

GOING ON TO PERFECTION – Part 4

[Hebrews 6:1](#)

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,

Here the writer of Hebrews is inviting us to “go on to perfection.” Moreover, to go on to maturity is just another way of inviting men to go on to maturity. Now, the writer further describes this “perfection” as bearing fruit.

[Hebrews 6:7](#)

⁷ For the EARTH which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and BRINGETH FORTH HERBS meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:

Again, he’s describing spiritual maturity in terms of a field bringing forth fruit. Therefore, perfection is equivalent to bearing fruit. Now, notice what it takes in order to be perfect or *fruitful*?

[Hebrews 6:7](#)

⁷ For the earth which drinketh in THE RAIN THAT COMETH OFT UPON IT, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed,

In order to be fruitful or reach perfection, you must have RAIN...and a lot of it! What does this “rain” represent?

[Isaiah 55:10–11](#)

¹⁰ FOR AS THE RAIN cometh down, And the snow from heaven, And returneth not thither, But watereth the earth, And MAKETH IT BRING FORTH and bud, That it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: ¹¹ SO SHALL MY WORD BE that goeth forth out of my mouth: It shall not return unto me void, But it shall accomplish that which I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

In one sense, the “rain” represents the word of God. Therefore, we need the word of God (and lots of it) in order to grow or reach perfection.

[1 Peter 2:2](#)

² AS NEWBORN BABES, desire the sincere MILK OF THE WORD, that ye may GROW thereby:

How much milk do babies actually need? Well, on average, a baby needs about 32 oz of milk per day. And since most babies will consume about 4 oz per feeding, they need to receive milk every 2 to 4 hours each day. Therefore, this is the kind of *rainfall* that we need in order to grow spiritually!

[James 5:7](#)

7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath LONG PATIENCE FOR IT, until he receive the EARLY AND LATTER RAIN.

First of all, we are told that the Father has long patience for the fruit of the earth. This tells us fruit doesn't just grow overnight. Secondly, we're told that the ground requires a heavy outpouring of rain (i.e. the early and latter rains) in order to bring forth fruit!

[Joel 2:23–24](#)

23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: For he hath given you the former rain moderately, And he will cause to come down for you the rain, THE FORMER RAIN, and THE LATTER RAIN in the first *month*. 24 And THE FLOORS SHALL BE FULL OF WHEAT, And the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.

What do the former and later rains represent? Well, we know that on the day of Pentecost Peter said concerning the outpouring of the Spirit, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Therefore, the early and later rain represents the outpouring of the Spirit. So, we need more than the "rain" of the word. We also need the "rain" *of the Spirit* in order to reach perfection!

[Hebrews 6:7](#)

7 For the earth which DRINKETH IN THE RAIN that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed,

Notice that it's not enough for the rain to fall. The earth must DRINK IN the rain to reach perfection! How do we know when we're *drinking in* the rain?

[1 Thessalonians 1:5–6, 9](#)

5 For our gospel came not unto you IN WORD only, but also in power, and IN THE HOLY GHOST, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. 6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, HAVING RECEIVED THE WORD in much affliction, WITH JOY of the Holy Ghost: 9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of ENTERING IN WE HAD

UNTO YOU, and how ye TURNED TO GOD FROM IDOLS to serve the living and true God;

You know you're drinking in the rain by the way you *respond*. Paul knew the Thessalonians had received the word and the Spirit into their hearts because of how they responded (i.e. with joy, turning to God from idols). Many claim they are receiving the word/Spirit, but the way you can tell who's really *drinking it in* is by how they respond!

Luke 8:14

¹⁴ And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no FRUIT TO PERFECTION.

We see here how “perfection” is again associated with “fruit.” Also, we see that not every ground brings forth fruit or reaches *perfection*. Once again we ask, “What does it take to reach perfection?”

Luke 8:15

¹⁵ But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and GOOD HEART, having heard the word, KEEP IT, and BRING FORTH FRUIT with patience.

Notice that to reach perfection the ground must “keep” the word. Again, how well we “keep” the word is determined by how well we *respond* to it.

James 1:21–22

²¹ Wherefore LAY APART ALL FILTHINESS and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS. ²² But be ye DOERS OF THE WORD, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

Notice that “doing the word” doesn't actually save (or perfect) the soul. The *word* does that. Instead, *doing the word* is how we “lay aside” or remove (from the heart) those things that hinder growth (i.e. filthiness, naughtiness)!

1 Peter 1:22

²² Seeing ye have PURIFIED YOUR SOULS IN OBEYING THE TRUTH through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see *that ye love one another with a PURE HEART* fervently:

Notice, “obeying the truth” or loving one another is what purifies the heart. But, it's the word that saves (changes) the soul!

[1 Peter 1:23](#)

²³ BEING BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever.

Unless we remove the things that are keeping us from growing, the word (rain) won't have any affect on us.

[1 Peter 2:1–2](#)

¹ Wherefore LAYING ASIDE all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, ² As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, THAT YE MAY GROW THEREBY:

It's not just the word that's necessary for growth. We must also "lay aside." But, our "laying aside" is less about growing the fruit (trying to be perfect), and more about creating a good *heart* (or ground) that allows seed (fruit) to grow.

[John 15:1–2](#)

¹ I am the true vine, and my Father is the HUSBANDMAN. ² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, HE PURGETH IT, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Notice how the husbandman helps the tree to reach perfection—through proper maintenance (or *purging* it). We're too focused on trying to produce fruit. Our focus should be on removing the things that keep hindering the seed from bearing fruit!

[Hebrews 12:1](#)

¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us LAY ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT, and the SIN which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

God has a part and we have a part. Our part is *maintenance*, God's part is *growth*!

[Genesis 2:9, 15](#)

⁹ And out of the ground MADE THE LORD GOD TO GROW EVERY TREE that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁵ And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and TO KEEP IT.

Notice, God caused the ground to grow. Man simply "kept" the ground or made sure it remained in a state that was conducive for growth! So, we really don't have a development or *growth* problem. What we have is a *maintenance* problem.