

General Topics :: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect

Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by Mirac, on: 2007/8/12 9:24

I ran smack into a brick wall this weekend. The more I fight against my flesh. The more I strive to be "perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect." The more I listen to Jesus say to the woman at the well, "Go and sin no more." I realize I can't even do good without being prideful about the good deeds that I do. I can't keep the least of His commands. I fail to do what Jesus has asked of me. I realize, I deserve death, but Christ, He deserves my life...for what He did for me. Maybe if I can get myself out of the way enough, He just might be able to do something good, something genuine through me.

I am broken with failure asking for forgiveness for what I fight not to do. Not to run to my Savior asking for forgiveness for what I have asked for many times in the past. Oh how great your Mercy Lord! Oh how glorious, the love you have to wait on me to journey farther with you, to give you total access to me. That I may fully submit all areas of my life. That you may remake me into what you will. My patience for myself grows thin. I can't bear to fail you. Please take this poor sinner's life and make it into something, something that brings glory and honor to your name.

Unimaginable, unfathomable...your love! Did you know when you asked of us, what you asked? Did you know the difficulty of what you asked? I think you probably did. So much failure, to strive to be like my Jesus. So much pain, when I fall so short. So much different than what I am, to serve and not to be served, to seek humility and humbleness rather than prop myself up with pride for everyone to look at. Why does it feel like everyone but me has it altogether? Why does it feel like I'm the only one who struggles to follow you? Why does it seem like everyone has it altogether?

Thank you Lord, for stepping down out of heaven to offer the only life line that can save me...You with me, every day, leading me through this journey, gazing into my eyes letting me know, everything will be alright, one day.....

This is my cross. So what are the thoughts about sinless perfection? Where are you at with this? Why when I talk about this topic with people do they immediately blow it off and claim it's not possible? Did not Jesus ask it? Can't it be possible if He asked?

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by sojourner7 (), on: 2007/8/12 9:31

It might help you to understand when you get the Greek word for perfect. It means to be complete, made sound and whole. The Holy Spirit's work is to complete us in love, to perfect us by making us one with the Lord. The Holy Spirit empowers and enables us to live a godly life! That is why it is so necessary to be filled with the Spirit, led by the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit!! 8-)

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/8/12 10:02

Quote:

Mirac wrote:

I am broken with failure asking for forgiveness for what I fight not to do. Not to run to my Savior asking for forgiveness for what I have asked for many times in the past. Oh how great your Mercy Lord! Oh how glorious, the love you have to wait on me to journey farther with you, to give you total access to me. That I may fully submit all areas of my life. That you may remake me into what you will. My patience for myself grows thin. I can't bear to fail you. Please take this poor sinner's life and make it into something, something that brings glory and honor to your name.

Friend,

I hear your pain resonating through your post. I had experienced it for years. May I offer a small morsel of insight, coming from having wrestled with this issue, and having come to a point of victory?

The only way to what you seek is **through** the Cross. It is not enough to **behold** the Cross on the hill, you need to take up your own, and follow Him up the hill. The pain you are experiencing, if allowed to complete its work, will work a death in you, and the desire to be "made" into anything will all but totally fade away, as you **realise** (internally as an abiding reality) that "in you and your flesh there is (and always will be) no good thing".

I read in your post a vestige of desire to **be something**. A sense of resentment about having to lean on His mercy to be righteous. It is hard to say this kind of thing without sounding condescending, and if I am right, you will be struggling with the urge to inform me of the fact that I've got it all wrong, and your desire is to "decrease, that he might increase". If you are like I was, then it would probably be more true that you have a strong desire to **desire to "decrease.."**, but for some reason, self keeps winning. It is truly a torturous experience, but take comfort in the fact that it is a clear signpost that the Cross is near.

I once heard someone say that suicide by crucifixion is impossible, because no matter how hard you try, you can't get that last nail in. I have found this to be true. We cannot choose our Cross, and it is never pleasant, but when we **find it** (or should I say, "it finds us") it is an incredible relief to finally "die".

Who better to quote but a Wesley:

Quote:

Charles Wesley wrote:
*The dead to sin shall find Thy grace
The pure in heart shall see Thy face
I cannot see Thy face and live
So let me see Thy face and die*

The Wesleys taught the doctrine of Christian Perfection (at least conceptually), before John wrote in his journals of his heart being "strangely warmed", after hearing the introduction to Luther's commentary, on the Epistle of Romans, being read out. One time they were preaching to a man on death row, and when the man was born again was born again, as a result of John's witness, the man began to console John.

I insert this to point out that every great man of God has had their own crisis, or what Keith Daniel refers to as their "own personal Calvary". Go with it, friend. It's coming. And then you will know what it is to be **"complete"** in like manner to your Father in Heaven's **completeness** (paraphrased to bring out the meaning).

