

## A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR

### **TEXT: I PETER 5:10**

#### **Introduction:**

1. The apostle Peter concludes his first epistle with this beautiful prayer: "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (5:10).
2. Matthew Henry calls it "a most weighty prayer," and indeed it is.
3. This prayer is addressed to "the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus."
4. I will follow the four-point outline here in verse 10, and I hope it will be a blessing to you this New Year's Eve.

#### **I. PERFECTED**

1. The world uses the word "perfect" differently than the way the Bible uses it. Here the word means, "to complete."
2. In Scripture, perfection is a goal. Our Lord said in Matthew 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
3. When God saved us, He "called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus." That "eternal glory" is now our goal.
4. I was driving in my car and I heard an atheist on the radio explain how he believed everything ended at the grave. What a miserable thought!
5. When we look at this prayer in I Peter 5:10, we are reminded of God's divine intervention. It is God who calls us, and makes us perfect, and establishes us, etc.
6. Our Lord said in Luke 6:40, "The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master."
7. The apostle Paul says in II Corinthians 13:11, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
8. Hebrews 13:20 and 21 says, "Now the God of peace... Make you perfect in every good work to do his will..."
9. Perfection is our goal.
10. Hebrews 6:1 says, "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection..."
11. D. Edmond Hiebert said, "The basic idea of the verb (translated "make you perfect") is the thought of making whole by fitting together, to order and arrange properly. When applied to that which is weak and defective, it

denotes setting right what has gone wrong, to restore to a former condition, whether mending broken nets or setting broken bones" (*I Peter*).

12. According to the Bible, this perfection can only come "after that ye have suffered awhile" (I Peter 5:10).
13. This is the theme of I Peter -- victory over suffering. The word "suffering" occurs many times in this Epistle (cf. 2:21; 4:19).
14. The Lord uses trials and troubles to rid us of our imperfections, in order to make us perfect (cf. 1:7).
15. "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect..." (5:10).

## II. STABLISHED

1. *Strong's Concordance* says this word "stablish" means, "to make stable, place firmly, set fast, fix, to strengthen, make firm."
2. As the pastor of this church I want to see all of our members go on to perfection (not go on to backsliding), and I want to see them established -- i.e., stable, standing firmly, set fast, fixed in their convictions, strengthened in their faith, etc.
3. In the midst of fiery trials, God provides the stability we need to go forward.
4. The word translated "stablish" means "fixed." Abraham told the rich man, "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed" (Luke 16:26).
5. That great gulf, that chasm between heaven and hell, is "fixed." It is "set fast." It is "made firm."
6. Peter uses this same word here in our text. After we have suffered a while, God wants to "stablish" us, i.e., stabilize and fix us firm.
7. Things do not look good going into 2012. Our economy has not been this bad since the Great Depression. Many are out of work.
8. In addition to that, some Christians are suffering physically. Many are grieving over the loss of loved ones, etc.
5. God's Word says, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (5:10).
9. God promises us that the trials are only temporary -- just "a while," and God promises to "stablish" us, i.e., make us stable, and to strengthen us.
10. Which brings us to our third verb, "strengthen."

## III. STRENGTHENED

1. You will notice these four verbs are very similar. Spurgeon said they are like four stepping stones, very close to each other.

2. He called them "four sparkling jewels set in a black foil," the black setting being, "After that ye have suffered awhile."
3. This is the only time this Greek verb for "strengthen" is used in the Bible. It is yet another promise that God will strengthen us as we face trials and troubles in life.
4. FB Meyer said, "He may not take away the suffering or the temptation, but He will give more grace, communicating his own strength; so that the soul may even glorify God for infirmity and trial, and say gladly: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?'" (*Tried By Fire*).

#### **IV. SETTLED**

1. We are settled on a firm foundation.  
We're standing on the Rock of Ages;  
Safe from every storms that rages...
2. These four verbs -- perfected, stablished, strengthened, and settled -- emphasize our security in Christ.
3. David said, "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalm 18:2).
4. The Lord Jesus said, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24, 25).
5. God wants us to stay settled on the Rock of Ages, but some Christians are shaky and unsettled.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Spurgeon said, "Oh, how many there are that are never settled. The tree which should be transplanted every week would soon die. Nay, if it were moved, no matter how skillfully, once every year, no gardener would expect fruit from it. How many Christians there be that are transplanting themselves constantly, even as to their doctrinal sentiments. There be some who generally believe according to the last speaker; and there be others who do not know what they do believe, but they believe almost anything that is told them."
2. Don't be unsettled. Be firmly settled upon the Word of God. Make up your mind you are going to read it through verse by verse, chapter by chapter this year.

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