

If You Progress, God Will Perfect

Scripture Reading: *Philippians 3:12-16*

- A. "You therefore must be **perfect**, as your heavenly Father is **perfect**" (*Matthew 5:48*).
- B. "But I'll never measure up!" "That's an impossible standard!" "I'll never be good enough!"
- C. What does the Bible say about this issue? It speaks to the **past**, the **present**, and the **future**.

I. The PAST — What Jesus *HAS DONE*

- A. Our universal problem (*Romans 3:23*)
 - 1. New Testament commentary on the Old Law of Moses
 - a. *Hebrews 7:11-19* — the law made nothing perfect
 - b. *Galatians 3:21* — the law could not give life
 - c. *Hebrews 10:1* — the law could not perfect those who draw near
 - 2. And so what are we to do? Is the answer simply more and different rules?
 - a. Don't misunderstand — there is a new law, and it is important (*1 Corinthians 9:21*)!
 - b. But God has done more than throw more laws at our lawlessness (*1 John 3:4*).
- B. The law and the sacrifices were designed to lead us to Christ (*Galatians 3:24*).
 - 1. What did Jesus' sacrifice accomplish?
 - a. "He has **perfected** for all time those who are being sanctified" (*Hebrews 10:14*).
 - b. "You have come...to the spirits of the righteous made **perfect**" (*Hebrews 12:22-24*).
 - 2. Does this mean we are forever perfected, with no personal obligations whatsoever?
 - a. *Romans 6:1-4* speaks directly against such a conclusion.
 - b. "He has perfected for all time **those who are being sanctified**" (*Hebrews 10:14*).

II. The PRESENT — What God *IS DOING*

- A. While Jesus' sacrifice has perfected, in another sense, God is actively working to perfect.
- B. We are not on our own in this trek to perfection!
 - 1. *Romans 16:25* — "Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel"
 - 2. *Ephesians 3:14-19* — "he may grant you to be strengthened with power"
 - 3. *1 Thessalonians 5:23* — "may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely"
 - 4. *2 Thessalonians 3:3* — "he will establish you and guard you against the evil one"
 - 5. *1 Peter 5:10* — "the God of all grace...will restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish"
 - 6. *Jude 24-25* — "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling"

III. The FUTURE — What we *MUST CONTINUE TO DO*

- A. How did Paul reason in light of this glorious gospel? (*Philippians 2:12-13*)
- B. What should we be doing? (*2 Peter 1:3-11*)
- C. Paul wasn't perfect (*Philippians 3:12*), but his death could still be gain (*Philippians 1:21-23*).