

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Is moral perfection possible?

Is moral perfection possible? - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/25 23:28

Perhaps I can enter into a discussion on whether or not moral perfection is possible. I advocate the doctrine myself and would perhaps consider some arguments on the contrary. The texts that I will bring to the table are the following:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 2nd Cor 6:14-7:1

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God". Heb 6:1

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous". 1st John 2:1

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Romans 6:14-15

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 1st Thess 5:23-24

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom 8:4

I am sure that there are more but this will have to suffice for now.

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/6/26 3:10

As I would understand perfection, it means agreeing with God when he speaks to you, whether it is asking you do something, or convicts you, or whatever. When you act in total obedience you are acting and being 'perfect' because sin does not reign in your mortal body.

Now to be perfect like God, no. We still need the mercy of God. Luke 1:50: And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. If we would be perfect like God we would have no need for mercy.

What say?

ginnyrose

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by W_D_J_D, on: 2006/6/26 3:19

Yes.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Titus 2:12

ciao!

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/26 19:55

The answer to all three is the word according.

How is the Christian going to be judged?

Answer: Romans 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

How is the Christian established in this earth?

Romans 16:25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,

How are we to understand our lives as Christians?

2 Timothy 2:7-8 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

According, According to what? According to Paul's Gospel. What is Paul's Gospel?

Colossians 1:26-28 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

How are we to be by the preaching of Paul's Gospel which no other man in the Word had before or after him. There were 90 recorded writers of the New testament after the Cross, But none but Paul were chosen as the cannon of Gods blessed message, "Christ in you the Hope of Glory". Even John got it from Paul, and Peter also.

"that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:" According to Paul's Gospel. 1Ti 1:11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by philologos (), on: 2006/6/27 2:38

Quote:

-----Perhaps I can enter into a discussion on whether or not moral perfection is possible.

Please don't be offended if I say I think this is the wrong question. It must inevitably lead to me examining my own 'progress'. How about these questions...

"Is God able to save to the uttermost those that are coming to Him through Christ?" Heb 7:25

"Is God able to keep me from falling?" Jude 1:24

"Is God able to make all grace abound towards me?" 2 Cor 9:8

If the answer to these questions is 'Yes' then we might ask some additional questions. Is God able to do this for 'one second'? If so, why not two? If two, why not sixty? If for a whole minute, why not two minutes? If two, why not sixty? If for a whole hour, why not two...?

You get my drift?

Re: Wow - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/27 7:22

That's amazing! Did all of you agree with me?

One question for Ginnyrose.

Quote:
-----Now to be perfect like God, no. We still need the mercy of God. Luke 1:50: And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. If we would be perfect like God we would have no need for mercy.

If it is impossible to be perfect like God is perfect then why does Christ command us to be?
Have you considered this?

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt 5:48

Why then do we need God's mercy? First of all I will state the obvious that we would have no need for mercy in the sense of pardon if we stopped sinning altogether. So the mercy spoken of there must be some other extension of God's mercy or kind of mercy. For instance, if God removed the influence of His Spirit then we would all be hooped!!!!!! I mean burnt toast!!!!!! You know what I mean??? :-o

So it is an act of mercy that God would bestow His Spirit upon us to propel us onward. Also, if we are Christians then no doubt we are still developing and progressing in our outward life. We may be perfect inside and clean ("He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean" John 13:10) and yet needing guidance for the sake of outward conformity. We are imperfect with regard to our outward development and in this sense will always be imperfect for we will experience infinite progression. Wow, now that's a thought!

So if Christ tells us to be perfect like our heavenly Father is perfect and we cannot and will not ever be perfect in the sense of outward conduct and understanding then it follows that Christ is telling us to be perfect in the only sense which is attainable, to wit, moral perfection, perfect obedience to His law or complete conformity to rectitude.

You guys are awesome!!!