I hope you can hear the voice of love in my post. You are in the right place. Many have come to such a crisis from being around here. You may kick and scream for a while, but eventually, you'll be "crucified in Christ, nevertheless (you'll) live, but not (you), but Christ (will) live in (you), and the life (you'll) live, while in the flesh, (you'll) live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved (you) and gave himself for (you)", not just as an intellectual concept, but as an abiding reality.

Blessings. :-)

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/8/12 10:08

Quote:

The longer I am a Christian, the more I realize...It's more than just a one day conversion and we don't need Jesus anymore...It's more than just choosing Jesus one day of our life 3 years ago. It's choosing Jesus and relying on Him to supply us bread daily. It's seeking His will every day. It's seeking His grace, every day. It's picking up our cross and carrying it until the death of self is complete.
(from (<http://lifthimhigh.blogspot.com/2007/08/amazing-grace.html>) Mirac's blog)

I see you understand the concept. I look forward to seeing your testimony of it becoming reality. :-)

Re: - posted by Mirac, on: 2007/8/12 13:50

CJ wrote:

Quote:
-----I insert this to point out that every great man of God has had their own crisis, or what Keith Daniel refers to as their "own personal Calvary". Go with it, friend. It's coming. And then you will know what it is to be "complete in like manner to your Father in Heaven's completeness" (paraphrased to bring out the meaning).

I have also noticed in myself the tendency that when I think I am being pure of heart, humble, not self seeking...that even in the midst of victory, I can find pride welling up in me of my pompous holiness.

My main question is, is it true that anyone (Other than Jesus) can live a life totally submitted to God's will...absolutely no self life? And, if a man made such a claim, wouldn't that be prideful? Wouldn't the poor in spirit actually never be able to come out and say, that they are holy and deserving of God...?

And no, I don't take offense to anything you try to sharpen on me...I welcome it. I appreciate your insights....

Something to meditate on:

Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness...But it does not say Blessed are those who are righteous, but rather talks about the heart's desire for righteousness, but there is a hunger, not a filling or satisfaction of actually having it complete or perfect.

Thanks

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/8/12 17:27

Quote:

Mirac wrote:

My main question is, is it true that anyone (Other than Jesus) can live a life totally submitted to God's will...absolutely no self life? And, if a man made such a claim, wouldn't that be prideful? Wouldn't the poor in spirit actually never be able to come out and say, that they are holy and deserving of God ...?

If someone had come to this point, and denied it, wouldn't that be a form of pride? Don't forget who it was that told us that at Moses was the meekest man on earth. Perhaps the problem isn't so much one of **being** submitted to God's will, as much as knowing **what it is to be** submitted to God's will, and then **being** it.

Submission is a **being** before it is a **doing**.

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect, on: 2007/8/12 20:36

Quote:
-----The more I strive to be "perfect, as my Father in heaven is perfect."

Dear Brother my heart is weeping for you, only because you struck something that is near and dear to my heart, something I am going through. You hate your sin, you detest what you are and what you can do! I believe that is a place where God is dealing with many who have that desire. It is a dangerous thing to pray the refiners fire, to be cleansed. Ray Comfort mentioned about that style of prayer in an article. I wish I could find it because it was the very thing he went through. I don't believe we can be perfect, only when the Perfect comes will be perfect. There is a difference when we strive to be made perfect and to be content. Paul said "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who can save me from the body of this death?"

Quote:

----- I think you probably did. So much failure, to strive to be like my Jesus. So much pain, when I fall so short.

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

Quote:

-----The more I listen to Jesus say to the woman at the well, "Go and sin no more."

Jesus had to say that to her, by not saying anything about not to sin anymore, people would think it is okay to sin? He is calling us to a higher standard. He is perfect and sinless, for Him not to mention it, would minimize His suffering, Holiness and sacrifice.

brother hang in there stand fast!! Get a brother you are close to, and bug him when times of failure come and when temptation begins. I have a dear brother who I trust, when I have slipped up, I don't hold it in. I bring it to the light and confess it to him. Not saying that you need to go and share everything and especially if you are not sure if you can trust a brother. Also, remember be careful what you might share, incase you may cause a brother to stumble.

Blessings
Reformer

Re: Sinless perfection - Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect - posted by Needd, on: 2007/8/12 21:27

I have also been dealing with the pursuit of holiness in my own life. God has led me to an awesome book about it: The Life That Wins by Watchman Nee

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by ssweber, on: 2007/8/12 21:37

I had this very same experience... the more I looked at the perfect law, the more it condemned me.

This is of God.

I was in bondage to my sin, namely sexual immorality (porn, lust) and spiritual pride. But the law worked about death in me. One night I died: said "I can't NOT sin... I can't do this anymore. I can't live any longer." I was bitter towards myself and mourned. It is incredibly humbling.

