

The Way to Spiritual Perfection

by Stephen Kaung

Spiritual perfection is a gift from God that requires diligence and cooperation with His grace to achieve.

Duration: 1:05:26

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 4:13, Philippians 3:15

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Sanctification"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of renewing our minds in order to walk in the way of spiritual perfection. He explains that before encountering God, our minds are focused on worldly things, but through surrendering to God, our minds undergo a transformation. The speaker also highlights the responsibility we have to diligently cooperate with God in order to receive the promises and blessings He has given us. He emphasizes the need for unity and fellowship with other believers, as we can learn from and support one another in our spiritual growth. Ultimately, the speaker concludes that spiritual perfection is both obtained through the finished work of Jesus on the cross and attained through our ongoing pursuit of God.

Transcript

Will you please turn to Philippians, the letter to the Philippians, chapter 3, verse 15. Philippians, chapter 3, verse 15. As many therefore as are perfect, let us be thus minded.

And if you are any otherwise minded, this also God shall reveal to you. Again. As many therefore as are perfect, let us be thus minded.

And if you are any otherwise minded, this also God shall reveal to you. Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Lord, our hearts are full of thanks.

We are so thankful for all that Thou has done for us. Thou has not kept away anything. Thou giveth Thy blood, Thy flesh to us, Thyself holy to us.

Lord, who are we that Thou should be mindful of us? How we praise and thank Thee for what Thou has done on Calvary's cross. We thank Thee that it is finished. There is nothing that can be added or be taken away.

Grant us that vision. Give us that understanding. Enable us to have full faith and confidence in Thee.

And draw us that we may truly run after Thee. Dear Lord, we do want to glorify Thee. And we want to see Thy image being formed in us.

That Thou mayst be glorified. Hear our cry. We commit ourselves to Thee again for this time.

Trusting Thy Holy Spirit to reveal Thy heart, Thy mind to us. And lead us into Thy truth. And we will give Thee all the glory.

We ask in the name of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. I find it very difficult to speak after the Lord's table.

Because the Lord's table is really the climax. We have been brought to His very presence. We see anew, afresh, what He has done for us.

And it is a perfect work. Nothing can be added. If only we have faith in trusting Him.

And what He has done for us. I do not think there is any need to talk anymore. So that's why I feel always very, very difficult to speak after the Lord's table.

If our hearts are really filled with Him, what else do we need? What else are we seeking for? But because I haven't finished my burden. So I have to continue. Now everybody knows by now that our theme for this time is spiritual perfection.

It is actually more than just a theme to talk about. It is something that is vital to our Christian life. You know we have the tendency, we are limited by ourselves.

By our thinking, by our concept, by our need. So we always feel if only God will do something to satisfy our need, to solve our problem, we are satisfied. We don't want anything more than that.

But dear brothers and sisters, we must remember that God created us. And He redeems us with a very specific purpose. It is for His glory.

And because it is for His glory, He will not be satisfied until His glory is manifested in us. So He will continue to work in our lives until Christ is fully formed. And that is glory.

That is His character. That fits with Himself. God does not want us to stop at midway.

He wants us to arrive at the end. And the end is God's purpose in love for His people. So we believe that spiritual perfection is God's will for His people.

Not just for a few selected, special, so-called spiritual giants. It is for every child of God. God expects every child of God to grow up into maturity.

And if anyone of us will be complacent and be satisfied with anything short of that, I think he will grieve the heart of God. So I do hope that, at least at this moment, brothers and sisters, we do have a desire for that spiritual perfection. It is not singless perfect, but it is something that will answer the heart of God.

God is perfect. And He expects us to be perfect. Not in the same degree or measure, but in the same quality and nature.

So this is what we have been trying to present before you, brothers and sisters. Now this morning I would like to go into this matter of the way to spiritual perfection. First of all, I would like to pose a question.

I hope you will listen very carefully. Is spiritual perfection something to be obtained or something to be attained? What do you mean by obtained? Obtained means that everything is already ready. It is a gift, freely given, universally given.

You don't need to do anything. There is nothing required of you. All you need to do is to receive it by faith.

That's obtainment. Just like our salvation. We don't need to do anything.

As a matter of fact, the more you try to do, the farther away you are from the salvation of the Lord. Because it is a gift. Everything is prepared for you.

On Calvary's cross, our Lord Jesus has borne your sin in His own body. Just believe in Him. And your sins are all forgiven.

You are justified before God. If you believe on the Lord Jesus, you have life. You receive eternal life.

The life of God, the life of Christ. His very life will come into you. And you are born again.

