

God's perfection for us – God's way!

Part 1 of 2 (Matthew 5:48)



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All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

Key words: *perfect, perfection, complete, mature, in the flesh, in the spirit, Matthew 5:48; Philippians 3:9-11; Romans 3:21-24;*

Summary: *We're called to be perfect (Matthew 5:48). But who, among people you know, are perfect? Find out what "perfect" means, how we get there, who does it, when it happens, and how it happens. Do you ever wonder if you'll ever "make it" or "qualify" for God's kingdom? Find out what God says in His word for you. We will all experience way more peace and appreciation for God once we truly understand this vital topic. I suggest you print off the notes and follow along with the audio as it moves fast.*

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Hi and welcome to Light on the Rock. I'm Philip Shields.

I was cleaning our glass sliding door recently and thought I'd done a great job. So I put glass sprays and cloths away – and then later saw an annoying streak I'd missed! I just couldn't let it go. So I had to get all the gear out again and do it right. On many things, I guess I'm a "perfectionist".

But other times, it's not that important and I'll accept "that'll do" or "that's good enough", when time is an issue and where perfection isn't needed.

Now be thinking about that spiritually in our lives.

I had a neighbor in WA state some years back whom I saw spraying green paint on to some brown spots – some dead grass areas of his lawn. I was going for a walk and couldn't miss this. He explained a friend from another state who had a perfect lawn was coming to visit, and he just couldn't have this guest see his ugly brown spots.

So was his lawn perfect after spraying? Of course not. It was as fake as what Jesus described as the Pharisees' whitewashed tombs full of dead men's bones.

So when it comes to things you do, which kind of person are you?

- A "**that'll do**", "that's close enough, good enough" kind of person

- Or a “**perfectionist**” constantly checking and double-checking to be sure you got “it” done perfectly?
- Or perhaps – more realistically – like me, some things we’re willing to leave at “*that’s good enough*”, while other things we have to get perfectly.

But remember God does tell us to do the best we can. Look at these verses:

Ecclesiastes 9:10

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might...”

1 Corinthians 10:31

“Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”

It IS a pleasure watching **true craftsmen** do their work – whatever it is. I watched a man making the cuts and engravings on to fine crystal glasses. What a delight he was to watch. I asked how long it took to get that good, to learn his craft so perfectly. His reply: “You never learn. You just keep getting better and better.” I loved the answer. We should always strive for improvement. But could it be even more than just “improvement”?

I’ve read that in creation – no matter what it is you examine in God’s creation, with microscopes or telescopes – the perfection of what God created is astounding. The closer you look, the more perfect it is.

But I heard a minister recently teach that the Bible does not teach perfection – but just doing the best we can. So let’s take a look.

Did Yeshua discuss perfection? And what could he have meant?

Matthew 5:48

“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your father in heaven is perfect.”

Eternal God Most High wants perfection. This will be a 2-part sermon so we can explore this important understanding carefully.

So welcome everyone to Light on the Rock, where we focus on our love for God and for one another. Where Yeshua is the Light and He is our Rock, as He leads us to an ever-closer understanding of our perfect heavenly father.

YOU have been called by God the Father to perfection. Remember HE is the one who calls people to Him.

GOD in the Highest looked down on this planet *and hand-picked you (John 6:65, 44) to be in HIS first resurrection.* Not because you bring so much to the table, but because Father wants to show what HE can do even through weak vessels such as us. *What God is doing, and wants to be doing, in your life, is the ultimate game changer!*

No matter what you've done, no matter what you've BEEN, no matter your faults and sins in life... when we listen to our Father calling us – *He wants PERFECTION for you, and HE will CHANGE YOUR LIFE! Let that sink in!*

And it starts with the good news of what Jesus (Yeshua) did – who paid your sin debt for you, by his blood, so you could be in the Kingdom of God.

Revelation 1:5b

“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

So now dreams – your dreams, and God's dreams for you and me – really can come true.

Have YOU had a dream? We can't even imagine God's dreams for us. He wants you to be among the first children in his family.

Christ is “the firstborn among MANY brethren”, remember **(Romans 8:29)**.

