

PHILIPPIANS Lesson 33

Chapter 3, verses 8-14: Made Perfect Through Suffering

5 December 2022

Paul is a saved man. He has been given eternal life by trusting Jesus Christ as his Savior. He is going to heaven, but he tells us he is trying to attain something in the meantime. He wants to apprehend (lay hold of) the knowledge, the faith, and the fellowship of Jesus Christ. He wanted to get to the place where he can be Christlike at all times (in good times and bad times).

- Paul was willing to endure all the sufferings of Jesus Christ if it meant it would draw him closer to His Lord and make him closer to what God wants him to be. He had not attained that yet (vs 12), but that is what he was aiming for.
- He wants God to perfect him (make him a finished work) now that he is saved and going to heaven.

Examples of "Perfect" in the bible:

2 Corinthians 12:9 God had strengthened Paul to perform many wonderful works for Him, but he still needed more perfecting that only comes through physical weakness.

Galatians 3:1-4 The believers in Galatia had received the Holy Spirit by faith, but when they went through a time of suffering, their faith began to weaken. Paul didn't want their suffering to be in vain (vs 4), but rather, to contribute to their perfection (vs 3).

- When you go through a time of suffering, don't forget that God is at work in your life trying to perfect you.

1 Thess 3:9-10 God's ministers work and pray for the brethren that they "**might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.**" The believers in Thessalonica were model Christians (1 Thess 1:7), but there was still some perfecting that needed to be performed in them.

The Perfection of Jesus Christ:

Hebrews 2:9-10 When Jesus Christ came to earth as a man, he needed to be made perfect through sufferings.

- He was always sinless. His perfection was not related to sinlessness.
- Jesus Christ had never suffered until He became a man. He was perfected by learning how to suffer hunger, thirst, be betrayed by a friend, and experience physical pain, etc.
 - He accomplished this by fully trusting the power of God the Father.

Hebrews 5:7-9 Jesus learned obedience through the things which he suffered...being made perfect.

Hebrews 7:19 The law made nothing perfect. Hebrews 11 lists many faithful Old Testament Saints who could not be made perfect (Heb 11:40) until Jesus Christ suffered and died for them.

Hebrews 12:22-23 Our perfection will be complete when we are with the Lord in heaven.

Paul was a just man who wanted to be made perfect. He didn't want to wait till he got to heaven. We ought to have the same desire in our Christian life.