You don't need to do anything. And you cannot do anything. It is a free gift.

So it is something to be obtained. Everything is ready. Nothing more to be done.

Just receive it by faith. And it's yours. Now what is attainment? Attainment is, there is a goal before you.

And you have to run after it. You have to strive to arrive at the goal. A promise is there.

But you have to attain to that promise. Now, so the question is, is spiritual perfection obtained? Or attained? Now probably, as you have listened for the past day, probably you are a little bit confused. On the one hand, you hear that everything is done.

As our brother mentioned the New Covenant, it is done. It is the work of God, accomplished in His Son Jesus Christ. It is finished.

You cannot add anything to the New Covenant. It is all there. Absolute.

Unconditional. Inward. Intimate.

Ready to give to you. And from God's standpoint, He has already given it. All you need is to accept it.

Receive it. And it's yours. You have spiritual.

Then probably you hear something else. How we need to strive. How we need to put ourselves in it.

How we need to be diligent. And so forth. Before you can really achieve to that spiritual.

Now, is there any contradiction? Dear brothers and sisters, so far as I am concerned, I believe that spiritual perfection is both to be obtained and to be attained. It is both. When we think of truth, objective truth, which means that it is something that God has done in His beloved Son.

And it is finished. The work of our Lord Jesus of Calvary's cross is the truth. Eternal truth.

Whatever He has done on the cross remains forever. Time will not change it. Circumstance will not change it.

Condition will not change it. Nothing can change it. It is there.

Standing forever. No shadow, no shade. Truth forever.

It is absolute. That's spiritual truth. And our foundation is laid on spiritual truth.

Without that foundation, there is nothing to build upon it. Without that foundation, whatever we have done will be false. It does not depend upon your condition.

Whether you believe it or not, it doesn't matter. Not because you do not believe in it, it has lost its power. It is still as powerful as it was done on that day when our Lord Jesus was crucified.

Now this is objective truth. This is something that we have to have a very clear view. There should be no doubt in our hearts.

And this is our foundation. And on the other hand, we find on the experience. So far as our experience is concerned, that is subjective.

Objective is something already done. Forever there. Eternal truth never changes.

But subjective experience is personal. In other words, it is a condition of our spiritual life. And it changes.

It should be progressive. And it is something that you have to use diligence in order to arrive at the goal. So these are the two sides in the word of God.

On the one hand, we have to lay hold of the objective truth given in the scripture. The firmer the whole, the better. On the other hand, if we lay hold on that firm foundation, there is bound to be experience.

Personal experience. Or put it in another way. Objective truth is God's work in His Son.

Subjective experience is God's work through His Holy Spirit. Objective truth is what God has done in His Son on Calvary's cross. Subjective experience is what the Holy Spirit today is working in each of our lives.

And if it is real spiritual experience, it is to experience what the objective truth tells us. In other words, it is not just something far away. The Holy Spirit brings what Christ has done two thousand years ago into our very daily experience.

And this takes time. It requires cooperation. So brothers and sisters, in this matter of spiritual maturity, I believe, on the one hand, we need a revelation of our Lord Jesus.

As our brother has emphasized yesterday, we need to have a revelation of the completeness of His work. The new covenant established by His very blood. We need to know our Lord Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant.

And the clearer we are, the better. We need to have full faith in what the Lord has done for us on Calvary's cross. But dear brothers and sisters, if that is all, how good it will be.

We have no responsibility. We do not need to go through a process, sometimes very painful, and we are already there. You know, sometimes I think, if after I'm saved, I'm immediately raptured to heaven.

How good that will be. Now, why is it the Lord, leave me here on earth, and leave me so long? Well, He has a purpose. He is bringing what Christ has done on Calvary's cross into my very being.

Will you please turn to 2 Peter. 2 Peter chapter 1. You know, I read the Bible before I was saved. I was brought up in a Christian family.

We have daily devotion. My father would lead the daily devotion. He would read from a big Bible, and then we all kneel down, and he would lead us in prayer.

So from my childhood, I knew the Bible. But even so, the Bible was like Greek to me. I did not understand.

I read it. I knew it. I believed it.

I never doubted the Bible as the Word of God. But somehow it doesn't work. The Bible is the Bible and I am I myself.

Two separate entities. But thank God, that afternoon when I was saved, I went into my room. I opened the Bible.

It was 2 Peter, not 1 Peter. And somehow His book is different. It's the Living Word.

