



Text: Philippians 3:12–14 (NLT) I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But **I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.** No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, **I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.**

The picture is of a person fully engaged, leaning forward, pressing ahead with the anticipation of winning the prize. This person is not just on an unfocused journey easily distracted by circumstances or enticements. On the contrary, they are single minded and determined to stay the course.

They are looking for the moment when they can experience the "**Great Exchange**". The time when they **go from being a contestant to being the winner**. When they go from being **just another racer to the champion**.

The Great Exchange

As we press toward Jesus we will have several experiences that will define and shape us.

The Salvation Experience

The "A-ha" Experience

The Journey Experience

The Salvation Experience

While it might be tempting for those who have known the Lord for a long time to turn a deaf ear to this figuring "we already know this stuff", let's remember that our salvation is still the greatest exchange we have ever experienced in our lives and it should be fully understood and cherished.

Mystery Revealed - The Holy Spirit has a purpose The main purpose of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus to us.

Jesus said "... **when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.** He will glorify Me, for He will **take of what is Mine and declare it to you.** All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you." John 16:13–15 (NKJV)

On the **Day of Pentecost Peter said**, repeating the words of the prophet Joel, "**In the last days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.** Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams." Acts 2:17 (NLT)

We are **living in the Holy Spirit age**, the age of grace and revelation when **everything in the Kingdom of God is about discovering who Jesus is** and who we can be when we submit to Him.

"the **mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations**, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is

Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may **present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.** To this end I also labor, **striving according to His working which works in me mightily.**" Colossians 1:26–29 (NKJV)

Meant to be an Overcomer Many people today do not **really know what happens when they are "Born Again"** and therefore they are **confined to living by hearsay and incomplete teaching.**

Man was never intended to live under the curse. Sin came and man fell to it's temptation. Because man fell **Jesus came to restore through His death and resurrection.**

When we **accept what Jesus did for us** by asking for forgiveness of our own sins then what Jesus did for us covers our sin and we **begin to live as an overcomer.**

The Opposite of Ignorance As soon as we accept Jesus we are put in the school of the Holy Spirit to teach us about this new way of living. The Holy Spirit is an interactive educator constantly drawing us to seek the Lord and His will for our lives.

The "A-ha" Experience

This describes how we feel **when the "light" goes on and we "get it"**. We can be reading our Bible, praying, listening to something spiritually inspiring or just meditating on what God can do and we will receive the understanding of a truth about who Jesus is or can be in us. To the new believer this seems a bit odd because it does not happen before we are made alive in Christ.

Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV) 2 And **you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world,** according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Now, after coming to the Lord, we **step into the provision that God has prepared for us in advance** of our coming to Him.

Ephesians 2:4-10 (NKJV) 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together **with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places **in Christ Jesus,** 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us **in Christ Jesus.** 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created **in Christ Jesus** for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Notice how many times it says **"with " or "in" Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit is trying to help us understand just how great an inheritance we have received** when we come to Jesus. We do not receive the curse of sin we receive the spirit of life.

"And if **Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.** But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. " Romans 8:10–11 (NKJV)

It's not mysticism

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. Colossians 2:8 (NKJV)

Mysticism focuses on external rather than on the eternal. It highlights fantasy rather than reality.

For Example take the marriage relationship. A man and a woman become one just as Christ and his church are one. Eph 5:31-33 In the beginning there is a certain amount of **fanciful dreams and expectations they have for what their marriage will be.**

It would be a **mistake for either one of the couple to hold on to an expectation,** practice a expectation, and demand that reality adjust to their expectations, even **when it is a non-essential one.**

The danger in this is that in order to **keep the expectations** alive external things such as **material possessions, status symbols, and philosophies** are **introduced but fail** to bring any real growth in the marriage. **Only that which is established on truth will lead us to experience our full potential.**

Nothing we can buy, arrange for or secure of this world will ever satisfy the reality that we need a loving Savior.

In a marriage **things get weird when we think that the things we use to celebrate our marriage become the things we use to sustain our marriage.** In a marriage relationship **we shouldn't buy a gift for our spouse to get them to love us more but to express our love to them.** The gift is not meant to the end in itself but an expression of the love we have for each other.

Breakthroughs are expected. In order to have a breakthrough you have to **have a circumstance that requires a breakthrough** and Jesus is the champion of breakthroughs. Nothing has or ever will be able to keep Him from accomplishing His will.

The **Holy Spirit wants to teach us about Jesus and Jesus wants to develop our relationship with Him further.** He does that **by leading us through the circumstances of life.** If you don't face circumstances you will not grow in your relationship with the Lord because that is how he reveals His will to you.

Satanic schemes cannot overcome you if unless you let them. If we let the circumstances in our life shape our actions we will be subject to our circumstance and therefore susceptible to whatever our circumstances dictates to us.

If we know who we are in Christ, redeemed, and a child of God, then no matter what circumstances come our way we will not be defeated.

Our character, who we really are, is **developed by how we have relied on the Lord through previous circumstances.**

A person who believes in breakthroughs will not say "Devil why did you do that to me?", they will say, "Lord what do you want to do in and through me in this circumstance? **People like that are too hot to handle for the enemy of our soul** because the **more they are tested and tried the more they become like Christ.**

The Journey Experience

A journey - something suggesting travel or passage from one place to another <the *journey* from youth to maturity> - Merriam-Webster Dictionary.com

This journey with Jesus is not of this world. We live in the world but the world's philosophies, teachings and situations do not define us, they are only meant to serve us.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:2 (NKJV)

Living as a child of God is a process. We are in the process of discovering who we are in Christ.

Conduct vs. Identity We should realize that who we are is based on who Jesus has made us, not on our conduct. This is not to say we should not live righteously it means that we do not stand on our ability to be perfect, we stand on our position in Christ.

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4 (NKJV)

The Shaking Experience While on this journey with Jesus the Holy Spirit will work to help us remove the things that hinder us from becoming like Christ. It is likened to the shaking process that **shakes loose the things that are unnecessary.**

Be careful that you do not refuse to listen to the One who is speaking. For if the people of Israel did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses, the earthly messenger, we will certainly not escape if we reject the One who speaks to us from heaven! When God spoke from Mount Sinai his voice shook the earth, but now he makes another promise: "Once again **I will shake not only the earth but the heavens also.**" This means that all of creation will be shaken and removed, **so that only unshakable things will remain.** 28 Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, **let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe.** Hebrews 12:25–28 (NLT)

Everything we need to succeed If we know that we have been saved, redeemed, made alive in Christ then we should also know that He has given us everything we need to succeed.

For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. Colossians 2:9–10 (NLT)

Our journey is not one of trying to grasp for something more, our journey is about learning how to release what Jesus has already given us. That changes everything. We are no longer living by our own abilities but by what Jesus is doing in us.

The journey is to become more like Him. When John the Baptist realized that Jesus had come and was fulfilling His rightful place as the Savior of man he said, "**He must increase, but I must decrease.**" John 3:30 (NKJV)

All the Lord asks of all of us is to lay down what is temporal, eliminate what is a non essential to our journey with Him and press on to become all we were created to be.

Conclusion

This is not a conclusion but a beginning.

Salvation has come, we have the opportunity to know the Lord, up close and personal and life's journey is opening up in front of us with great opportunities.

Just one thing to ask. Will you come to Jesus? Yes, Jesus. Seek Him. Know Him. Love Him.