We can push ourselves in physical arenas to near perfection –but in things SPIRITUAL, is anyone flawless spiritually? Will attaining flawless spiritual perfection have to be an act of God – or something you and I can attain if we just keep trying harder? Many act like it's the latter.

And IF you're able to attain this perfection Yeshua speaks of in Matthew 5:48 by YOUR efforts, then surely the glory will be YOURS, because YOU did it. How could you credit God if YOU did it?

I have a friend who took this word “perfect” to mean flawless, as in “a perfect, flawless diamond” – and he said if we don't have a perfect track record of PERFECT, SINLESS living over time, he said “we just won't be in the kingdom of God. We have to grow to become flawlessly perfect like God is in heaven, or we're simply not going to make it.”

That's what HE said, remember. Well let's learn more.

But IS THAT the correct understanding of Matthew 5:48? IS eventual “perfection” – as in Matthew 5:48, something that's a result of all our hard

work? I'll show in a minute how the Greek word CAN mean flawless perfection – but actually, for humans, it usually means something quite different.

I asked him how he was doing in his own life with his definition of flawless perfection. He claimed he had gotten up to 2 weeks now of perfect living. He said he was sure his dad would qualify as perfect.

Has ANYONE ever been able to be perfectly like our heavenly Father? So far, only one has.

Hebrews 1:1-3 NKJV

“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by **His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;**

3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...”

NIV, Berean, NASB : “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and, **the exact representation of his being...**”

CEV: “Is like him (God) in every way.”

Holman translation: “He is the radiance of His glory, the **exact expression of His nature...**”

All we can say is “WOW”. ONE man has lived exactly like Father. Here now is where we find clues how we will be perfect too, one day. IN Christ is how WE will also be perfect, as our heavenly father is perfect. Remember Jesus was perfectly like his father. And we are supposed to be IN Christ, as parts of his body. ... Let that sink in.

Pagan **Pilate**, investigating Yeshua before his crucifixion, came out **THREE TIMES** saying to the Jews who wanted Jesus crucified -- “**I find NO FAULT with this man.**” (**John 18:38; 19:4 and 19:6**). Three times! “NO fault”!

Hebrews 4:14-15 says our Messiah was tempted or **TESTED** in all points as we are, YET without sin. **Being TRIED or tempted to sin is not a sin.**

It's when we GIVE IN to temptation – and pursue its end – that it is sin.

That way Yeshua can sympathize with us! He understands being tempted and tested. *But he never gave in to sin's temptations. Not once. Don't feel bad about being tempted. Even Jesus was tempted. But DON'T GIVE IN.*

And look at the perfect, flawless performance of our Savior as a man:

Hebrews 4:14-15

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a **High Priest** who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, ***but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.***”

So one human, born as the son of God, was able to live perfectly, though he was tempted, tried and tested in every possible way.

But Yeshua certainly did have some advantages we don't have.

- **He was BEGOTTEN by His Father**, through Holy Spirit (**Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:34-35**). Yeshua's source of his DNA in other words, was from God the Father, not a human father. Jesus literally was the son of God in the Highest. We will also be full children of God when it's all said and done, but none of us were conceived by the Highest through Holy Spirit.
- **Jesus was worshipped from birth onwards (Matt.2:11; 8:2; 9:18; 14:33 and more). Remember *only GOD can be worshipped without it being a sin.* See **John 9:35-38** – blind man. Jesus often said God was literally his father (**John 10:31-36**).**
- **He could remember his pre-human birth life in heaven with God Most High. You and I can't do that.**
 - *“Father glorify me with the glory I had with you before the world was” (John 17:5).*
 - *“I saw Satan fall like lightning” (Luke 10:18).*
 - *“Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:56-58). And remember Yeshua is the WORD and wrote and inspired every word in the Bible.*
- **Yeshua was visibly served by ANGELS** on several occasions and said he could order 12 legions of angels to appear if he wished

(**Matthew 26:53**). He could walk on water. He knew people's thoughts (**Matt 9:4; Luke 5:22**). Can we do any of that?

Yeshua was fully man – but certainly did have some advantages over the rest of us.

So what does PERFECT mean?