Because a relationship is there. Now I am thinking of 2 Peter, not 1 Peter. 2 Peter chapter 1. In 2 Peter chapter 1, we will read from verse 3. As His divine power has given to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue, through which He has given to us the greatest and precious promises, that through these He may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Now when you read these verses, what's the impression that they give you? Here He is saying very clearly. As His divine power has given. In other words, it starts with God.

His divine power has given to us all things. Everything is given by Him which relate to life and godliness. Everything that relates to life.

And the life here, of course, eternal life. The life of Christ. God's own life.

Spiritual life. All things regarding to life has been given. Life has been given.

Everything that life is, is there. And then godliness. Now what is godliness? Godliness simply means like God.

How can we be like God if there is no life? But with that life given to us, together, God has given to us everything concerning godliness. How can we be like God? All the power is there. All the elements are there.

The potentials are there. It's given. Freely given.

And this is given through the knowledge of Him who has called us. From knowing Him. And the knowledge here is not bookish knowledge or mental knowledge.

The knowledge here is experiential knowledge. Intimate knowledge. Personal knowledge.

We know God has given us all things regarding life and godliness. Life given as a beginning. Godliness given as the end.

All have been given through the knowledge of the One who has called us by glory and virtue. You know we are all called by God. And when God calls us, He calls us by His glory.

In other words, His calling is according to what He is. He is glory. Therefore when He calls us, He calls us to glory.

Anything short of glory is short of His calling. And He has not only called us by glory and virtue. Now the virtue here, to me, is especially related to His work.

In other words, He calls us according to His glory. And He works to bring us into that glory. Through which He has given to us.

Again, give. And when God gives, it's free gift. No condition.

No requirement. He does it all. And He has given to us the greatest and precious promises.

Now in the word of God you'll find great, not only great but greatest, not only promise, precious promise. All through the Bible concerning this matter of life and godliness. Our Lord said, come to me.

He that believes in me has eternal life. What a promise that is. And thank God, not only He has given us greatest and precious promises.

Concerning life and godliness. That is spiritual perfection. But as our brother mentioned yesterday afternoon.

He has put all these promises into a covenant. Into a contract. Into something that is binding to Himself.

In other words, He can't even send Himself to our level. He knows that how little faith we have. How suspicious we are.

We cannot believe anybody. So He binds Himself. Put His promises into a contract.

Into a covenant. Everlasting covenant. To assure us that it shall be done.

And through these He may become partakers of His divine nature. That is spiritual. So from these two verses.

What you see is. Spiritual perfection is the gift of God. It is not only promised.

It is accomplished. In His Son. And is given.

Spiritual perfection is to be obtained. Everything is ready. Just receive it.

Thank God for that. That is our blessed hope. That gives us joy.

Strength. But then you read on. From verse four.

Or verse five. But. For this very reason also.

It is not about something else. It is for this very thing. Life and godliness.

Partakers of His divine nature. Delivered from the world. At last.

In this very matter. For this very reason. For the very reason that God has given.

These promises. He has given us life and godliness. He has given us all things.

Concerning life and godliness. For this very reason also. Using therewith all diligence.

Narayan verses three and four. It is all that God has done. We do nothing.

Gift. Received. But from verse five to eleven.

It seems as if. It began to shift. To us.

We need to use all diligence. We need to supply. That diligence.

God has given. But if we do not. Supply.

Diligence. We won't get it. So this is.

Human responsibility. God. Require us.

To cooperate. In the final analysis. It is still his grace.

But his grace. Works in us. To enable us.

To cooperate. So here you find we need to use all diligence. Now brothers and sisters.

If spiritual. Perfection. Is given.

By God. To all. Why is it.

Not all. Exhibit. Manifest.

Expresses. Spiritually. Why is it that today.

Among God's people. They are more babies. Than grown ups.

Why is it. It is because. Most people.

Do not use diligence. They just sit back. And try to have.

An easy time. Instead of applying themselves. To what God has promised.

To what Christ has accomplished. Apply ourselves. Desiring it.

Pursuing it. Seeking for it. Diligently.

And so is this. In your faith. Have also.

