THE FORMULA FOR PERFECTION

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God bless you,

Oluwatobi S. Adewuyi
Coordinator

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Topic:
FORMULA OF PERFECTION
Bible Text: Phillipians 3:12-14

Prayer

Father Lord, King of Glory we bless your Holy Name. We are about learning from your word, let your light shine and may heavenly dew rest on us. Water the minister as he waters us In Jesus Mighty Name (Amen).

Study

The Apostle Paul says in the preceding verses that he suffered the loss of all things so that he might gain Christ and be found in Him. He talked about putting away a righteousness that is by the law and taking on the righteousness that is by faith in Christ Jesus so that Christ might be known and the power of His resurrection. This implies that to gain Christ entails first putting your trust in Him and putting no trust in anything other than Him. All things one once valued must be counted as loss for the sake of focusing on the Lord. Despite all that Paul said about how he counted all these things as loss for Christ, he states in **Philippians 3:12 (KJV)**, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." From this, we know that he had not reached a state where one can no longer fall into sin in this life, which is complete or ultimate sanctification. His goal was to "press on" as if he had not yet obtained it. This shows that no one can claim to be perfect because we can still fall into sin, though we should not intentionally do so and should repent when we do. Paul says he has not already attained or been perfected, but he presses on to obtain what Christ Jesus laid hold of him for.

Carefully examining his words when he talked about not yet obtaining it, we can see that each of us has something to attain or obtain, which is eternal life. **1 Corinthians 9:24 (KJV)** says, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." From this verse, Paul makes it clear that we have to run the Christian race with the goal of obtaining eternal life, much like athletes running in a competition. This implies that we are not running aimlessly; there is a target, a goal, and our focus should be on achieving it. When running a race, everyone's total concentration is on reaching the goal to obtain the prize. Any form of distraction can lead to failure. So, run with

focus, not getting tired or carried away by the applause of others until you reach the goal. Keep pressing on because perfection and eternal life are the objectives.

Since we have not yet attained it, we must press on, continue, and not faint. In **1 Timothy 6:12 (KJV)**, Paul tells Timothy, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." This implies that to gain eternal life, we must be ready to fight against the temptations of the flesh and other weaknesses. The struggle must continue until we hold on to it. There will be times when it feels like giving up, times when it seems like the enemy wants to win, but we must keep pressing on.

"We are expected to run this race to perfection as if it is possible here on earth. Perfection is attainable, but to achieve such perfection, one must be ready to press on relentlessly.

In **Philippians 3:13 (KJV)**, Paul says, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before." From this, we can see that Paul provided a formula that can help us attain perfection. He used himself as a case study and encouraged the church in Philippi to follow his example. This would help them become more like Christ, for the Lord said in **Matthew 5:8 (KJV),** "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

This is God's will for everyone who is saved. When God saves us, the work begins in us to make us perfect. He wants us to become more like Him and gradually transform us into what He desires. Paul recognized that the Lord was still working on him. This is why he said he did not consider himself to have apprehended perfection; one could still miss the mark if not careful. So he made it clear that he had not yet achieved that perfection and then shared the formula for getting closer to it. This formula still works today for those who seek to live a perfect life. If Paul could apply it, and as we read about his life, he declared to Timothy that he had fought a good fight and had kept the faith.

In 2 Timothy 4:7-8 (KJV), Paul said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith**: [8]** Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Paul said a crown of righteousness awaits him. He declared that

he had finished his race. Such a declaration can be made at the end of our lives on earth if we grasp and apply the formula. If this formula worked for Paul and he shared it with the church, it can work for those who use it. We must remember that our goal on earth is to become perfect in all ways and eventually enter heaven.

The formula:

- Forgetting the past.

- Reaching forward to the future

One might wonder how this formula works. It has steps that must be followed, just as with mathematical formulas. Mistakes made in applying the steps can lead to incorrect results. This is why those who do not apply this formula correctly may not achieve the desired outcome. Let's examine the formula step by step.

1. **Forgetting the past:** This simply means letting go of the things done in the past that might negatively affect your future. These things from the past can include both the bad and the good. When referring to the bad things from the past, it's about actions you took before coming to know Christ, and you must ensure that these do not weigh you down in your journey with the Lord. Such things must be forgotten so that you can focus on the future. It's important to note that a major way to truly forget the past is by making necessary restitution. Failing to do so can prevent you from moving forward because the Holy Spirit will not let you rest.

