

Philippians 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Analysis

Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you (Ὅσοι οὖν τέλειοι, τοῦτο φρονῶμεν· καὶ εἴ τι ἑτέρως φρονεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ὁ θεὸς ὑμῖν ἀποκαλύψει, Hosoi oun teleioi, touto phronōmen; kai ei ti heterōs phroneite, kai touto ho theos hymin apokalypsei)—Teleioi ("perfect, mature") seems paradoxical after v. 12 ("not already perfect"). Resolution: teleioi here means spiritually mature, not sinlessly perfect. Mature believers recognize they haven't arrived (v. 12) and press forward (vv. 13-14). Touto phronōmen ("let us think this")—adopt this mindset. Ei ti heterōs phroneite ("if you think differently")—Paul allows for disagreement but trusts ho theos...apokalypsei ("God will reveal")—divine illumination corrects error. This balances strong conviction with gracious patience toward those at different maturity stages.

Historical Context

Ancient philosophers debated perfection's attainability. Stoics claimed sages achieved perfection; Skeptics denied knowability of truth. Paul's middle way: maturity recognizes imperfection and pursues growth. 'God shall reveal' trusts Spirit's illuminating work (John 16:13; 1 Cor 2:10-12). Early church had diverse maturity levels; Paul calls for unity in pursuit while allowing Spirit to correct misunderstandings over time.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How can you be 'perfect' (teleios—mature) while acknowledging you haven't 'already attained' (v. 12)?
2. What theological or practical issues might require waiting for God to 'reveal' clarity?
3. How do you balance strong conviction with gracious patience toward less mature believers?

Interlinear Text

Ὅσοι	οὖν	τέλειοι	τοῦτο	φρονεῖτε	καὶ	εἰ	τι
as many as	us therefore	be perfect	this	Let	and	G1487	G5100
G3745	G3767	G5046	G5124	G5426	G2532		
ἑτέρως	φρονεῖτε	καὶ	τοῦτο	ὁ	θεὸς	ὑμῖν	ἀποκαλύψει·
otherwise	Let	and	this	G3588	God	unto you	shall reveal
G2088	G5426	G2532	G5124		G2316	G5213	G601

Additional Cross-References

John 7:17 (References God): If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

Galatians 5:10 (Parallel theme): I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

1 Corinthians 2:6 (Parallel theme): Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

Isaiah 35:8 (Parallel theme): And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

Colossians 4:12 (References God): Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

1 Corinthians 14:20 (Parallel theme): Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

Matthew 5:48 (Parallel theme): Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Hebrews 5:14 (Parallel theme): But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Colossians 1:28 (Parallel theme): Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Romans 15:1 (Parallel theme): We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.