



We have journeyed together throughout this Series examining **the five Life Stages**.

We began with **Stage One** of being called into a saving faith with Christ.

We then were invited by God to learn the ways of godliness and growing in obedient love **Stage Two**.

In **Stage Three**, God invited us to a love relationship that was marked by greater intimacy with God. The idols of the heart were brought to the surface, and we were being purified by Him.

In **Stage Four**, God invited us to sacrificial love in order to usher in His kingdom here on earth.

As we continue to allow Him to purify us, we are invited into an intimate union with Christ to become light and love to the world **Stage Five**.

Knowing the terrain of the soul helps us to stay focused on our singular goal-to love God with all our heart, mind, and *soul* so that the kingdom of God will go forward.

No matter the stage we are in, we must continue to abide moment by moment in Him, keeping our gaze fixed upon His face and allowing Him to transform us.

CONCLUSION

- ✚ We have a high degree of identification with Christ and a willingness to lay down our lives.
- ✚ We have become, by God's grace, perfect through suffering.
- ✚ We experience a deep union with Christ and want nothing more than to dwell with Him.
- ✚ We are seen by others as embodying God's light and love.
- ✚ We share in the sufferings of Christ that the gospel may go forward.
- ✚ We no longer fear death but rather see it as the full realization of seeing Christ face to face.

Resurrection

1. Excellence of 2. Found in Him. 3. Which is from. 4. Know Him. 5.



**PEEPLS VALLEY
BAPTIST CHURCH**
Together we are becoming!
One Spirit

Stage Five: Intimate Love

[Being Light & Love for the World]
BEING

Philippians 3:7-11

August 7, 2022 / 10 Av 5782

Characteristics of your Transformation

As soldiers of the Cross, we are completely abandoned to God in Divine Union

Obstacles of your Transformation

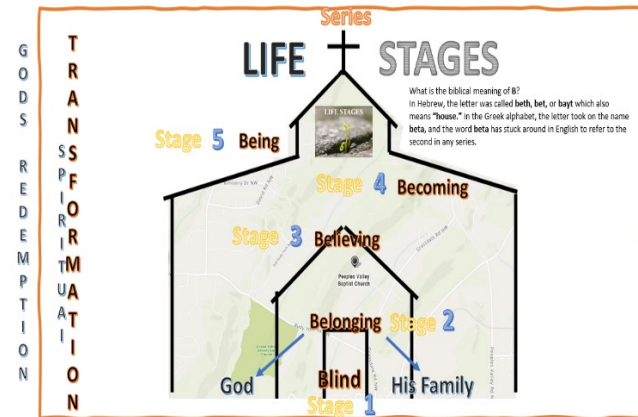
We may find others misunderstanding us and struggle with loneliness.

Transformation in Suffering

We share in Christ's sufferings.

Movement to the Next Stage

Coming into a deeper realization of the thin veil between eternity and the present moment.



Philippians 3:7-11 (KJV)

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith

of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: **10** That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; **11** If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (KJV)

INTRODUCTION:

Being a Christian believer cost Paul a lot. He lost his status, he lost his prestige among former peers, and he landed in a foreign prison cell, facing possible execution. So, what did he gain from his choice? The Christian life is one of growth and progress toward the goal of becoming like Christ. The longer we are saved, the more we should resemble our heavenly Father. When we first get saved, our lives will still have a lot of the baggage of the world, but each day some of that baggage should fall by the wayside and our walk with Christ should grow stronger.

Life Stages Points

1. Knowledge of Christ

- You make choices in life, but choices also make you; every choice count.
- Paul made a choice to follow Jesus, and he saw the world differently. What once seemed dull now shone with meaning, and things that had meaning became dull.
- The Bible describes believers as people who know God. Paul had tremendous knowledge, but the knowledge of Christ surpassed everything.
- Paul received the knowledge of Christ the same way we all do:
 - First, he was born—he received a physical knowledge of life and the world.
 - Second, he was born again—he received a spiritual knowledge of new life in Christ.
- Inquiry: The Lord wrote two books: The Word and the world (creation). Discuss the similarities and differences between physical knowledge (based in the world) and spiritual knowledge (based in God). Can you have one without the other?