Therefore, any wrongs you committed before giving your life to Christ should be addressed through restitution, so you can genuinely leave the past behind. Things that are not rightfully yours must be returned to their rightful owners. As mentioned in **Ezekiel 33:15-16 (KJV)**, "If the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he had robbed, walks in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he has committed shall be mentioned unto him: he has done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

This scripture emphasizes that none of his sins will be mentioned against him because he has done what is right. If you fail to make restitution, Satan will keep reminding you of those things, making you feel like a sinner, which can hinder your progress. That's why you must return borrowed or taken items, like books, bags, clothes, cups, and other possessions, to their

rightful places. The formula for forgetting the past may not work for you if you avoid necessary restitution. As stated in **2 Corinthians 5:17 (KJV)**, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

You cannot claim that old things have passed away if you haven't taken care of restitution. Instead, being a new creature should encourage restitution because your new nature will not allow you to be comfortable with keeping what doesn't belong to you. The Holy Spirit will guide you in recognizing what needs to be restored, and it's advisable to involve your spiritual leaders when dealing with sensitive restitution matters. "When dealing with sins committed in the past, it's essential to confess as necessary, not just the ones requiring restitution, but also those that need confession. You should confess to the right person as directed by the Holy Spirit. If reconciliation is required, you must reconcile with those you have unsettled matters with in order to truly forget the past. Even if you haven't done anything wrong to them, but they behave in a certain way towards you, it's still crucial to approach them and seek resolution without causing offense. Past unresolved conflicts and disagreements cannot be ignored; they must be settled. Apologies should be made to those against whom false witness was borne, and any wrongs said must be corrected, as the situation may demand. By doing this, you work towards truly leaving the past behind.

The Good Past

As for the "good past," it might be surprising, but it's crucial not to dwell on past good deeds that could lead to complacency and hinder further progress. Forgetting those things which are behind is essential because if one lingers on past achievements, there may be no motivation to pursue greater heights in Christ. Christ's depth cannot be fully explored; the deeper we go, the more we discover about Him. His ways are beyond human understanding, as stated in **Romans 11:33 (KJV)**, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!'

God's wisdom is profound, and Jesus Christ, who embodies the wisdom of God, emphasizes the need to keep searching and delving deeper into our faith. We should not become complacent but continue to seek higher levels in Christ. Forgetting, in this context, doesn't mean erasing these experiences from memory; it means not clinging to them or assuming that you have reached the ultimate pinnacle in your journey with Christ. That's

why Paul emphasized that he had not yet reached a state of accomplishment in Christ.

Concerning our previous teaching, there's something I need to clarify here concerning Eternal Life as my attention was brought to it by one of our brothers in Christ here. Please read👇🏽

Good afternoon sir.

Please concerning the point you made here, particularly about gaining eternal life, I believe what apostle Paul was talking about is about fulfilling the mandate assigned to him not eternal life. This is because every believer has eternal life already. It's something we have already been given.

1 John 5:13

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God .

in **John 5:24** our Lord Jesus Christ says,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

This truth is also established in the following bible passages

John 3:36

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on.

Explanation

Good evening my brother in Christ, thanks so much for calling my attention to this, you are right sir! Eternal life is found in Christ. But the word eternal life can be used in two ways, it can mean our final destination in heaven or our life in Christ.

Just the way we have eternal death which will be in hell.

Let's consider this conversation with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 19:16-21

[16]And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

[17]And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt ENTER into life, keep the commandments.

[18]He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

[19]Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

[20]The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

[21]Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

In this passage of the scriptures, the man asked the Lord what he must do to **HAVE** eternal life, Jesus answered him saying if he must **ENTER** heaven. The Lord understood what he said as, how would he make heaven. This was why He said he should do what the commandments say and also follow Him. By telling him to follow Him simply implies that He's telling him to rely i.e. believe in Him.

Mark 10:28-30

[28]Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

[29]And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

[30]But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Peter asked what those who have followed the Lord, that is, believe on Him would get as a reward, and the Lord said they will have eternal life in the

world to come, not now. This does not mean they did not have eternal life already, they already had it as you said, but the Lord used that word to refer also to their final destination, that was what I was referring to when I used the word eternal life.