And I mean that. I was expecting some kind of long drawn out discussion on Romans 7 or something of the sort. By the way what do folks like yourself think of such a passage? Do you think that a Christian at best is "carnal, sold under sin" or do you think, like the early church, that Romans 7 is descriptive of a man under the law? Or maybe you have never thought of that. Maybe we could discuss this.

With love in Christ, Randy

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/6/27 8:08

Well, if it is not possible, then the words, "Be ye perfect, as I am perfect" are nothing but a cruel joke. The key is, how are we **made** perfect? I believe that many great answers are found in this thread:-)

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/6/27 12:42

Paul said in Phillipians 3:12,13:

vs 12 "Not that I have already obtained or am already perfected, but I pursue, if even I may lay hold of that for which I also have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.

vs. 13 "Brothers, I do not account myself to have laid hold' but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward".

We as believers have been grafted into the Branch of the One who is perfection. We are one with Him in spirit and He is in us and we are in Him. As we abide in the Vine we enjoy the rich supply of the Divine Sap, and through this Sap we bear much fruit.

But this is always conditional upon our abiding in the Vine.

The only perfect One is Christ and we are in Him and He is in us. And day by day as we take the cross, deny our natural life and live by Him we are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

We cannot with Paul say we have obtained. But by the indwelling Divine Life we pursue and as we do we are being perfected in this indwelling Divine Life.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by Abide, on: 2006/6/27 13:44

I asked myself the same question, and the Spirit of God led me to the answer. One that brought much comfort and assurance. It's heavenly divine.
I will Return.

Re: - posted by mamaluk, on: 2006/6/27 14:01

"be ye perfect..."

E.W.Bullinger, a Greek Scholar stated that the word perfect could/should be read as **complete**.

Romans 7:17-20

"As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. 18I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. 19For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. 20Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it."

Romans 7:24-25

"what a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? 25Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin."

Had I lived a lifetime of 100% moral perfection, but stumbled for one second, perfection is no longer there.

Galatians 6:14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Nevertheless, "be ye holy...for I am holy"

Praise The Lord Jesus Christ,

I am nothing, HE IS ALL

Re: Is moral perfection possible? - posted by beenblake (), on: 2006/6/27 15:45

Before you get into a discussion of whether or not "perfection" is possible, we must first define "perfection". What is "perfect"?

Is perfection something you do or something you are? What or who gives definition to perfection? If perfection is lost, how can it be attained?

Additionally, what is sin? Is sin outward, something committed in body and deed, or something inward, committed in spirit? Can a person whose intention is good, whose spirit is good, commit a sin outwardly in the flesh, in deed, and yet still be perfected in spirit? Can a person ever be perfect in the flesh?

Lastly, what of our own perfection? Is it something in our control? Or something outside our control? Do we make ourselves perfect? Is that possible? Or does God make us perfect? And if God makes us perfect and we sin, why did we sin?

Some questions to ponder...

In Christ,
Blake

Re: - posted by Forevidence (), on: 2006/6/27 17:40

Eze 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from **all your filthiness**, and from **all** your idols, will I cleanse you.

Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Eze 18:30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from **all** your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

Eze 18:31 Cast away from you **all** your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

1Th 5:23 And the very God of peace **sanctify you wholly**; and I pray God your **whole** spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Th 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

2Co 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from **all filthiness** of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting holiness** in the fear of God.

Col 4:12 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.

In Barnes' Notes upon 2 Cor. viii. 1, we have the following:--

"The unceasing and steady aim of every Christian should be perfection--perfection in all things--in the love of God, of Christ, of man; perfection of heart, and feeling, and emotion; perfection in his words, and plans, and dealings with men; perfection in his prayers, and in his submission to the will of God. No man can be a Christian who does not sincerely desire it, and who does not constantly aim at it. No man is a friend of God who can acquiesce in a state of sin, and who is satisfied and contented that he is not as holy as God is holy. And any man who has no desire to be perfect as God is, and who does not make it his daily and constant aim to be as perfect as God, may set it down as demonstrably certain that he has no true religion."