A big part of the problem is that we speak English, and the New Testament was written in Greek.

Webster's dictionary defines “perfect”: **“being entirely without fault or defect. Flawless, as in ‘a perfect diamond’; Faithfully reproducing the original”** – as in “letter-perfect”. Another definition: “Lacking in no essential detail, as being complete”. Perfect, in other words.

So if we understand our mission to be “perfect” using the ENGLISH definition of being flawless – we're in trouble. And I think that is what my friend did, when he understood that we have to have track record of living flawlessly.

But in the ORIGINAL GREEK we find this about ‘PERFECT’:

Greek for “perfect” is Strong's word 5058, “teleio” meaning “complete, mature, to make perfect BY reaching the intended goal.” It points to finishing your work or duty.”

(Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says something almost identical.

So this word we're reading as “perfect” – especially in the KJV and NKJV -- in GREEK, the meaning can include perfection and flawlessness, especially in reference to GOD and Christ, but it also has the meaning for us, of “complete, mature, finished, reaching the end goal” and is often translated that way in many translations other than KJV or NKJV's “perfect”.

So, very important we get this: the word “perfect” we're reading in English, can often mean “complete, finished, mature, reached the goal” – and does not, when referring to humans, have to mean “flawless”.

HUMANS ARE NOT FLAWLESS; often FAILURES

I believe most of you believers will agree that Yeshua lived a flawless life, but aside from him, we don't know anyone else who really did. Paul says, "ALL have sinned" (Romans 3:23). **Ecclesiastes 7:20** says you won't be able to find a perfectly just person who never sins in all the earth. (Also Gal. 3:22; 1 John 1:8-10; all of Romans 2, etc.)

Even Apostle Paul even made it clear that – though he was filled with God's Holy Spirit and had been "in Christ" for over 2 decades when he wrote this, says he still stumbled! Just read the last half of Romans 7, "that which I hate, I (still) do..." (**Romans 7:14-20 especially**).

So Paul makes it clear that he did not see himself as having already attained perfection, completion, finishing the course – not yet.

Philippians 3:13-14 NEW LIVING TRANS.

"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection.

14 But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.

Holman Christian Standard Bible

"NOT that I have already reached the goal or am already fully mature...."

We'll come back to those verses and context later.

So scripture is clear: all humans are imperfect, and often feel like failures. This includes the apostles and prophets, your pastors, and other believers. We'd probably all be shocked to know the private failings of those we esteem.

Look what patriarch Jacob (Israel) said when Pharaoh asked him his age:

Genesis 47:9

And Jacob said to Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are one hundred and thirty years; ***few and EVIL have been the days of the years of my life...***"

I can relate to Jacob. Can you? Jacob says, "my life? How disappointing it's been." Many of us feel like failures in our spiritual life. Don't you?

Certainly when I look back at MY life, or even day by day – I often feel like an abject failure as a Christian, husband, father. **I'm not alone.** And

many of you ask out loud "I wonder if I'll ever make it into God's kingdom?" Right? You will be in God's kingdom – but certain understandings have to be in place first.

NEED GOD'S "SEED" -- HIS NATURE, HIS "DNA"

THIS WHOLE concept of becoming perfect as God is perfect – which is what Yeshua SAID – will be impossible without God's Spirit. Peter calls it God's "Divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). The Holy Spirit puts God's very nature into our lives, so we don't have just human nature, but now a 2nd nature – God's own nature. That should be very exciting.

With the Holy Spirit, Christ and Father come dwell and LIVE in us, make their home in us (John 14:23) . The Holy Spirit is the very nature of God coming into us. We are begotten anew, or born again, of his divine SEED (1 Peter 1:23). Part of GOD himself comes into us when we receive his Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:2-4

"Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, **that through these you may be partakers of the DIVINE NATURE**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

2 Peter 1:4 NLT

"...that enable you **to share his divine nature** and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires."

John 14:23

Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him".

1 Peter 1:23

"...having been born again, **not of corruptible SEED but incorruptible**, through the word of God which lives and abides forever..."

When God's spirit is in us, it's really like the very nature of God himself is in us. Yeshua said both he and our heavenly father would come live in us!