If you have faith. If you believe. Then.
Faith. Without work. Is dead.
If it is living faith. There is. The work of faith.
Following. Is there. And.
With virtue. Knowledge. You need to know the mind of God.
If you want to work. You have to work according. To his will.
You need knowledge. And in knowledge. Temperance.
Self control. In temperance. Endurance.
There is suffering involved. And endurance. Godliness.
And godliness. Brotherly love. And brotherly love.
So you find that this life. In us. That has within us all these qualities.
The life of Christ in us. Have faith. Have virtue.
Have knowledge. Have temperance. Have endurance.
Have godliness. Have brotherly love. And have love.
All these qualities. Are in that life. But that life needs to be.
Developed. Needs to grow. So that all these things.
Will begin. To appear. And manifest it.
For these things existing. And abounding in you. Make you to be neither idle.
Nor unfruitful. As regards the knowledge. Of our Lord.
Jesus Christ. If we say we know the Lord Jesus. Then.
Invariably. You will find all these qualities. Will appear.
But we need to. Be diligent about it. For he with whom these things.
Are not present. Is blind. Spiritual.
Thing. Is most practical. What is unseen.
Can be seen. What is invisible. Is made visible.
So the life of Christ in us. Is unseen. But it has to be.
Visible. That's testimony. Otherwise we are blind.

We think we have it. We don't. Short sighted.
Living just. For this world. Forgotten.
The purging of his former sins. We even forget. How the Lord forgive us.
Our sins. Wherefore we rather brethren. Use diligence.
To make your calling. And election sure. Thank God we have a calling.
It is a calling to glory. To spiritual perfection. We are elected.
By God. For that purpose. But we have to make.
Our calling. And election sure. For doing these things he will.
Never fall. For thus shall. The entrance into.
The everlasting kingdom. Of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Be richly.
Furnished. So dear brothers and sisters. You see in the very word of God.
There are. These two sides. And they compliment each other.
They do not contradict. Each other. We need to.
Put our full confidence. In what our Lord. Has done for us.
And if we have that confidence. Then. We will apply ourselves.
To yield. To the Holy Spirit. In our daily life.
So dear brothers and sisters. I hope that. We will not have.
A kind of confusion. Thank God it is both. One is.
Absolute. That is. The truth.
One is relative. That is. Our experience.
When you think of what God has done. In Christ for us. It give us hope.
Give us joy. But it should. Draw us.
Give us that. Desire. To seek.
Diligently. So brothers and sisters. I would like to.
Just mention. A few things. From the.
Experiential side. When you do that you have to. Take for granted.
That the truth side. Is already established. Now if the truth side.

Is not established. There is nothing to build on. The Holy Spirit.
He can only work. Upon what Christ. Has accomplished.
So I do hope brothers and sisters. That we have a firm foundation. Of.
What Christ. Has done for us. And on that basis.
We will pursue. So I would just. Mention.
A few things. On the subjective side. How in our daily life.
Can we. Arrive at. The spiritual.
Perfection. That God. Is calling us.
Into. Now of course. Spiritual perfection.
Is a person. Spiritual perfection is Christ. Christ.
Has already demonstrated. To us. What he was on earth.
He is the only one. Who is spiritually. Perfect.
Absolutely perfect. So when we talk about spiritual. Perfection.
It means that. It is only in him. That we are made perfect.
If it is not in him. Nothing. Nothing can be perfect.
So the. Thing is. We need to know him.
If we know him. He will bring us. Into the spiritual.
Perfection. Because he is. And brothers and sisters.
You find the apostle Paul. In Philippians chapter three. What he considered.
As precious. Important. Life to him.
In the past. When the Lord met him. On the road to Damascus.
Is completely. Changed. On the road to Damascus.
The Lord met. This young man. And when the glory of the Lord.
Took hold. Of that young man. That young man.
Completely. Surrendered himself. To the Lord.
And in that surrender. Something happened. His mind is renewed.
In other words. Before that. His mind.

Is set upon the world. And the things of the world. These are.
Life to him. But after the Lord. Met him on the road to Damascus.
In his surrender. His mind. Undergoes a change.
Now he said. I look all things. As dross.
As refuge. For the excellency. Of the knowledge.
Of Jesus Christ. To know him. Becomes his passion.
Dear brothers and sisters. In the way. To spiritual perfection.
Our mind. Plays. A very essential part.
If our mind. Is not renewed. We will not be able.
To walk in this way. Of spiritual perfection. Where your mind is set.
That's where you are going. But we cannot change. Our mind.
Only the Holy Spirit. Can do. On one condition.
Surrender. So brothers and sisters. Consecration.
Is very very basic. To our Christian life. If we really want to grow.
In the Lord. In the knowledge of the Lord. And that will bring us.
Growing in our life. We need to. Present our bodies.
A living sacrifice. We need to give ourselves. Completely to the Lord.
Hand over. Ourselves. Our right.
To ourselves. Lord. This is yours.
You have bought it. With a price. Do whatever you like.
According to your will. When we think of consecration. Sometimes.
We are afraid. Thinking that by doing that. We loose everything.
But thank God. What we loose. Is something that need to be.
Lost. But what we gain. Cannot be measured.
So brothers and sisters. In my heart. I feel.
I feel. That unless. We really.
Consecrate ourselves. To the Lord. There is no way.