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/27 17:56

Quote:

"I asked myself the same question, and the Spirit of God led me to the answer. One that brought much comfort and assurance. It's heavenly divine.

I will Return."

I like this.

I like this also, how about I have returned in the Spirit of all believers. "When that which is perfect is come," Is He

come? Are we known as He is known to us? The Holy Spirit reveals Him to us more and more each day. As Paul has said, "Phl 3:10 That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 1Jo 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Has He Come? Are we Perfect in Him? What more can we say? Yes, Yes and Yes Yes. Praise God and Amen.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/6/27 19:47

Quote:

-----I like this also, how about I have returned in the Spirit of all believers. "When that which is perfect is come," Is He come?

The context of this verse is the coming of Christ. In that day, when we shall see Him face to face. No, it has not come. But it shall come. And in that day we shall be Like Him because we shall see Him as He is.

In that day is the day of His coming which is also the day of our transfiguration into the complete image of his likeness. In that day we shall be truly like Him inwardly and outwardly.

Graftedbranch

Re:, on: 2006/6/27 19:47

Great question.

If we were born of incorruptible seed and not of corruptible then that means there is no corruption after we are born again. Right? The question is what part is incorruptible? I believe it is our spirit that is incorruptible. "That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of spirit is spirit." What spirit? The holy spirit. If our flesh is "conceived in sin" that means our flesh is born in sin and there is no hope because the flesh can't be born of the spirit. Right?

So our spirit is perfect but our flesh is imperfect and it can't be saved until we receive an "unfallen" new body untouched by sin.

But we must keep our flesh under SUBJECTION or it will either be PUNISHED or DESTROYED.

J-bird

Re: - posted by inastruzay (), on: 2006/6/27 20:06

Philp 3:12-16

Yea, for me I know that it is doctrinally sound to know the above and I believe it, and practice it, but, for me, it is exercising to keep a mentality that perhaps it is attainable now?

This is a kind of self imposed discipline but an hope as well.

this is a good thread. Thanks guys.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/6/27 20:57

Quote:
-----If we were born of incorruptible seed and not of corruptible than that means there is no corruption after we are born again. Right? The question is what part is incorruptible? I believe it is our spirit that is incorruptible. "That which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of spirit is spirit." What spirit? The holy spirit. If our flesh is "conceived in sin" that means our flesh is born in sin and there is no hope because the flesh can't be born of the spirit. Right?

Advancing the notion of Christian perfection in some absolute sense is the most contrary notion in all of church history as it has never been attained.

Not even the apostle Paul claimed to "have obtained or already been perfected."

Christian perfection consists in being in oneness and fellowship with the perfect one and being constituted with His perfect Life and nature.

The New birth brings into us this incorruptible Seed. But it is just a seed and must grow and develop. It is planted in fallen men and women who have been redeemed and justified in and by Christ and who as children with His life must grow up in all things into Christ who is the Head.

There are many experiences and crises which we undergo as believers beginning with repentance and faith resulting in the New Birth. But there is no one experience which renders us perfect in ourselves but rather each crisis and experience brings us into a deeper realization of our own corruption and Christ's indwelling perfect, overcoming life within us. And it brings us deeper into a life of dependence upon Him.

The more we experience Christ, the more we are conscious that "in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing". The more we know that in ourselves we are nothing and can do nothing and Christ must be all in all to us.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/27 21:46

Quote:

"The New birth brings into us this incorruptible Seed. But it is just a seed and must grow and develop. It is planted in fallen men and women who have been redeemed and justified in and by Christ and who as children with His life must grow up in all things into Christ who is the Head."

The incorruptible Seed of the Spirit of Christ is fully completely birthed in Mary, striped, crucified, dead, resurrected, ascended, and born again in the Believer. The Seed of Christ is fully blown and all consuming life in the Mature Seed of the Father brought forth in Christ.