2. Position in Christ

- Paul describes Christians as being "found in [Christ]" v. 9. This phrase denotes our unity in Christ's life, death, and resurrection; Christ's life is in us.
- Practically, being *in Christ* means that when God looks at you, He sees Christ.
- Inquiry: In our close communion with Christ, He is in us by the Spirit, and we are in Him by the Spirit. There is both a physical and spiritual union. Think of a house: you can be in your home, and your home can be in you (memories, feelings, etc.). What are some other things that you can *be in* and are also *in you* (for example, oxygen)?

3. Righteousness by Christ

- *Righteousness* indicates a condition of being right before God, accepted by Him. It can't be produced by good works; it must be provided by grace and received by faith.
- Paul tried to get right in a host of ways: religious heritage, legalism, and rule-keeping. By worldly standards, he succeeded; by Christ's, he failed.
- Righteousness is not achieved by determination, but by *imputation*—the Lord places it in you and credits it to you. It is the great exchange **2 Corinthians 5:21**.
- The worst form of badness is human goodness used as a substitute for true righteousness.
- Inquiry: Why is the biblical teaching of Christ's righteous imputation essential to the Christian faith? Without it, can we please God perfectly? Why not?

4. Fellowship with Christ

- Paul never came to a place in his life when he had enough of knowing Jesus; he always wanted more of Christ. The initial saving knowledge of Christ became Paul's lifelong pursuit.
- Paul longed for deeper fellowship with Christ v. 10:
 - A personal fellowship: "that I may know Him"
 - A powerful fellowship: "the power of His resurrection"
 - A painful fellowship: "the fellowship of His sufferings"
- All the sufferings Paul experienced only deepened his fellowship with Jesus because He was one who suffered far worse.
- Sorrow is one of life's greatest fellowship enhancers. A trouble-free life is a shallow life.
- Inquiry: A common word used in the Bible for *now* is *ginóskó*. It means knowledge by learning or experience. How can our knowledge of Christ be expanded by learning and experience? Give examples.

5. Glory like Christ

- Paul was a humble man, saying, "**I am the least of the apostles**" **1 Corinthians 15:9**; **Ephesians 3:8**.
- Paul understood that something greater awaited him: glory, the ultimate benefit our salvation—the blissful vision of seeing Jesus face to face. This is every believer's ultimate benefit: heaven with Jesus.
- As Christians, we are part of the greatest organization in the world, and our retirement package is unequalled.
- Inquiry: Though the Bible doesn't go into detail about heaven, there are some unique passages found in **Revelation 21** and **22** concerning the new heaven and new earth. Note some of the unique facets of our future glory in these chapters. What did you find?

Five Benefits of BEING Believers

I. **Knowledge** "Excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus" v. 8

II. **Position** "And be found in Him" v. 9

III. **Righteousness** "The righteousness which is from God" v. 9

IV. **Fellowship** "That I may know Him..." v. 10

V. **Glory** "The resurrection from the dead" v. 11

Application

Connect Up: The word Paul used for *righteousness* in Philippians is *dikaíosuné*. It means an act of equity and justification. Why must we depend solely on Christ, receiving Him as Savior, to have a right relationship with God the Father? **Romans 1:1-17**.

Connect In: The universal church should concern itself with Christian knowledge—in both learning and experience **2 Peter 3:18**. Discuss ways we can grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ (for example, Bible study and service).

Connect Out: Knowing that Jesus is the only way to the Father, how should this truth affect your relationship to nonbelievers? Other than evangelism (which is primary), what other practical things can you do to show the love of God in Christ to the world?