So we are told to repent – turn from our former ways and turn to God and follow his way. We are told to be baptized for the remission of our sins -- and receive the laying on of hands to receive God's spirit. (**Acts 2:36-39; Acts 8:14-16**).

So NONE of this sermon will “work” for you unless you have God's spirit. Why? Because you have zero chance of ever being complete, or perfect, trying to get there by yourself without God's presence and NATURE in you.

So if you have not repented, been baptized and received God's spirit, let's find a way to get that fixed! If you wish to learn more about water immersion – use my **search bar and type in “Baptisms”** – for the 2011 sermon all about it. Get immersed by a spirit filled minister of God and be sure he lays hands on you and asks for God to send you His Holy Spirit.

Then the process of perfection – through Christ – can begin.

“Making it” into God's kingdom

Do you realize God has a DREAM for you – that you will be perfect, just as your father in heaven is perfect. And He really wants us to stop feeling like such a failure. We are victors in Christ (read 1 John 5:4-5; 1 Cor. 15:57). You've got to believe that if you are ever going to move away from feelings of failure!

In today's message --you will hear HOW our God turns around even the worst of sinners, even one who has done everything wrong all his/her life (You or me)– if they SURRENDER that life to His Lordship. Yes, even they can be seen by God as “perfect” and “mature”, as I'll explain.

I hear expressions in church like “I wonder if I'll EVER qualify for God's kingdom or if I'll EVER make it.” Do YOU ever say or think that? Frankly that shows a huge misunderstanding of HOW we qualify, who does it, and who makes sure we “make it” into God's kingdom. It also shows a huge misunderstanding of GOD'S GRACE that KEEPS working for us even long after baptism and while we still fail and sin.

Let me jump AHEAD – but let me put your mind at ease right now on qualifying and making it. Col. 1:12-14. **KJV is a worded a bit awkwardly...**

but notice the verb TENSES. *They're PAST tense.* KJV in v 12 "the father who has made us meet to be partakers of..." What does that mean?

Colossians 1:12-14 NKJV

"Giving thanks to the FATHER who HAS QUALIFIED us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

13 He HAS delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins."

When we read other passages, we see that bringing us into God's kingdom, from start to finish, is GOD's work. *Perfection – becoming mature, complete, and in His eyes – perfect - is God's work.*

You can read **Romans 8:29-30. Notice the tense. It's past tense.** We read that God foreknew us, predestined us, called us, justified us (made us righteous), HE glorified us. Even the fruits of HIS righteousness are by Christ. (Philippians 1:11). Now let's read Rom 8 – and notice WHO is doing all this:

Romans 8:29-30

"For whom **He foreknew**, **He** also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that **He** might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom **He predestined**, these **He** also called; whom He called, these **He** also justified; and whom He justified, these **He** also glorified."

Praise God! God predestines us, calls us, knew us ahead of time, and – past tense -- justified us – meaning "declared us as righteous."

How can God do all these as if they're already all **done?** ***Because God knows how he wants everything ending up, and like a great architect, he sees the final result before it's actually there!*** He knows how His Plan will end up, so he declares it already done.

Isaiah 46:9-10

"Remember the former things of old,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like Me,

**10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things that are not yet done...**

Architects are great at this. They know the exact “look”, design, size, shape, color –everything about a house or building even while all we can see ahead of time is a vacant lot. All we see is dirt and rock and trees. The architect sees the final result. That’s what God does. He sees and declares you and me in our final state, as HE intends it. Keep listening!

I hope you're starting to feel some HOPE – that you are SEEN by God, when he jumps to the end of the story - as already having been perfected!

Here’s a verse, but we’ll continue to build on how we get to this point, but I want you to read and hear this now and be encouraged ... and notice the TENSE of the verb is PAST tense, already done by Christ, in God’s eyes, as God looks to the end product of our growth process. He sees perfection as already done.

Hebrews 10:14 KJV

“For by one offering He **hath perfected forever** them that are sanctified”

NIV: “For by one sacrifice he **HAS made perfect forever** those who are being made holy.”

