

Psalm 37:37 -

Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.

In closing, we would like to tell you a story of how a young girl explained the Christian walk of Enoch to her friend. She said that at 65 years old, Enoch walked with God for the next 300 years and the journey started at Enoch's home. Each year Enoch's character got closer and closer to God, that one day God said to Enoch "You are now closer to My home than your home." So God took Enoch to heaven. What a beautiful illustration of how our walk should be with God on our journey to heaven. It is our prayer that this study will help you understand Biblical character perfection, for God's chosen people who are faithful to His word, in this final generation that will be alive at the second coming of Christ.

Testimonies To Ministers p.488 -

Through the grace of Christ every soul must work out his own righteousness, maintaining a living connection with the Father and the Son.



1 Kings 8:61: "Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day."

This study has been compiled by Higher Level Ministries

All Bible texts quoted are from the King James Bible

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Search the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy

If righteousness is right doing, and it is by our actions that all will be judged, then our character is revealed by what we do. It's not what a man says but what a man does, in harmony with God's revealed will that counts. Do our works show whether our faith is genuine or not?

Perfection
and what the
Bible says...

HIGHER LEVEL MINISTRIES

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus

Philippians Chapter 2 verse 5

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The concept of “perfection” is heavily maligned by new theology advocates as something very bad. Yet it merely consists in on-going obedience to God’s law. What could be wrong with that?

Frankly, it is the love of sin which causes people to avoid living a good, clean, pure life.

There are three concepts of perfection viewed by the Christian world. Those views are No 1. “Perfectionism”, No 2. “We cannot be perfect because...” and No 3. “The Biblical teaching on the perfection of Character.” In this study we will look at each concept.



Let's begin...

Part 1. “Perfectionism”

There is a difference between “perfectionism” and “perfection.” Perfectionism is the tendency to do every little thing in a certain, often strict way. This can be a problem as an individual will then tend to rely on his or her own works to “prove” her faith. Does the Bible support such a view?

Scripture Study No.1: *Mark 7:1-13* -

1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. 4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the...

Christ's Object Lessons p.65, 66 -

As in nature, so in grace; there can be no life without growth. The plant must either grow or die. As its growth is silent and imperceptible, but continuous, so is the development of the Christian life. At every stage of development our life may be perfect; yet if God’s purpose for us is fulfilled, there will be continual advancement. Sanctification is the work of a lifetime.

Acts of the Apostles p.531 -

None need fail of attaining, in his sphere, to perfection of Christian character. By the sacrifice of Christ, provision has been made for the believer to receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. God calls upon us to reach the standard of perfection and places before us the example of Christ’s character.

2 Testimonies p.171 -

God has not apportioned you your lot to merely watch over and care for yourselves. You are required to minister to, and watch over, others, and in this exercise you will manifest those evils in your character which need correcting, and will strengthen those weak points that need strengthening. This is the part of the work we have to perform; not impatiently, fretfully, unwillingly, but cheerfully, gladly, in order to reach Christian perfection.

Desire of Ages p.311 -

God’s ideal for His children is higher than the highest human thought can reach. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” This command is a promise. The plan of redemption contemplates our complete recovery from the power of Satan. Christ always separates the contrite soul from sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil, and He has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning. The tempter’s agency is not to be accounted an excuse for one wrong act. Satan is jubilant when he hears the professed followers of Christ making excuses for their deformity of character. It is these excuses that lead to sin. There is no excuse for sinning. A holy temper, a Christlike life, is accessible to every repenting, believing child of God. The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness.

Maranatha p.224 -

Everyone who by faith obeys God’s commandments will reach the condition of sinlessness which Adam lived before his transgression.

2. We must walk by faith:

Hebrews 11:6 - *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

2 Corinthians 5:7 - *For we walk by faith, not by sight.*

3. We must walk in the spirit:

Romans 8:1 - *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Galatians 5:16 - *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*

4. We must walk in truth:

1 Kings 2:4 - *So that the Lord may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.*

3 John 4 - *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*

Spirit of Prophecy References:

Here are several Spirit of Prophecy statements on perfection. Here is how it can be fulfilled in our lives:

Christ's Object Lessons p.315 -

God requires perfection of His children. His law is a transcript of His own character, and it is the standard of all character. This infinite standard is presented to all that there may be no mistake in regard to the kind of people whom God will have to compose His kingdom. The life of Christ on earth was a perfect expression of God's law, and when those who claim to be children of God become Christlike in character, they will be obedient to God's commandments.

commandments of men **8** For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. **9** And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. **10** For Moses said, honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. **11** But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, it is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. **12** And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; **13** Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

In this conversation between Jesus and the Scribes and Pharisees, Jesus points out their "perfectionism" or "legalism" in the following nine areas:

1. Washing their hands often.
2. If they didn't wash, they didn't eat.
3. holding the tradition of the elders.
4. Washing of pots and cups etc.
5. Corban - using "a gift" to violate God's 5th commandment.
6. Worshipping God in vain.
7. Teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.
8. Laying aside the commandments of God.
9. Many other things not mentioned in this conversation.

Scripture Study No.2: **Matthew 23:1-6 & 13-15** -

1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, **2** Saying The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: **3** All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. **4** For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. **5** But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, **6** And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. **13** But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in...

14 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. 15 Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

In this second conversation, Jesus again, points out their “perfectionism” or “legalism” in the following nine areas:

1. Sit in Moses' seat influencing as a teacher.
2. Do not do after their works.
3. Bind heavy burdens.
4. Their works are to be seen of men, not God..
5. They are hypocrites.
6. They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men.
7. The three woes.
8. Make long prayers.
9. Converting believers but making them two fold the children of hell.