The Place where we must mature is in our mind, we already have the Mind of Christ but it is not His Mind that takes over our mind as the Spirit of Christ takes the spirit of Satan out, (dead old nature) and gives birth to our new nature Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ. Rom 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. The Holy Spirit is the Worker in our mind. The Mind of Christ is "finished", ours is not and never will be. Rom 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (That is death life in Satan.)
Rom 8:10 And if Christ in you, the body dead because of sin; but the Spirit life because of righteousness.

The Holy Spirit is the soul=spirit Teacher of the Mind of Christ that our mind is maturing into. Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Our wisdom in our mind comes from the Holy Spirit baptized into us by the Spirit of Christ that is birthed in us sent by the

answered prayer of Jesus Christ by the Father. Christ is "made" wisdom to us by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 1:30 But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

"Of Him" is the Holy Spirit, In Christ Jesus, by God the Father made to us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Wisdom: 4678. sophia

Search for G4678 in KJVSL

sojia sophia sof-ee'-ah

from 4680; wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual):--wisdom.

Righteousness: 1343. dikaiosune

Search for G1343 in KJVSL

dikaioSunh dikaiosune dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay

from 1342; equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification:--righteousness.

Sanctification: 38. hagiasmos

Search for G38 in KJVSL

agiasmoV hagiasmos hag-ee-as-mos'

from 37; properly, purification, i.e. (the state) purity; concretely (by Hebraism) a purifier:--holiness, sanctification.

Redemption: 629. apolutrosis

Search for G629 in KJVSL

apolutrwsiv apolutrosis ap-ol-oo'-tro-sis

from a compound of 575 and 3083; (the act) ransom in full, i.e. (figuratively) riddance, or (specially) Christian salvation:--deliverance, redemption.

All Three of the God Head The Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit are in the believer, making Their Abode with us that we will put on the Nature of Christ in us the Hope of Glory. Perfect In the Spirit of Christ, becoming Perfect in the mind=soul-spirit and will be perfect in body. 2Cr 1:10 Who delivered us (Christ)from so great a death, and doth deliver: (Holy Spirit) in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver ; God the Father with a new resurrected body Like Jesus Christ.

Perfect? Not Yet but getting their, and what we all should seek, to know Him in the Seed of Christ.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/28 9:49

Quote:

-----We cannot with Paul say we have obtained. But by the indwelling Divine Life we pursue and as we do we are being perfected in this indwelling Divine Life.

This is a common argument. Also it was said that "even Paul said that he never attained unto perfection".

I think that this verse was taken out of context.

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect"

The perfection that he is talking about is the resurrection of the dead and more specifically the receiving of a body "fashioned like unto his glorious body".

But to use this verse to speak of the impossibility is vain for he says "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded"

So there is a sense in which we may be perfect and a sense in which we will not be perfect until we receive a glorified body

ody. I have shown also in a former post the fact that there is yet another sense in which we will never be perfect, to wit, perfect in understanding and the subsequent outward life that follows the perfect understanding.

So the obvious sense in which we are commanded to "be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect" is moral perfection or wilful conformity to the law as we understand it. We cannot be obligated to do that which is impossible and so it would be bold faced mockery for Christ to command a type of perfection that was impossible for us to enact.

PS I still am wondering whether or not there are some here that think that the guy in Romans 7 who is "carnal, sold under sin" is a Christian.

Randy

Re: - posted by mamaluk, on: 2006/6/28 11:39

"so it would be bold faced mockery for Christ to command a type of perfection that was impossible for us to enact." Quote from RandyJ

Right on!!

Thanks,
mml

Re: - posted by habakkuk3 (), on: 2006/6/28 12:11

I would use the term sanctification rather than moral perfection. For me anyway, it's easy to get caught up in our concept of perfection versus the Biblical definition of it.