The next day (still felt horrible) I listened to some testimonies and teaching at christourlife.ca ... and learned that Jesus came to set us free from our sin--It isn't about our striving, its about dieing and then being resurrected. It wasn't works, it is simply Jesus. In that moment something clicked, I knew that freedom is my own. After that I laughed at Satan's temptations--"If the son sets you free you will be free indeed." Now I don't pay them any attention.

Keep seeking Christ.
-Sam

Re: - posted by Mirac, on: 2007/8/12 23:01

Quote:

-----Dear Brother my heart is weeping for you, only because you struck something that is near and dear to my heart, something I am going through. You hate your sin, you detest what you are and what you can do!

Thank you brother...I appreciate the love. Something God gave me through this maybe it can strengthen you when testing

g or failure comes:

I deserve death, BUT Christ, Christ deserves my life.

If Christ has my life, then one day I shall truly find life at the living waters that truly satisfy, not this shadow of a life that sends droplets of heaven. One day this thirst and hunger for righteousness will be no more, it will be what we are.

Peace to you and yours

Re:, on: 2007/8/12 23:09

Quote:

-----I deserve death, BUT Christ, Christ deserves my life.

Amen brother, its not us that holds the Cross, but the Cross holds us.

Hey I am going to add your blog to my blog. A buddy and I just started it last week, so it is a slow process in building it, since I am not much of a web designer!! :-P WE feel like we have a way to minister to others.

Re:, on: 2007/8/13 8:48

I dont know where this came from, but I think this sums up my beliefs on this whole matter of Christians being able to achieve perfection in our mortal bodies.

"Reconciling God's standard of perfection, and the reality of our imperfection is difficult. The answer is God's grace, but how do we walk in His grace without using it as a license to sin.

You must, therefore, be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." --Matt. 5:48

These words of our Lord come, as we might expect, from, the Sermon on the Mount; at the conclusion of the portion in which Jesus gives us a whole new set of laws which tell us that to look on another with lust is the equivalent of adultery, that anger can be the equivalent of murder, and that we even have to love our enemies.

Jesus' call for us to be perfect is the only standard He could possibly set for us, and yet at the same time, it is an impossible standard to meet. It is the only standard our Lord could offer when we consider the possible alternatives. Could He have said, "Be, therefore, 75% unselfish, 90% chaste, 98% honest..."? Or how about, "Be loving and charitable to the extent that it feels right to you"? No, a righteous and loving God can neither accept sin, nor can He allow us -- given our sinfulness -- to set our own standards. If there is to be a judgement, and if there is pardon for sins, surely a loving God would show us beforehand by what measure we will be judged, and for what we need forgiveness. And yet this is truly an impossible standard; one that none of us will achieve in this life. Our sin nature, our tendency to act selfishly, runs too deep. Try as we will to eliminate all fleshly sins, we will soon find ourselves immersed in pride or judging others. Try to be charitable and give away all that we have, and we find ourselves preoccupied with ourselves and how we spend each dollar and each hour.

How do we reconcile this? How do we live, called to perfection, but knowing we cannot be perfect? There can be only one possible answer -- grace. Between what we are and what we are called to be spans the glorious arch of God's grace. It is both a covering over us, and a bridge to the Father -- His priceless, yet freely offered gift. The mercy of God, through the life, death and resurrection of His Son, has paid in full for our falling so short of the mark. Jesus took on for us the penalty that a just God requires, and through identification with Him we are freed from having to pay that penalty ourselves.

This is the ultimate answer, but for those of us who struggle with sin daily, and that is all of us, it is not an entirely satisfactory answer. A question that immediately comes to mind is, "But how then shall I live today?" Although, perhaps not going so far as to pose Paul's theoretical question, "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1), we nevertheless sense the risk that we could use God's grace as license to sin. We know that we could presume upon God's grace, even to the point of taking lightly what that grace cost God, thus falling into an even deeper sin than the sin for which

ich we were consciously appropriating that grace.

This is a practical and real problem for those of us who struggle with any type of prevailing sin such as lust or chronic masturbation. How many times can we sin and repent? God's answer is clear, 70 times 70, or all that we need to. But what is happening to our hearts when we start slipping into such a pattern that real remorse for our sin fades, forgiveness becomes routine, and we even find ourselves thinking that we will be forgiven before we sin? Is not the last state worse than the first?

This kind of thinking can easily draw us back into legalism; intellectually accepting God's grace, but so fearful of abusing it, that we strive as if it weren't really there.