To spiritual perfection. Our mind has to be renewed. And when we.
Consecrate ourselves. The Holy Spirit. Renew our mind.
That's Roman 12. One. Young people.
You are told. By your elders. Do not love the world.
Do not be conformed. To the world. But can you do it? You just love it.
You may outwardly obey. But when you become independent. You will be worse.
Than the worldly people. Seeking after the world. You tell the young people.
Do the will of God. Once I asked young people. What do you think about the will of God? He said everything that is against me.
Is the will of God. Can you love it? Can you prove it? Of course not. But with the renewing of the mind.
Is different. You look at the world as dross. And you look.
At the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. As the most precious thing. In your life.
So brothers and sisters. Absolutely so. Do not hold back.
Anything from the Lord. So far as you know. Give yourself completely.
Let the Lord has every key. To your life. And if you are not willing.
You pray. As Jeremiah prayed. Lord make me willing.
To be willing. That is the first thing. The second thing.
Very simple. If you want to know anybody. You have to.
Live very close. To that person. So in the scripture.
The Lord said. Abide in me. And I in you.
That is the secret. Brothers and sisters. Spiritual experience is very simple.
Just learn to abide. Abide in Christ. It is not those crisis.
Special experience. That counts. It is your daily abiding.
That counts. When the two disciples. First two disciples.
Follow the Lord. John and Angel. The Lord turned back and said.
What do you want? They said. Where do you live? We want to abide with you. And that abiding.
Makes what John is. He knew the Lord. Much more intimate.
Than others. How do we abide in him? Daily abiding him. Once I asked young people.

How do you abide in the Lord? Some said. We need to read the bible everyday. We need to pray.
We need to. Go to meetings. Have fellowship.
All these are true. But brothers and sisters. The secret of abiding.
Is in 1 John. Chapter 2. It says. The anointing.
That is in you. Obey. And you abide.
In Christ. Thank God the Holy Spirit is in us. He is there.
To bring us into glory. To transform us. He is there.
To make Christ known to us. Whatever is not of Christ. He will show us.
Whatever is Christ. He will also reveal to us. And all you need to do.
In your daily life. Big things. Small things.
Obey. The voice of the Holy Spirit. Within you.
That is the way. To spiritual perfection. And another thing.
Our brother has already mentioned last night. You do not like to hear the word. Discipline.
Discipline is necessary. For growth. Hebrews 12.
And as our brother also mentioned. Discipline. Involves.
Suffering. Why? Because there is so much in us. That is.
Old. Natural. Earthly.
Worldly. Selfish. Even satanic.
And all these things in us. Has to go. But when they go.
In our flesh. We suffer. But it is necessary.
Because the Holy Spirit. Is not only negatively. To take away all these things.
That stand in the way. Of spiritual perfection. But at the same time.
He is adding Christ. Into us. Discipline.
Is important. Do not despise. Discipline.
Is the love of the Father. So that we can be partakers. Of his divine nature.
And finally. This matter of spiritual maturity. Is more than a personal.
Experience. We find in the word of God. Why is it.

That we are not. As absolutely perfect. As Christ is perfect.
We have a measure. Of his perfection. It is because we are limited.
This man. Is limited. In his capacity.
So we can only contain. So much. Of the riches of Christ.
In us. This riches of Christ. The fullness of Christ.
The perfection of Christ. Can only be expressed. Through our body.
So you find in Ephesians chapter 4. Until we all arrive. Verse 13. At the unity.
Of the faith. And of the knowledge of the Son of God. Until.
The full grown man. The measure. Of the statue.
Of the fullness. This can only be reached. In the body.
In the body of Christ. Therefore brothers and sisters. We cannot afford.
To be independent. Thinking that you alone. Is sufficient.
You need. Your brothers and sisters. You need fellowship.
You need. To be helped. By your brothers and sisters.
What you do not have. They have. They can share with you.
And what God has graciously given to you. You can share. With your brothers and sisters.
And that's the way. That we grow together. Into the fullness.
Of the statue. Of our Lord Jesus. So may the Lord.
Dear Lord. We want to thank Thee. Because Thy word.
Is perfect. We thank Thee for. What Thou has done for us.
So complete. We thank Thee for. What the Holy Spirit.
Is doing in us. So patient. So consistent.
Persistent. Until. What Christ has done.
On the cross. Is fully realized. In Thy body.
O Lord. May Thy bride. Be made ready.
To meet. We ask in Thy precious name.

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