As far as the text in Phillipians 3 goes, I agree with Randy and would add this from Adam Clarke's commentary "**St. Paul, therefore, is not speaking here of any deficiency in his own grace, or spiritual state; he does not mean by not being yet perfect, that he had a body of sin and death cleaving to him, and was still polluted with indwelling sin, as some have most falsely and dangerously imagined; he speaks of his not having terminated his course by martyrdom, which he knew would sooner or later be the case. This he considered as the teleiwsiv, or perfection, of his whole career, and was led to view every thing as imperfect or unfinished till this had taken place.**"

Why would Jesus tell someone to go and sin no more if it were not possible. I don't believe God plays shell games.

I'm short for time today but may post something when I have time to pray over it and ponder it a bit. One site that has much information on this topic is (www.enterhisrest.org) Enter His Rest.

Re:, on: 2006/6/28 14:16

Has anyone here ever met or heard of anyone who was born again and never sinned again. If you have I would love to meet them or read about them. The only person I know who was sinless was Jesus.

It's really not a doctrinal thing. It's just common since. ;-) J-bird

Re: - posted by JesusIsLife (), on: 2006/6/28 14:36

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

1 John 1:8

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/28 15:30

Romans 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul says many times we are perfect in Christ. In Christ, that is the whole of even our perfection. In self that is the flesh, he says nothing good dwells in him. But, he says with mind being renewed to the Mind of Christ, which we already have, he serves the Law of God.

This is how he serves the Law of God, by the Christ that is in Him. That is why he can say:

Romans 7:22-24 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

That is why Christ in him is his perfection. The flesh as we are in this world will never be perfect. That is why God has made it possible to give us total rebirth. Born again in Spirit by the Spirit of Christ, which takes place at the birth of Christ in you the Hope of Glory. The mind is quickened by the Holy Spirit and is the center of our learning about this Christ that is in us. This quickened is for the mind:

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit and made alive in our soul which was dead to God. 2227. zoopoieo

Search for G2227 in KJVSL

zwopoiew zoopoieo dzo-op-oy-eh'-o

from the same as 2226 and 4160; to (re-)vitalize (literally or figuratively):--make alive, give life, quicken.

This quicken is to our new spiritual birth in Christ Jesus by His Spirit having taken over the old spirit of man which was Satan and put the old man to death. Bringing us into life in Christ. Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Making us perfect before God our Father by seeing in us Christ Jesus. 4806. suzoopoieo

Search for G4806 in KJVSL

suzwopoiew suzoopoieo sood-zo-op-oy-eh'-o

from 4862 and 2227; to reanimate conjointly with (figuratively):--quicken together with.

Perfect in Spirit by Christ in us, and will be perfect in Flesh on resurrection day, which I like to See as New Body Day, then Perfect like the Body of Jesus Christ and with the full capacity to enter the Kingdom of God with His dear Son.

Our mind is coming to this perfection. Thus the scripture: 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. Saved, being Saved and Will be Saved. 2 Corinthians 1:9-10 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;

"who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Romans 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

IN Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by habakkuk3 (), on: 2006/6/28 16:15

As one who is learning what it means to follow Christ in terms of my entire life, I don't profess to know much but am thankful that the Holy Spirit is teaching me. I do know, however, it's tempting to proof-text and here's a definition from Wikipedia. Proof-texting is the practice of using decontextualised quotations from a document (often, but not always, a book of the Bible) to establish a proposition. Critics of the technique note that often the document, when read as a whole, may not in fact support the proposition.

As far as not sinning, I suggest reading the entire book of 1 John. Verse 8 is oftentimes quoted out of context. Here's a few verses from 1 John to pray over.

1 John 1:6-7 6If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. 7But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 John 2:1 1My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.

(Chapter 2: 3-7,29) 3We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 4The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: 6Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. 7Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard.

29If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him.

(Chapter 3:4-10) 4Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 5But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. 6No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. 7Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. 8He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. 9No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 10This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

(Chapter 5:18) 18We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps himself safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.