GOD’S Own RIGHTEOUSNESS CREDITED TO US BY FAITH

One big way to understand perfection is to remember we are A PART of the perfect and holy Body of Christ: We are supposed to BE IN Jesus, God’s perfect Son! We are HIS body parts – some are hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth, and so on (**1 Cor. 12**) So if we are parts of HIS body, how can we be anything but holy, clean and pleasing – for he is constantly washing away our sins in his blood (1 John 1:9).

This cleansing does not happen just at baptism – but from then on. This cleansing, this washing away, after receiving God’s spirit – which is the guarantee of our salvation – happens every time a child of God sins and repents. We remain God’s child. We just need some cleansing, but we still belong to him. God is not going to easily give you up (John 10:29).

Can you imagine any body part or member of the Son of God’s body being anything but clean, holy – especially after what Yeshua does for us? He sees his Bride as without spot or wrinkle, remember (read **Ephesians 5:25-27**).

Paul also says that because we are in Christ, we sit in the heavenlies on the right side of God – IN and with Christ. As part of Him. (**Ephesians 2:4-7**)

This perfection we've been called to, is directly tied to the other sermons I've given on *God's credited or imputed righteousness* to us by faith. It's called the *righteousness by FAITH* (**Gal. 5:5; Romans 5:15-21; Rom 9:30-32**).

Hebrews 11:7

"Noah became heir of the righteousness that is according to faith"

God cannot accept our own best efforts, even with the Holy Spirit – because it won't be flawless or even complete. Remember Paul, 26 years after his conversion, wrote in Romans 7 that he still sometimes did what he didn't want to do.

Apostle Paul also made that so clear:

Philippians 3:9-11

"...that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in HIM, NOT having my OWN righteousness, which is from the law,

but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from GOD by FAITH;

10 that I may know Him and the power of HIS resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."

We simply are NOT going into the Kingdom on our own great performance, as it simply falls too far short. Let's jump to verse 12 now and re-read if Paul felt he had attained that perfection already. When he wrote Philippians, it was now close to 30 years past his conversion:

Philippians 3:13-14 NEW LIVING TRANS.

"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection.

14 But I press on to possess that **perfection** for which Christ Jesus first possessed me.

Paul realized in verse 9 that he wanted God's own righteousness that we receive as a GIFT from God. Paul calls it in **Romans 5:17 as the GIFT of God's righteousness**. *How often do you ever hear of this gift of God?*

Father offers the BIG SWAP. He says, "You give me all you have, all your faults and sins – and I will give you all I have through Christ. *In this gift, you will be able to become very righteousness of God in Christ. Let's read it.*

2 Corinthians 5:21

"For He [God] made Him who knew no sin to BE SIN FOR us, that WE might become the righteousness of GOD in Him."

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, please read that verse over and over and over until you realize it is talking about you too!

We must get this: *God imputes on to Christ all our sins and filthiness. Then he imputes on to us all of God's own righteousness as we are now in Christ.*

If we are seen by God as having HIS own very righteousness – that's what 2 Cor. 5:21 says – so why do we resist that? So many of you do resist it. Your own righteousness won't "make it". Paul said in Phil 3:9 he didn't want his own righteousness but GOD's righteousness.

Jesus' ROLE

*Yeshua took on himself everything **that was the bad in us**. BY doing so, in his love for imperfect you and me, He took on himself God's wrath that was intended for your sins (**Romans 5:9**). Now if we don't accept him, God's wrath still remains on us (**John 3:36**).*

*SIN separates us from God. Yeshua also took that **SEPARATION** our sins caused – for us... "my GOD, MY God, why have you **forsaken me**"? **PSALM 22:1**. Remember?*

***HE TOOK OUR REJECTION. Do you ever feel rejected? Yeshua understands.** Even his own people rejected him. Even the one who betrayed him - - **JUDAS**. In Hebrew it is "Yehudah" (**Judah in English**). The betrayer's very name was the same as the tribe that rejected Yeshua. Of course the whole world really rejected him. God replaced our rejection caused by sin with God's acceptance and reconciliation with us.*

*It got even more disgraceful. In front of PILATE, the choice given the mob was to **release either the righteous son of God the Father – or BARABBAS -- which also means "son of the father"**. Did you get that? How did Yeshua feel to see them pick a well-known criminal over him?*

And in his love, God gave us Yeshua's perfectly perfect life, full of love, compassion, forgiveness, and acceptance of us. So in spite of me and you – Yeshua became sin for us and took the consequences of our sin on himself.

