

In the previous verses Paul speaks of the equipping and building up of Jesus' body, the church.

Now in 4:13 he begins to speak of the *goal* of that equipping and building up.

This is consistent with both the ultimate purpose of God ([Ephesians 1:10](#))

and the mystery of God revealed through Paul ([Ephesians 3:6](#)).

To bring us all TO THE UNITY OF THE FAITH. I love that phrase. It shows that the real unity of the Body of Christ is the unity of the faith.

Not the unity of structure or organization, but the unity of the faith. All believers in all different congregations are included in that unity of the faith. Remember Jesus wants everyone brought here.

We see that in the high Priestly Prayer

John 17:[20](#)-23

This unity is something we have to grow in. my sb story

We grow in unity when we grow in knowledge.  
maturity....

And so as a body unified we are to be working toward growing in Knowledge and maturity.

growing in KNOWLEDGE of the Son of God – knowing Jesus! That's what the whole work of the gifted offices mentioned in the previous verses should be working towards.

Growing – a PERFECT (mature) man, to the measure or pattern of the fullness of Jesus.

How deep is that.... some might say paul is pretty gnarly.....

In the sermon on the Mount Jesus sets a pretty high standard for his followers...

**Matthew 5:48 – “But you are to be perfect, even as your father in heaven is perfect.”**

- That's a pretty SHOCKING statement...

**Yet in this one statement Jesus shares the will of God for men.**

- God's desire since man's fall has been to call out a redeemed people to be PERFECT
- The “perfection of the saints” then, is the redemptive plan of God from the beginning.

What do I mean when I say, “the perfecting of the saints”?

There are 3 “types” of perfection in the Bible:

1. **POSITIONAL perfection**--When we believed in Christ, positionally before God you became, in God's eyes, perfected in Christ.

- a. **Colossians 2:9-10a—<sup>9</sup> For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, <sup>10</sup> and in Him you have been made complete (...)**
- b. **Hebrews 10:14—<sup>14</sup> For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.**
- c. Positionally before God we stand in a **PERFECT** place.
- d. In Christ, sin is paid for and removed, the barrier between us and God is GONE!
- e. **In Christ we are made perfect!**

2. **ULTIMATE perfection**—A FUTURE experience when we are made to be like Christ in heaven.

- a. We haven't experienced this perfection—and won't on earth!

**Hebrews 12:22-23—“...you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, <sup>23</sup> to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of *the* righteous made perfect...”**

--This refers to saints who have been taken to heaven.

**Phil 3:12-16—<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained *it* or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup> Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: forgetting what**

*lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup> Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; <sup>16</sup> however, let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

- b. He's looking toward his ultimate perfection when he's like Christ.

- There's a **positional perfection**, which is ours now—we don't need to worry about that, done.
- There's an **ultimate perfection**, which is ours in the future—we can't do anything about it until we get out of this world.

3. **EXPERIENTIAL perfection**—Practical day-to-day perfection we can realize NOW!

This is what Paul is talking about here in Eph 4

- a. **Positional perfection**, that's taken care of.
- b. **ultimate perfection**, that will be taken care of.
- c. **experiential perfection** is the process of growing

<p><b>This should be the goal of our Christian life to become perfect in practice.</b></p>
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2 Pet 3:18 Rather, you must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. All glory to him, both now and forever! Amen.

unfortunately that is not the case....

Phil 3:14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Look at verse 12:

- What is the reason there are evangelists and teaching pastors??
- Why are there apostles and prophets??

### **For the perfecting of the saints!**

No man can make anyone else perfect...only God can do that!

- But we are called to teach and see God bring about a kind of practical perfection in men.
- This is what this passage is all about.

**The Greek word for perfecting means “fully equipped, full-grown, mature, complete, total”**

God is not demanding sinless perfection of us.

-If He was demanding that, we wouldn't be able to deliver and we'd be in a lot of trouble.

God is not asking for sinless perfection, but He is asking for fully equipped, full grown, mature, complete Christian, *as Christ-like as possible in this world.*

### **God is asking that we continue to mature to Christ-likeness**

-Guys, nothing less than that satisfies God.

**2 Corinthians 7:1 — Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.**

## **This is what the church age is all about: Maturity**

- this is what the church is all about
- this is what the ministry is all about
- this is the purpose of the church and its leadership—to bring believers to maturity. Maturity = intimacy

**Hebrews 13:20-21 —<sup>20</sup> Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,  
<sup>21</sup> 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.**

Maturity = intimacy which produces fruitfulness. we become effective.  
effective in what. the mission of God.

fruitfulness comes from intimacy... intimacy comes from maturity that comes from growing in knowledge.

There we see the progression for the church. Watch it:

- gifted men equip the saints
- the saints do the work of the ministry
- the body is built up
- the results of a grown up body are:
  - unity
  - deep fellowship with Christ
  - Christ likeness
  - the knowledge of sound doctrine
  - a dynamic loving caring evangelism to the world.

2 Pet 1:3 By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. 4 And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

5 In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God's promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

8 The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins.

10 So, dear brothers and sisters, 11 work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. 11 Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

bend a knee bow the head.....

Psalm 1

the fruitful season requires us to cultivate

**Mature saints evangelize**—they speak the truth and they care, and they do it in love.

- That's evangelism and **it is a byproduct of a growing church.**

Look at Acts 2 in your mind. Remember the passage?

- The church was born there.
- 3,000 people moved into the church that first day.
- They met together for prayer, communion, breaking of bread, fellowship and the apostles' doctrine.
- They met in houses all week breaking bread and sharing and teaching.

**It doesn't say they did any evangelism.**

- They were just growing and growing and it says, **"The Lord added to the church daily."**

But later in the book of Acts mature Christians are exhorting and studying the word and the Lord multiplied the church.

**Evangelism is a by-product of maturity.**