When one is truly born again, his heart is to obey the Lord Jesus not wickedness. The natural inclination then is to obey God, rather than serve myself or look for some way to justify sin of any sort. That's where I've been crying out to the Lord for and I'm trusting that He is doing this work in my heart.

I believe justification and sanctification are both works of faith in Jesus' completed work at the cross plus nothing. That being said, it will cost everything that I hold dear as I take up my cross and follow Jesus.

Victory over sin is only in Jesus and as I submit to Him. One can never have victory in the flesh, if so why would we need Jesus? That being said, I think we need to be very careful that we not rationalize any sin. If we do, the effect will be to harden our heart and reading the Bible and prayer will become ritualistic and we'll cease to walk in the Spirit and we'll wonder where God is. I've been there before and it's a very barren place and wouldn't recommend it to anyone...

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/28 17:55

"I believe justification and sanctification are both works of faith in Jesus' completed work at the cross plus nothing. That being said, it will cost everything that I hold dear as I take up my cross and follow Jesus."

I believe Justification and sanctification are both works of Jesus Christ by the faith of Jesus Christ that is in me. Christ in me is the completed work of the Cross. By His Faith in me I hold dear all that He is and the only Cross I have is the one that I was crucified on with Him.

Galatians 2:20-21 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

As far as not sinning: 1Jo 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and He cannot sin, because he is born of God.

I am born of God. I don't sin in my Spirit because my Spirit is Him. Jesus Christ cannot sin. The two edged sword is what separates my Spirit from my soul, and my flesh. We cannot sin in Spirit because it is Jesus Christs' Spirit that lives in me.

1Jo 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

1Jo 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.

We love God, because He begat Jesus Christ and we are born of God and love them Both by the Christ that is in us.

1Jo 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, our faith.

We are the whatsoever that is born of God. Our faith which is the Faith of the Son of God is what overcomes the world. Galatians 2:16-17 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.

1Jo 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but He that is begotten of God keepeth Himself, and that wicked one toucheth Him not.

Jesus is the One that is begotten of God, the only Begotten of God, and He keeps Himself because He is begotten of God by the Father's Seed. We are born from above by the same Seed by Jesus Christ birthed in us. Jesus Christ keeps Himself in the Father just like we keep ourself in the Son. In Christ we cannot sin, in the Flesh is the only place we can sin. That is why Paul says it is no longer him that sins but sin that dwells in him, that is his flesh. Paul says 146 times he is in Christ, that is the only way he cannot sin. Again: Romans 7:24-25 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

This comes from a long time careful study of Hbr 4:12 For the word of God quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

We can sin in the flesh, we cannot sin in the Spirit.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by JesusIsLife (), on: 2006/6/28 18:11

I agree, this is good, but what does verse 1:8 mean then to you? My heart is not to sin, this I know. I've been focusing on obeying God since I was saved and healed in 2001, but are you saying you don't sin, even with your motives or intentions or attitude?

I'm not justifying sin by that verse but I am being honest with myself. I don't cater to my weaknesses and neither does the Lord, but I believe that GOD is acquainted with our suffering, broken for our souls. He came in humility, in a manger, not with a gavel. That will come with His 2nd appearing, but I do not claim to be sinless, nor would I even dare to.

And I do believe I walk in the light, I have been set free of many drug addictions and sexual perversions and lying and cursing and stealing and slandering and hate and anger. Do you think that I am not grateful to God for the miracle He has

done in my heart, by transforming my entire life, by giving me the Holy Spirit, new desires and purpose? No, no, no, trust me I cry everyday because of the awesome grace that has swept over my entire being, but I do believe there is a difference between stumbling and falling away, there is a difference between a mistake and being taken captive by Satan, is that not true?

I do not continue in sin by any means, I feel inclined to love Christ through obedience, that is how I worship God, by obeying Him, but the Holy Spirit testifies within me that I am not perfect and that areas of my life need strength.