He didn't just accept our sins up to the point of baptism, but for the rest of our lives, as we fight sin. Yeshua becomes our LIFE more and more.

Galatians 2:20

*"I have been crucified with Christ; **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Colossians 3:3-4

*"For you died, and your **life is hidden with Christ** in God.
4 When **Christ who is our life** appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."*

*And then God said – "Now, in my Son of my love, you can also receive– and become -- **MY** very own righteousness **IN HIM** and have **LIFE** in him"*

But if we refuse God's son, we still come under God's wrath!

John 3:36

*"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and **he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."***

I hope you'll all join me and many others in accepting Christ as our life and accepting HIS righteousness and perfection.

So just because we still stumble in sin from time to time, like Paul admitted he also still did, doesn't mean you're not seen by God as righteous or even perfect – MATURE.

HOW SUFFERING plays a big role in our maturity/perfection

We know Jesus is and was perfect and lived perfectly. So why do we read this in Hebrews 2:10?

Hebrews 2:10

*"For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, **to make the captain of their salvation PERFECT through SUFFERINGS.**"*

Here the word "perfect" is the same GREEK word #5048 that Paul used to say he wasn't perfect yet. But Christ was perfected through sufferings. But wasn't Yeshua already perfect? How then was he 'perfected' if he was already perfect?

Here is where the other meanings of "perfect" come in. Again, The GREEK word for "perfect" can also mean "completed; Finished; to reach maturity or the end goal". #5048 – teleioe.

Here's what I feel was going on:

Jesus/Yeshua as the Word of God for eternity before he came, had never ever lived as a fully human flesh and blood person all his life -- until he was born as a baby, fully dependent on his mom and dad at birth. There were "theophanies" – but nothing like being born as a flesh and blood child.

Prior to that, had he ever experienced hunger, or been tempted to be overly angry, or lust after a woman? Had he ever experienced torture, scourging, crucifixion – and total abandonment?

The Bible also says even the Aaronic priests were able to have compassion since they themselves were "subject to weakness" (**Read Hebrews 5:1-2**). They were human. They understood failure.

So everything Yeshua went thru completed him as a better, more understanding, high priest. *That suffering PERFECTED him in the Greek sense of making him more complete, more finished.*

Hebrews 5:7-9

"who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,

8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience BY the things which He suffered.

9 And having been PERFECTED, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, **10 called by God to be High Priest** "according to the order of Melchizedek,"

v. 9- practically every translation says "perfected." But remember it can definitely mean bringing to completion to the expected goal.

So this "perfect" in the Greek clearly points to Christ adding some elements he didn't have before – I think in terms of being able to BETTER understand US humans, and the pains, sufferings, trials, temptations we go through.

Hebrews 7:28

“For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints ***the Son who has been PERFECTED forever.***”

You and I are ALSO being prepared to be more complete priests under our High Priest by the things we go thru as well. By SUFFERING. Suffering plays a big part.

I'll continue the role of SUFFERING, pain, death, disappointment, failure – and how all that plays such a big role in perfection in part 2, and then we'll see the explosive grand finale of our growth to perfection and completion in Christ. Be sure to listen to Part 2.

Summary so far:

So we see and know God is perfect. Jesus is perfect, mature, complete, flawless. But we're not. But we also understand that “perfect” can often mean in the New Testament – “mature, finished, completed” – *as well as* flawless, when referring to God.

We've seen how suffering as a flesh and blood human added elements to Christ's experience he had never had before. It completed him for his role as High Priest.

Our own suffering is also completing US for our role as empathetic priests and kings in the millennium and beyond.

Let's finish this part 1 of 2 here and next time we'll finish the sermon. Next time we'll cover more about the vital role of pain and suffering in our development, and how it's part of the program! We'll cover WHO makes sure we do end up perfect at the end? HOW does that happen? When is perfection finally complete? There's more to come!

Closing prayer.