfect me." It is blessed to believe that all God's people shall persevere; but the essence of delight is to feel that I shall persevere through him. Many persons are contented with a kind of general religion, an universal salvation. They belong to a Christian community; they have joined a Christian church, and they think they shall be saved in the lump—in the mass; but give me a personal religion. What is all the bread in the world, unless I myself feed upon it? I am starved, though Egypt be full of corn. What are all the rivers that run from the mountains to the sea, if I be thirsty? Unless I drink myself, what are all these? If I be poor and in rags, ye do but mock me if ye tell me that Potosi's mines are full of treasure? You do but laugh at me if you speak of Golconda's diamonds. What care I for these, unless I have some participation for myself? But if I can say even of my crust, "It is my own," then I can eat it with a grateful heart. That crust which is my own is more precious than all the granaries of Egypt if they are not my own, and this promise even if it were smaller would be more precious than the largest promise that stands in the Bible, if I could not see my right to it personally myself. But now, by bumble faith, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, resting in his merits, trusting in his death, I come to the text, and say throughout this year, and every year, *"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me"*—unworthy me. Lost and ruined me. He will yet save me; and

"I, among the blood-wash'd throng,
Shall wave the palm, and wear the crown,
And shout loud victory."

This, then, is the believer's confidence. May God grant you the same!

(To be continued in next week's bulletin...)

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	<i>Today: 14/06/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 21/06/2009</i>	<p>We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day. We like to welcome Cecilia & Esther Huang, Alvin and Ling Ting to our worship services last Lord's Day</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome: We would like to welcome Eld Stephen Toms, our speaker for this Lord's Day. Eld Toms is the secretary for Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony (SGAT). SGAT conducts their monthly meeting using the church premises on the last Friday of each month. • Calling of Resident Minister: Continue to pray for the Lord's calling for Rev Timothy Ki to serve as our resident minister. Rev Ki will be here in July. Pray for his visa application. • DHW Bible Study today: Today, we will cover Lesson 8 (Genesis 9). Please spend the upcoming week preparing for Lesson 9 (Genesis 10-11). • No Prayer Meeting: Please note that there will be no Prayer Meeting & Bible Study next Saturday, 20 June. • Examinations: Please pray for the students who are sitting for their examinations. • Pray for those who are sick: Douglas (knee pain), Maria (ankle and joint pain), Constance (left heel pain), those suffering from hay-fever • Pray for on travel: Sophia + family (Greece), Jonathan (Malaysia) • School of Theology at Metropolitan Tabernacle – 7th to 9th July: The theme for this year programme is "Reviving the Lost Art of Evangelistic Proclamation". Copies of the programme are available at the Book Table.
<i>Chairman:</i>	John Poh	Joey Seow	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld Stephen Toms	Eld George Chew	
<i>Message:</i>	Hearing God's Words	Travelogue - Ephesus	
<i>Text:</i>	John 8:47	Revelations 2:1-7	
<i>Organist:</i>	Grace	Anthony	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Joey Seow	John Poh	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Eld Stephen Toms	Eld George Chew	
<i>Message:</i>	Receiving Sight	Everlasting Friendship	
<i>Text:</i>	John 9:25	1 Samuel 18-20	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Grace	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	<i>Today: 14/06/2009</i>	<i>Next Week: 21/06/2009</i>	
<i>Ushers</i>	Anthony / Yetta	Daniel / Yetta	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	No Sunday School	No Sunday School	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Sharon	Constance	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>PA Crew:</i>	Nicolas	Lee-Wei	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 19 June	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Bible Study – Survey of the Old Testament	
Sat 20 June		Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: No Prayer Meeting	
Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £355.34		Lunch: £38.00	
<h2 style="margin: 0;"><u>Misreading Proveniences</u></h2> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;"><i>Adapted from "In Green Pastures" by J.R. Miller, D.D.</i></p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 40px;">We are all apt to interpret "providences" in accordance with our own desires. When we are wishing to be led in a certain way, we are quite sure to find "providences" that seem to favour our own preference. We must be careful in interpreting the meaning of events and occurrences. We are not to enter every door that is thrown open before us. The devil opens doors of temptation, but we are not to call opportunities to sin guiding "providences." God's voice in providence never contradicts the voice of his word.</p>			