I have seen people at both extremes of this dilemma -- the Christian libertines (what a great old word) who would impose on God's grace and the legalists who would act as if it were not available. Both ultimately are slaves; one the slave to his passions, the other a slave to the law. God's way is neither license nor legalism; it is liberty. He calls us to obedience, and calls us to know that we are acceptable to Him -- and therefore should be to ourselves -- even when we are not obedient.

Most of us struggle somewhere in the middle between these extremes, bouncing regularly back and forth between them. I have certainly done my share of bouncing, but over the years as I have come to accept certain principles, it has become less extreme. Let me share them with you.

First, we do need to recognize that perfection is not possible in this life. In our area of ministry, I especially appreciate a quote from C.S. Lewis that went something like, "Perfect chastity is like perfect charity; it is something few of us will experience in this life." We can readily accept that we will never be perfectly charitable -- totally unselfish in all we do. Why can't we accept the fact that most of us won't ever be perfectly chaste -- free from ever having an impure sexual thought? Try as we might, sexual sins are always somehow less acceptable. They should not be.

I have mixed feelings about the practice of some of the people in our groups who count the days since they last masturbated. By and large these are devout people who truly love the Lord and want to live in obedience to Him, but somehow, their growth seems not to go beyond abstinence. Perhaps so much of their energy goes into control that there is little left for broader growth. There may be an excess focus on the law or the on symptoms of the problem. Those whose focus is on broader growth, who see masturbation as a symptom of the problem (albeit still a sinful one) appear to enjoy a greater freedom, and ultimately a deeper healing.

Recognition needs to be made here for the case of true addiction. We have learned from the twelve-step method that where true addiction is present, absolute abstinence is necessary. If you think you might be addicted in some area, read some of the literature on addictions and see if your condition meets the criteria.

I am convinced that in most situations it does not.

To recognize that we may always to some extent sin sexually, is not to deny God's life changing power or the process of sanctification. For those leading the Christian life, progress will be made, and in certain areas sin may cease to be a problem altogether. But some sin will remain, and for many, especially men, the area of persistent sin may be sexual.

Second is the principle that our goal should not be perfection, but pleasing God. Most times when I am first aware of sin in my life, my first reaction is a profound disappointment in myself. I really thought I was beyond that. A person like me should be above that. What arrogance! And how subtle this attitude can be.

We need to regularly remind ourselves that it is God, not ourselves, that we sin against. I almost always use Psalm 51 in my prayers of repentance. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done that which is evil in Thy sight." (vs.4) Because I think most clearly in terms of pictures, sometimes I will imagine seeing Jesus hanging on the cross, literally weighed down by every sin ever committed, and I walk up to Him and thrust another one on His shoulders, with a glib, "Here's another one for you!" In my spirit that is what I believe my sins do.

Love is the greatest motivator to obedience. When you find yourself striving, start loving.

The third principle is that our direction, not our position is what counts. I don't expect my son to be perfect, but I certainly want him to be growing--spiritually, physically, intellectually. I believe our heavenly Father feels the same way about us.

The trap here, of course, is that we will fall into rationalization or deception as we tolerate our sins. Change is hard to recognize in ourselves, as is that absence of change. A journal can be a great help in this. It can help us to take that longer view look at ourselves that we need to accurately measure growth.

In the process of seeking growth rather than perfection, we do risk falling into deception. Repeated sin, repeatedly forgiven, can become trivialized or even accepted as anormal sin". If we allow the voice of the Holy Spirit to become muted, we might even come to deny that a sinful behavior is sinful. What a terrible situation, for to deny our sin is to miss being the recipients of God's wonderful grace. A life in the Body of Christ with real accountability is the best protection from such deception.

The tension between seeking perfection and accepting that we cannot be perfect may always require us to be doing mid-course corrections, but that's okay; God's mercy is so great that His grace extends to this also.

God's standard is perfection. Our life as Christians is meant to be one of perfect freedom. The only way we can reconcile the two is to keep our eyes, not on our perfection or our failings, but on Jesus Christ."

Krispy

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2007/8/13 10:13

Quote:

ssweber wrote:
Jesus came to set us free from our sin--It isn't about our striving, its about dieing and then being resurrected. It wasn't works, it is simply Jesus. In that moment something clicked, I knew that freedom is my own. After that I laughed at Satan's temptations--"If the son sets you free you will be free indeed ." Now I don't pay them any attention.

Sadly, many would see this as presumption, when in reality it is the pinnacle of humility. Striving is, in reality, an form of pride. It is as if we come to God and say, "Thank you for dying for me, so I can have forgiveness. Now I'll take it from here."

Salvation is **Christ only** from start to finish. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen." It is from this platform that Paul said "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service."

Re: Sinless Perfection-Be Perfect as Your Father in Heaven is Perfect - posted by Warrior4Jah (), on: 2007/8/13 18:32

Yes I believe in sinless perfection! We will be when we are with the Father as His own! :-)