Romans 2:7 To them who by **patient continuance** in well doing **SEEK FOR** glory and honour and immortality, **eternal life:**

Those who continue patiently seek for glory, honor, immortality and eternal life, if we look into this carefully, we would see that these things are not gotten on earth such as immortality, it's in the world to come, same way it is with eternal life as used in this context. What we would be considering in every teaching and verse of the scriptures is the context to which the words are used.

Please, let's take note and not get confused with those words as used in the teaching. God bless!

Labour:

"Labour" means our work for the Lord; labour is to exert one's power or body or mind, especially with painful or strenuous effort. When applied for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom, it is also called labour. We can see that laboring in God's work is not something easy. Looking carefully into the scriptures, you will see that Paul was a laborer who toiled extensively for the Lord. **2 Corinthians 11:23 KJV:** "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft." He said he was more abundant in labor. The same man who said, **"I do forget those things behind,"** he did not remain complacent because of past accomplishments. Instead, he pressed forward.

Labourers in God's vineyard take many forms, all who bear the vessels of the Lord. All are called labourers; no one takes a greater place before God. All are called to labour for the advancement of the kingdom, regardless of their capacity—whether an evangelist, a cleaner in the house of God, or others. This implies that as a labourer, you must put your past labours aside and continue to labour more. The focus should be on pressing forward in your labour without relenting. In your labour, do not get discouraged because you are not appreciated by men. God is your employer; He will compensate you for your labour, and there is more to labour on than to dwell on your past achievements.

Persecution:

This might sound surprising, but persecution can be a good thing for a Christian. Though it may be seen as something to avoid, for a Christian, persecution is not inherently bad; it often leads to personal growth. Jesus Christ said we would suffer persecution because of Him. **John 15:20 KJV:** "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." The scriptures say they would persecute you because they persecuted Him. **John 5:16 KJV:** "And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus and sought to slay him because he had done these things on the sabbath day." If the Lord could be persecuted, why do we see persecution as something that shouldn't happen to us?

If persecution were something outrightly evil, the one for righteousness' sake would not pronounce a blessing on those who are persecuted. **Matthew 5:10 KJV:** "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness have the promise of the kingdom of God. Therefore, as a follower of Christ, do not take pride in persecution or get angry to the point of leaving the path of righteousness because of it. Jesus said if you are persecuted in one city, flee to the next; this does not imply running away totally and avoiding persecution.

While living a righteous life, do not dilute the word of God. Even if you have to flee from one city to another, you would still face persecution because you are a light in the world. Regardless of the level of persecution for Christ's sake, the message is not to be discouraged but to forget past persecutions and press forward to the goal. **2 Timothy 3:12 KJV:** "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

If you are following me, kindly say *I'm being illuminated with the Christ's light*

Paul says he took pleasure in persecution. **2 Corinthians 12:10 KJV:** "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." We should not be angry or sober, or faint when persecuted for the sake of Christ; rather, we should rejoice in the persecution, even if it comes with shame, just like what happened to the apostles.

When they were preaching and the high priest and the sects of the Sadducees rose up against them **(Acts 5:40-41 KJV):** "And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. **[41]** And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

The apostles were beaten, but they left rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's sake. One might be forced to ask if these men were okay, but this is what we get from the life of a man in Christ – living abundantly in Christ's joy. We should press on, forgetting past persecution, for we would not lose our rewards.

Suffering: This is something many run away from. This does not talk about suffering as a sinner or an offender but as a Christian. **1 Peter 4:16 KJV:** "Yet if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." We are commanded not to be ashamed when we suffer for Christ's sake. This implies that our faith in Christ must bring suffering in different forms, and we are encouraged to glorify God on this behalf. We should not see suffering for Christ's sake as something to be afraid of or run away from. The truth is that suffering is beautiful, and no one wants anything that causes pain. We are told not to suffer as sinners **(1 Peter 4:15 KJV):** "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an

evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." If we are suffering, we must check the effect to which we are suffering. Sufferings for Christ should not discourage us but encourage us because it proves that we are on the right path. No matter what we suffer for Christ's sake, we must forget it to press forward. We must not let it weigh us down or serve as an entrance to sacrifice more for the Lord but should serve as an encouragement to us. **1 Peter 4:19 KJV:** "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." Those who suffer for Christ's sake are those who suffer according to the will of God.

