

A WORD ON PERFECTIONISM

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Last updated November 13, 2024

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines perfection as "a disposition to regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable." Perfectionism is a practice of this behavior. In the natural, this practice drives a person's desire to be perfect in the public eye. That "public eye" may be the actual public, extended family, or high-demanding parents. In the spiritual, Satan uses perfectionism to pull our desires away from God convincing us that we deserve better, can do better, or be better. While God may say one thing, spirits of perfectionism will say another – causing us to question ourselves, criticize our calling, and judge ourselves outside of what God has already declared us worthy of having.

Spirits of perfectionism affected several people in the Bible, including Jonah. Jonah argued with God about his calling because he felt the people of Nineveh did not deserve a chance to repent for their sins. He felt that they did not get it right the first time, they perish like everyone else. Scripture tells us that Jonah avoided his calling to ministry because he knew God would simply forgive Nineveh. If Nineveh did not meet Jonah's expectations, why should he be the one to minister to them? What Jonah did not realize was that spirits of perfection were disabling him from doing God's Will.

Spirits of perfectionism place spiritual disabilities on us from doing God's Will. "What will people think? I am not good enough for that. What if I do not sound like they want me to sound?" Moses told God in Exodus 4:10, "I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue." Satan puts every logical thing in front of us to cause us to question and criticize God's assignment over our lives. The problem with this is that the same amount of time spent in our criticism can be spent in our calling, but walking and speaking by the voice of God become disabled by perfectionism.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:5, "The blind receives their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Many times, we are blinded, immobilized, infected, deafened, and held back by a spirit of perfectionism. The way out of this is through Christ, his teachings, and his healing. Christ was the first one in the Bible to call God "our Father." Placing this title on God grows our relationship with Him from master-servant to father-son. Jesus then goes forward to teach us that the two greatest commandments are to love God and love people. When we understand our true relationship with God and begin to *love* Him versus obeying Him, we follow His commands because we are acting from a different place now. The conditions of the calling stop mattering as much.

Our love for God and recognizing the love He has for us is the way out of perfection. Scripture shows us that God never calls those who are perfect. He rarely calls those who "look the part" because it is His strength that is made perfect in our weakness. If we require *our* strength to be perfect before we act on our calling – or our conditions to be rendered perfect by our standards – who are we crowning as God? It is the love despite the imperfections where our deliverance from perfectionism is found. Love sees imperfections and weaknesses and looks past them. I pray that all spiritual doors in your life will remain open for God to move in on all spirits of perfectionism. I pray the Hand of God, the authority of Jesus Christ, and divine train of thought over your life that may pull you completely out of a stronghold of perfectionism. Grace belongs to you. Peace belongs to you. Most of all, deliverance and healing belong to you.