

deliverance from the remaining power and very presence of sin! In the meanwhile, we are called to a perfection of maturity. And this maturity is the product of growth, of development in holiness.

On the one hand, perfection is likeness to the Father's moral perfection, a likeness only imperfectly attainable in this life. On the other hand, perfection is spiritual maturity, a maturity that is imperfectly attainable in this life.

Chester Tulga writes:

Maturity is . . . the spiritual maturity of the believer who is an adult in Christian experience. Here . . . is a perfection which is the product of the years, the disciplines, the trials, the victories of the Christian life. Here is a mature spiritual wisdom, here is a spiritual understanding, here is a maturity of judgment, a ripening of conduct which cannot be received in a moment, but can only be realized by years of faithful discipleship . . .

So perfection is not a condition but a direction. It is not a state but a movement. . . Christian perfection is maturity of Christian experience. It is a paradoxical perfection; the perfection which steadily presses on to perfection.

What we have said about Christian maturity relates to progress in holiness, and what we have said about progress in holiness pertains to the adding of godliness in our character and subsequent conduct. Peter says, "and to perseverance, godliness."

F. The sixth quality that we are to add to our faith is brotherly love.

In verse 7 Peter says, "and to godliness, brotherly love."

Here we understand Peter to be speaking of spiritual siblings. All believers have been united to Christ and to each other. As a result of their spiritual birth, they are redemptive children of God and spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ. Whatever our other differences, we are all one family in Christ!

In 1 Peter 2:17 we are exhorted to "love the brotherhood"; and in Romans 12:10 we are encouraged to "be devoted to one another in brotherly love." In 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 Paul reminds us: