

Apostle Paul was an extremely aggressive gospel preacher

Acts 9:19,20,23

For some days he was with the disciples at Damascus. **And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.”** **When many days had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him,**

Acts 9:28,29 So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, **preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.** And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. **But they were seeking to kill him.**

Acts 14:8,15,19,20 Now at Lystra . . . we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, **they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.** But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.

Do we exercise the gospel preaching in our daily life? If not, it is difficult for us to be perfected by anyone.

Eph 4:11-12 And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to perfect the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

Col 4:17 And say to Archippus, “See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.”

There is an important service in church life is to perfect the saints to fulfill their ministries received from the Lord.

Eph 2:20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the corner-stone,

The growth of life in the saints is quite related to how they abide in the teachings and fellowship of the apostles. **During the Coronavirus period, do we desire and pay great attention to watch the messages given by the servant of the Lord?**

Apostle Paul desired and needed to perfect the saints for the spreading of Lord's testimonies in many cities:

Apostle Paul perfected the saints in three aspects:

1. To perfect each individual with care;
2. To perfect those who might have their own ministry.
3. To perfect each local church's corporate testimony;

Apostle Paul's Labour on the Perfecting of the Saints

For one who perfects others, he perfects people with his being and living not just their teachings (2nd Tim.3:10-11,14). For example, the entire new testament did not mention how Paul perfected Luke. Luke had been Paul's doctor for many years, yet he could write the book of Luke and Acts, showing that the perfecting he received might have all taken place unknowingly.

~ AD 50- AD 68

To perfect each individual with care

To benefit Mark's growth as a whole, Paul accepted him, rejected him and even encouraged him. Thus, Mark eventually became his fellow co-worker.

Acts 12:25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had completed their service, bringing with them John, whose other name was Mark.

Acts 15:36-38 And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the the Lord, and see how they are." Now Barnabas wanted to take with then John called Mark. But Paul thought best not to take them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

2 Timothy 4:11 Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. [preach the gospel or serve]

By working at Aquila's workplace, not only he preached the gospel to both Aquila and Priscilla, but the gospel also was spread from Corinth to Ephesus because of their labor together.

Acts 18:1-4 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. **And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla,** because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. And he went to see them, and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Acts 18:18-19 After this, **Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila...**And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

Aquila and Priscilla even brought in Apollos. Moreover, they went to Rome for the testimony of the Church in Rome.

Acts 18:24-27 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, **but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.** And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed.

Romans 16:3,5 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ... Greet also the church in their house (at Rome).

To perfect each individual with care

He also cared for Onesimus— not only did he preach gospel to him, but also perfected the humanity of Onesimus. (please see my other homework “Philemon”

Philemon 9-13,16 yet for love’s sake I prefer to appeal to you— I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus-

I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I became in my imprisonment.

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.

I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart.

I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf....

no longer as a bondservant but more than a bondservant, as a beloved brother

Paul gave special attention and perfection to those who may grow onto a servant of the Lord with a ministry

1st Tim 1:2 To **Timothy**, my true child in the faith: . . .

Timothy is Paul's true child (1st Tim 1:2, 2nd Tim 1:2). Not only he loves Paul, also honor Paul. Paul testified for him and said that he loved Lord, was a faithful brother, labored with Paul on gospel, and served Paul like a son to his father (Phil 2:22). **Timothy** and Paul together experienced suffering and prison. When Paul was released first time, **Timothy** was also released (Heb 13:23), and this indicates that when Paul was in prison, maybe **Timothy** was also in prison but at another place. At AD 65 when Paul was released at Rome, he asked **Timothy** to stay at Ephesus, served the churches around that area. At Ephesus **Timothy** learned the work of an Apostle. Around AD 67 before the martyr of Paul, he asked **Timothy** to come to his side, bring Mark, and the cloak, also the books, and above all the parchments (2nd Tim 4:9, 11, 13), this indicates that Paul needed the support of **Timothy** before his martyr.

Heb 13:23 You should know that our brother **Timothy** has been released, with whom I shall see you if he comes soon.

Paul gave special attention and perfection to those who may grow onto a servant of the Lord with a ministry

1st Cor 4:17 That is why I sent you **Timothy**, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

1st Cor 16:10 When **Timothy** comes, see that you **put him at ease among you**, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am.

2nd Tim 1:7 for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

2nd Tim 1:4 As I remember your (**Timothy**) tears, . . .

Acts 16:1-3

Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named **Timothy**, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted **Timothy** to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. .

To perfect each individual with care

Titus 1:4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith: ..

He cared for Titus and the benefit for the testimony of truth, so that he strongly contended against those whom he called false brothers regarding the issue of circumcision.

Gal 2:1-5 Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, **taking Titus along with me.** I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even **Titus, who was with me,** was not forced to be circumcised though brought in-who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery-to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

To perfect each individual with care

Paul cared about Titus and the Church in Corinth.

2nd Cor 12:18 I urged **Titus** to go (to Corinth),....

2nd Cor 2:12-13 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though a door was opened for me in the Lord, my spirit was not at rest because **I did not find my brother Titus** there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia.

2nd Cor 7:5-7 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn-fighting without and fear within. But God, who comforts the downcast, **comforted us by the coming of Titus**, and not only by this coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.

Paul gave special attention and perfection to those who may grow onto a servant of the Lord with a ministry

1st Thes 1:1 Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God . . .

1st Thes 2:6 though we (Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy) could have made demands **as apostles of Christ.**

Titus 1:5 This is why I left you (**Titus**) in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and **appoint elders** in every town as I directed you

Both Timothy and Titus grew and had a ministry of an apostle.

To perfect each individual with care

Acts 20: 3,4 There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. **Sopater** the Berean, son of Pyrrhus, accompanied him; and of the **Thessalonians**, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and **the Asians**, **Tychicus** and Trophimus.

Col 4:7,9 **Tychicus** will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

Eph 6:21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, **Tychicus** the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything.

2nd Tim 4:21 Do your best to come before winter. **Eubulus** sends greetings to you, as **do Pudens** and **Linus** and **Claudia** and all the brothers.

In Paul's labor he always aimed to perfect the saints so that they became pillars and joined his service team.

The traditional but old concept are to focus on meetings and on the rich supplies in the meeting. Yes, they are important, but Paul taught us in the Bible was to shepherd saints in the daily life and not by his words alone rather by his living (2nd Tim.3:10,11) as an example. In fact, Paul's way was to raise up spiritual children with spiritual companions that should be the guidance of how we shepherd the saints in the church life.

2nd Tim 3:10,11 You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, **my persecutions and sufferings** that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

To many local churches apostle Paul also labored to perfect them corporately.

Just as he wrote letters to the churches of Rome, Corinth, Galatia (the churches), Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse, and Thessalonica.

John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that **you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide**, so that **whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.**

The first exercise to show that we desire to be perfected is to have many prayers (individually or with spiritual companions and teams and the church). Such prayers enable us to be one with the Lord and the church. Then it is the exercise to preach gospel and accompany people.

A good indication to show that one is perfected in some degree, it is to see whether his fruit abide in the church life or not. Unfortunately many many saints do not have such an testimony. **It is not what they cannot, rather do not pay attention to the many prayers and exercises mentioned above to have such a great blessing to them and the church.**