

The Complete Christian

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God can complete or satisfy the basic needs that we have, and He can also help us to overcome our weaknesses, and make us complete in our strength. What do we need? We have a need for the knowledge and wisdom through which we can live our lives like Christ, and be what God wants us to be. Colossians 1:9-10 reads, "For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding." God will give us the knowledge that we need to know how to deal properly with life.

We need desperately to feel the freedom that God gives us from the bondage of sin and the guilt that is associated with it. In Colossians 1:13-14 we read, "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." The word redemption indicates that there was a price to be paid by someone for this freedom, that we had to be redeemed. We read from 1 Peter 1:18-19, "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." So Christ paid the terrible price, and we are now forgiven.

We also need to be reconciled to God again, to re-establish the relationship of love with him. In Colossians 1:21-22 we read, "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation." We do not have to feel anymore the terrible strain of a relationship that is not right. We have been enemies of God, but we can through Christ be reunited with him, as though nothing had ever happened. We can also, through this power, be reconciled to our fellow men, as well. This gives us the "peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phillipians 4:7)."

The complete Christian is also someone who is complete in their strengths. In 2 Tim 3:16-17 we read, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." It is quite natural for us to feel very lacking and inadequate about ourselves, especially when we think about serving God. But God here offers us a chance to be complete, to build up our weak areas so that we can become more well-rounded. He tells us that we may be complete, equipped, or able to handle, any service that we need to render. The church today is filled with specialists, whom, of course we call in when we see a need somewhere. We think we cannot perform the same service because, well, we just don't have that talent! But I believe that God offers us the power to develop ourselves in every way, so that we can help his cause in many different areas. God asks us in Colossians 1:10, "to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work." And we know very well Phillipians 4:13, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me." We must try to make ourselves more complete in God's service.

The other sense that I think we are complete in our strengths through Christ is that we can handle any problems that come our way in life. We read in Colossians 2:6, "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught." Being strengthened, or built up, is the key to living the Christian life. In Colossians 1:11, we read, "being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience". Then in the last verse of this chapter is perhaps the most powerful verses in the New Testament, "To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me." The simple truth is that we can conquer any problem that we encounter through the tremendous strength that Christ offers us.

With the salvation that God gives us, we are made complete in one last sense. This incomplete, imperfect, corruptible body is changed into one that will never die, but will live, complete, with God for all eternity. We can really only be truly complete when we are standing before the throne of God. But while on earth, God offers a completeness that can only be had through Christ, and that gives us the best life that can be lived.

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