A man can suffer because of his foolishness and even laziness. The Lord Jesus Christ says no looking back once we have started the journey with Him. **Luke 9:62 KJV:** "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

2. **Reaching forward to the future:** This implies that we must not only forget the things which have passed but also press forward and not remain

stagnant; this is a daily commitment. There are many things ahead of us which we must press towards. We must leave the baby stage of spirituality for maturity. We must strive to become mature in Christ, aiming for perfection and reaching the goal of the upward calling until we wear the crown of righteousness. We must keep pressing forward; this means aiming towards complete sanctification, learning the principles of the doctrines of Christ. **Hebrews 6:1-2 KJV** 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, **[2]** Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. These things are the basics of Christianity and should be known by all.

We are required to press forward to know more about Christ, have fellowship with Him, live out His life, and finally make it to heaven. If we haven't gotten there, we must keep pressing on; this is the formula for perfection.

Similar to those running in a race, they keep running until they receive the prize. We must keep running until we receive the prize; nothing should stop us. Our focus should be heaven, and we will not stop until we get there. Once we make up our minds that heaven is our goal, we will keep pressing on, ready to lay aside every weight of sin that hinders us. **Colossians 3:2 KJV** Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Paul encourages us to run the race set before us with our total focus on the Lord Jesus Christ. Even Jesus, in His time on earth, focused on the joy set before Him—the cross. He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now seated in the place of authority. A great reward awaits all those who make it to that glorious Kingdom, far greater and incomparable to the sufferings and shames we may experience on earth. **Hebrews 12:1-2 KJV** 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, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

It is wise for every Christian to follow this formula for perfection, to reign with Christ on that final day. Keep looking unto Jesus Christ, the author, and finisher of our faith. There is abundant joy awaiting us, only if we are

ready to reach forward. Never become complacent with where you are; as long as you are not yet dead, take things seriously and do all it will take to reach there.

Say, *I will not lose my heavenly focus*

How to reach the Future.

1. **Be genuinely born again:** this cannot be over-emphasized. False salvation cannot pay you, in fact it will hinder you from making it at last. Your salvation must be genuine and total. **John 3:3 KJV** Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

2. **Seek for the meat of God's word and not the milk:** it is unfortunate that many people find it convenient to continue to take milk even after getting saved for years, they hate the meat of God's word and would run away from it. This set of people are not reaching towards perfection, they have chosen to stop at the bus stop of spiritual paralysis. They have rendered themselves spiritually handicapped. There are those who have been saved for years yet find it hard to digest the raw and sound teachings of Christ, these are wheelbarrow Christians, shallow minded and carnal. Just like the disciples who left the Lord Jesus Christ. **John 6:60,66 KJV** Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? **[66]** From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

3. **Make heaven your priority:** in all, seek the kingdom of God above all things. **Matthew 6:33 KJV** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

"Seek first" this is the right priority, it must be made your number one! Then, you will become focused and not deviate, the more you are still alive and have not gotten there yet, then you must know that you cannot stop. Your bus stop is that heavenly city, this is what it means to stay focused until you reach the goal.

This was what Paul meant by saying **Philippians 3:14 KJV** I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He says that he pressed towards the goal of the upward calling, you must also press towards the goal and not faint on the way or relent, making Jesus Christ the focus as you look up to Him daily in your walk with Him.

We have come to the end of this study may we all make it at last to the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ's name, Amen

Invitation

If you know that you are still living in sin and you are ready to repent and begin to live your life in strict obedience to God so that you can overcome every sin in your life to make heaven, please place your right hand on your chest and say this prayer with your mouth.

Say,

"Lord Jesus, I accept You as my personal Lord and Savior. I believe that You died for me and took away my sins so that I will not face the penalty of them. I surrender my life to You today, and I make a decision to obey and follow You. Come into my life now and accept me as Your child. Thank You for saving me, in Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen."

Congratulations, now you are saved. If you prayed this short prayer, please WhatsApp +2347067511039 and let me know that you have just been saved. I want to have a word with you. God bless you!

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