"I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/28 19:33

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

The object of the apostle is to show that it is implied in the very nature of the gospel that we are sinners, and that if, on any pretence, we denied that fact, we utterly deceived ourselves. In all ages there have been those who have attempted, on some pretence, to justify their conduct; who have felt that they did not need a Saviour; who have maintained that they had a right to do what they pleased; or who, on pretence of being perfectly sanctified, have held that they live without the commission of sin. To meet these, and all similar cases, the apostle affirms that it is a great elementary truth, which on no pretence is to be denied, that we are all sinners. We are at all times, and in all circumstances, to admit the painful and humiliating truth that we are transgressors of the law of God, and that we need, even in our best services, the cleansing of the blood of Jesus Christ. The fair interpretation of the declaration here will apply not only to those who maintain that they have not been guilty of sin in the past, but also to those who profess to have become perfectly sanctified, and to live without sin. In any and every way, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. We deceive ourselves. We have wrong views about our character. This does not mean that the self-deception is willful, but that it in fact exists. No man knows himself who supposes that in all respects he is perfectly pure.

So while we still have the ability to self-deception and the willful capacity in the flesh to a propensity to sin, John immediately give the way of escape. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Then making, "all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God", a truth that cannot be denied he writes by the Hand of the Holy Spirit, 1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Then above all this, John makes it plain that in Christ, if we are in the Spirit of Christ and truly have the Spirit of Christ in us. We are perfect in Him. 1Jo 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His (Christ) seed remaineth in him: (Us) and He (Christ) cannot sin, because He is born of God.

1Jo 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.

1Jo 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but He that is begotten of God keepeth Himself, and that wicked one toucheth Him not. Jhn 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.

In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/28 21:42

A couple quick thing that I would mention.

1) There is a great gulf affixed between the statement "He that says he has no sin" and "He that says he **does** no sin". Do you understand?

I have heard many people use this verse in defence of the idea that not even Christians can live without sin.

Another main objection to the doctrine of "Christian Perfection" is found in Romans 7. I do not have much time, otherwise I would love to explain my view and the early church view of Romans 7. I will simply encourage all here to read Asa M

ahan's Misunderstood Texts of Scripture.

<http://truthinheart.com/EarlyOberlinCD/CD/Mahan/MisTexts.htm>

Please forgive the typos. It is still in the works.

PS There are those who profess to be freed from sin, however, there are none who can say that they have never sinned and this is the obvious import of the passage "He that says he has no sin is a liar." Besides this fact I will say that it is utterly false to develop the possibility of a thing by whether or not it has ever occurred. Just because it may never have occurred that does not mean that it was not possible.

For the purpose of clarifying let me add that I understand moral perfection to be a wilful conformity to all the known will of God. Moral perfection cannot be "intire" perfection because we are finite beings with a finite understanding of the will of God.

The man in Romans 7 (whoever he is) was "carnal sold under sin" and had a "law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin". My question would be can this be the same person contained in Romans 8 who is by "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made free from the law of sin and death"? It seems that there would be an obvious inconsistency in the scriptures if these verses were speaking of the same person.

Randy.

Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2006/6/29 0:45

I've mentioned this before in the topic on holiness. Methodist theology in its core teaches sinless perfection as being obtainable. I disagree. The question asked here is moral---(external)--perfection obtainable. I do believe one can train themselves, or discipline themselves and be morally (outwardly) perfect, however that doesn't necessarily take God's help. I know most on this board will disagree. The Jewish leaders in Jesus' day were outwardly perfect, but Jesus called them white washed sepulchers. He admonished His disciple to be careful to wash the inside of the cup, and much more. Can we have victory over sin? Absolutely, however if there's anyone who really believes they can attain to a state of sinless perfection, they are deceived and have lowered their view of God's Holiness. God's Holiness is infinite in its essential nature.