What Fuels Perfectionism?

What we call “perfectionism” is not the same as the pursuit of perfection, though sometimes the lines can be blurred. When we pursue perfection, we are determined to do something as well as possible within a given set of talents, resources, and time limits. Perfectionism is a pride based compulsion that fuels our obsessive fixation on doing something perfectly.

What's Behind Our Perfectionistic Tendencies?

We're complex beings, so it's rarely just one thing. In unusual cases, its primary cause is a clinical disorder or spiritual bondage. But as a rule, perfectionism nearly always has its roots in our desire for spiritual acceptance. In other words, it's not really perfectionism, but taking perfection to the extreme whereby the person becomes unbalanced in how they live and view the word of God. Perfectionism is a common-to-man temptation we all face in our fight against sin.

Why did Paul pray night and day? **1 Thessalonians 3:10** - _____

What can the blood of the everlasting covenant do for us?

Hebrews 13:20-21 - _____

What can patience bring to us? **James 1:4-5** - _____

What can the blood of the everlasting covenant do for us?

Hebrews 13:20-21 - _____

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There are four principles that are pleasing to God and in accordance to His will, that we must consider when we are talking about Biblical character perfection.

1. We must walk away from evil:

Psalms 1: 1-2 - *1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

Proverbs 14:16 - *A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.*

NOTE: In the case of the patriarchs it is clear that obedience and faith is what makes a person “perfect” and right in his generation in the sight of God, the Bible makes it plain that they were perfect in their generation while having a fallen nature. Enoch’s relationship and walk with God was so perfect that God translated him, meaning that his physical body had to be changed in order to be taken to heaven.

Enoch is the first person ever recorded to be translated, showing that it is possible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to live righteously in a fallen world. Remember Enoch lived in a world that was so corrupt that God had to destroy it and so we have no excuse to say that we can not live righteously or attain Biblical perfection of character in our generation.

Why would God ask us to do something that we cannot attain?

Matthew 5:48 - _____

What is Biblical perfection? **James 3:2** - _____

What does Paul say about the principles of Christ? **Hebrews 6:1** - _____

Why is charity an important part of our character? **Colossians 3:14** - _____

How do we perfect holiness? **2 Corinthians 7:1** - _____

How perfect does God want us to become? **1 John 2:5** - _____

And the wonderful news is that God wants us to live in freedom from its tyrannical rule over us and to live in obedience to His will, as He guides our lives through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.

PART 2. “We Cannot Be Perfect Because...”

There are some in Christianity who hold to the belief that we cannot be perfect because it requires our physical bodies to be perfect and not subject to the fallen nature. While they understand that a man can live righteously and do the right thing and might attain a perfect character, he can never be truly perfect because his fallen nature (the physical body) is subject to death. So then to be perfect, in their understanding, is when both the character and the physical body are perfect. To them this can only be attained at the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. And the texts to support their view are:

a). Did man’s nature change after the fall? b). How did it change?

Text Ref. No.1: The Fall. Genesis 3:1-7 - a. _____

b. _____

Who’s sin caused the fall of mankind?

Text Ref. No.2: Character. 1 Timothy 2:13-14. Romans 5:12,14,17-19 - _____

Let’s look at God’s three-fold approach to the fall in Genesis 3:

Investigation - v8-14. **Judgement** - v16-19 and **Punishment** - v22-24.

Who came in the likeness of sinful flesh?

Text Ref. No.3: Nature. Romans 8:3 - _____

Who was made like us?

Text Ref. No.4: Nature. Hebrews 2:9, 14-17 - _____

What mind-set does a person have when they are born in the flesh?

Text Ref. No.5: Nature. Romans 8:5-8 - _____

Why do we need to be born again?

Text Ref. No.6: Nature. John 3:3, Romans 8:13-17 - _____

How many kinds of bodies are there?

Text Ref. No.6: Character. 1 Corinthians 15:39-45 - _____

When will our bodies be changed?

Text Ref. No.7: The 2nd Coming. 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 - _____

Although this view has two parts (perfection of character and perfection of the physical body) the Bible only supports the first position but it does not support the second position. While it is true that our physical bodies and our physical natures will be changed at the second coming of Christ, the Bible never includes being “perfect” in regards to the changing of our physical bodies when it comes to the plan of salvation, and so the second part of this view must be rejected.

PART 3. “The Biblical Teaching On The Perfection Of Character.”

For many Christians today, the idea of being perfect is completely alien to them, especially when the majority of the Christian world teach that a persons perfection is found in Christ Jesus. While this is true, God still requires us to strive to be perfect as believers in Christ and puts forth a number of Bible texts to help us on our Christian walk in a sinful world.

Philippians 2:5 -

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:13 -

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

Romans 8:37 -

We are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Matthew 19:26 -

But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Ephesians 3:20 -

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

How did God see each of these Bible characters in their generation?

Text References No.1: Enoch - Genesis 5:21-24.

Noah - Genesis 6:9; 7:1.

Abram - Genesis 17:1.

Job - Job 1:1

Why did God see them in this way?

Text References No.2: Enoch - Hebrews 11:5.

Noah - Genesis 6:11-13 & 22 & Hebrews 11:7.

Abram - Hebrews 11:8-10.

Job - Job 1:1 & 8; 2:3.
