

Continuing on to Perfection

2 Timothy 3:16,17

Sunday Morning, January 24, 2010

Pastor Dwight LaPine, Calvary Baptist Church of Rochester, MN

Introduction : Last week we began to look at this idea of continuing on to perfection. The Bible gives us the basis for this message in Hebrews 6 when it says,

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

To understand the context of these verses, I would like to have you go back to the last portion of chapter 5. The ones that the author is writing to have been saved for a period of time, but there was a problem. In the time that they had been saved, that they professed salvation, there should have been more change take place in their life. They should have by this time grasped the simple truths of salvation and were able to teach these truths to others. In fact, by this time they should be using the Bible to find their own answers. The Bible should be meat to cause them to grow at an even greater rate.

I will never forget the long nights that my wife would experience with small children. At first, those kids did not sleep very long. The first babies that we had were small, six pounds eleven ounces, and they would wake up often and cry. My wife would wake up and go and tend to them. It seemed to last a long time. I tell you it was hard to wake up and turn over and go back to sleep. But then finally, the doctor would say that we could start them on rice cereal. What a difference. Instead of just milk, which was what they needed at the time, they now began to eat cereal and almost immediately they began to sleep through the night. They would put on weight and they would be much more content for a much longer period of time.

The same is true of new Christians. At first, they are very hungry, but they also have a lot of ups and downs in their lives. I love being around new Christians because they are so excited about everything they learn, but on the other hand, it is hard to be around new Christians, because they require so much. They need time, they need encouragement, and they need someone to feed them on their schedule, not ours. It seems that they are demanding, when in reality, they are just experience the initial part of growth. They learn to rely upon the body of Christ, and it is in those first months that we show them that we love them.

But, there comes a time when they should grow. Babies can't stay babies forever. They have to learn to eat. For one thing, it will make them much more content, and they will grow faster and they will soon be able to feed someone else.

We read,

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

The thing that ought to be and the thing that is are two different things. Instead of helping in the church, they are still those who need to be helped. Instead of being part of the solution, they are part of the problem. There are not enough people caring for the need of people. We need help, but they are not able to help, because we still have to help them.

There is nothing wrong with milk.

1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

We need to desire milk, but there is also a need to desire meat. Meat is needed later on. Milk is needed in the beginning.

Let me share with you something that we learned this past week from Dr Kevin Bauder. He was talking about how we place value on something.

Ill in how to account for the value of a thing - Dr..

CONTINUING ON TO PERFECTION

I. Three Greek Words

If God has a desire to make the spirits of just men perfect, then there appears to be a plan of God that is not yet attained in every life. There are many verses that have to do with the subject of being made perfect. There are three Greek Words that are used for the word perfect.

A. Telios

The most common word is telios. It means to bring to an end. We have said that it means to be made mature. But the thought of brought to an end is more than just maturity. The idea is that we become what God designed us to become. We are brought to the end of His plan. Our end is different from God's end. When I am building something, and my wife asks me if I am finished, I may say that I have come to the end of what I am going to do with this project. But she might look at it and say, "no you have more to do." I have a different idea of my end than my wife has. In like manner I often have a different view of my "end" than God does. His will is that we will be brought to a completion, but that is not according to my design, it is according to His design. We may not have blueprints, but I believe that God's plan is even more intricate than a set of blueprints. He knows exactly what we are to be like and how we are to use our abilities for His glory. We do not set the end. God does.

It needs to be our desire to be brought to God's end in our life. In fact, that needs to consume us. It must become the most important desire of our life. Whatever it takes to get us to the point, whether it be a good thing, or a suffering, it is still desired because the end is so important.

B. The second word that is used for perfect is the word artios. It is an interesting word. It is only used once in the New Testament. It means to be fit. The word is used in 2 Timothy 3:16.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect <739>, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The idea of perfect in this verse includes knowing doctrine, receiving reproof, being corrected and instructed in righteousness. The word artios comes from a root word that means at this time, at this very moment. The thought is to be fit for an assignment. That you are at the present moment, ready. To be brought to a point where you are trained and strengthened to be prepared to do a certain task. The word means that you are ready at the present time. You have all you need. It is similar to boot camp. Boot camp has a purpose, and end. It has the basic plan to make you into a fit soldier, one who is able to fight for his country. Now, there are various degrees of fitness.

C. The third word is katartios. It means to be outfitted. God's desire is for us to BE PERFECT , to be fit through the correction of the Bible to do his will.

Heb 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The idea of perfect is someone who pleases Him well, also someone who brings glory to Him for ever and ever. You can't get any more fit than that. That is God's will. His desire is to bring you to that point.

There is a difference between fit and outfitted. Fit is a personal preparation. Outfitted means that you have the equipment necessary to accomplish the task. Picture the disciples sitting on a rock by the sea of Galilee.

Mt 4:21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending <2675> their nets; and he called them.

During that night, like many nights, the net has developed a tear. Some of the netting is loose and some is missing. The fishermen must have a net that has integrity. In other words, without holes. Any hole will allow the big fish to escape. So they spend much time after every day on the lake, fixing their nets, getting them ready for the next time.

We have to be prepared for the task that God has given to us. Not only do we have to be fit, all of the holes need to be mended, and it is God's task to mend the holes, to give us integrity.

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore <2675> such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

In like manner, people get holes in their life, and they lose their integrity. It is our job as believers to help them to come back to the Lord. We need each saint in our church growing. But there are times when we will be hurting and we will fail. At those times, we need to be restored, so that we can go out again and catch fish.

God has a way of showing us the areas where we lack integrity. Just about the time we feel we have arrived, God puts us through a test that shows that we have a long ways to go. 1 Peter 5:10 gives us another round of suffering and pain so that we will be made perfect.

1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

The word used here is *katartizo*. It means to be fit and outfitted. It mean that we are ready and able to be and do what He wants us to be and do. But, this process takes some suffering.

Our Goal as a church:

Col 1:28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Heb 6:1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