So really a better question would have been to make a difference between sinlessness vs. moral perfectionism. That might have been a better place to start. :-)

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/29 0:50

How can I live and Christ live in me also? That is another person living in me. If God made this possible in Mary and Christ was born, what is the difference if He births in the believer the instant he believes the same Seed of Christ that was in Mary? One gives the Only Begotten Son the other giving The Spirit life of Christ born again in the believer. It is the same principle, both miraculous birth. As Christ said, ye must be born again of the Spirit and water, The Water being The Word and the Life of Christ, which is the living Water He would have given to the woman at the well if she would have asked. Then He said The water He gives to whomsoever will never thirst again. John 4:14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. There it is the water we must be born again with, and the Spirit of Christ in us the Hope of Glory. This is our new birth, and He that is birthed in us can and never did sin. This is our perfection and Paul lays it out very plain. It is no longer him that sins but sin that lives in him. Paul's Spirit is perfect because it is Christ, Paul is no longer Paul, but Christ living in Paul. Paul is not a new creature. Paul and Christ are one. Does not Paul say it is no longer him that lives but Christ that live in him. Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

"BUT CHRIST LIVETH IN ME", not I, but the I now lives by the Faith of the Son of God that liveth in the I. Why can nobody see this?

How can the real I not be perfect? It is Christ in the I, or Christ in you the hope of Glory. Colossians 1:27-28 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every

man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Is this not scripture or is it just my imagination? I guess it is a mystery that nobody understands, and I am just deceiving myself. But, still I am in Christ and Christ is in me. If you put a sock in the water the water is in the sock also, they become one, a water sock, or a Christian, A Christ One, One in Christ.

This Perfection in Christ does not make me, that is the I without Christ, free from sin by the flesh I still live in. It does say that I am perfect before God because of the Christ in me.

Do we have to sin? Nowhere does it say we do.

It says sin is crouching at the door, we choose to open the door, but that does not change the perfection of Christ in me. Who chooses not to sin, we do, Who chooses to love Christ and the Father, we do, who chooses to believe God? We do. Before Christ in us, impossible, with Christ in us, ??????????????

I am not freed from sin because the Holy Spirit still reveals sin in me that I don't even see. When it is brought to the surface it can be repented of and even cleansed from all unrighteousness. 1Jo 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

A water filled sock In Christ: Phillip

Re: - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/29 1:06

Just a quick point that I would like to make and then I must go.

Moral character is predicated of the ultimate intention, purpose and motive of an individual.

"God looks at your heart." Moral perfection, as I believe I have stated already, consists in obedience to God **in the best way you know how**. I also stated specifically that outward perfection was not ever attainable, even in heaven for that would require a perfect understanding which is also unattainable for finite beings.

Ponder, Randy

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/6/29 3:51

FUNDAMENTAL FACT ABOUT PROOF.

"No proposition is, properly speaking, proven, till facts or arguments are adduced, which not only affirm its truth, but contradict every opposite proposition. How often is this fundamental law of evidence overlooked and disregarded in almost every department of human investigation. In Theology, for example, how often is an hypothesis denominated a doctrine, which merely consists with a given class of passages of Holy Writ, assumed as absolutely affirmed by these passages, when, in reality, they equally consist with the contradictory hypothesis. Let it ever be borne in mind, that no passage or passages of Scripture prove any one doctrine which do not contradict every opposite doctrine. No facts affirm any one hypothesis which do not equally contradict every contradictory hypothesis." Asa Mahan, Intellectual Philosophy. Taken from truthinheart.com

The Holy Spirit says Amen to Philosophy of man.

Why do we use scripture at all, lets just proof what man wants through philosophy.

So prove Christ in you wrong. We are not baptized into Christs' death and His suffering. There is no mystery, man knew all along that God would come in Christ and die and be born again in a person. Perfection in Christ is just a lie of Satan. Satan is just a good story for kids.

You must proof God by mans standard of proofs.

146 times in Christ statement must be proofed and throw out all the ones that don't match.

Sorry :-?

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/6/29 8:34

Quote:

beenblake wrote:

Is perfection something you do or something you are?

To quote Norman Grubb, "You're a human 'be'ing not a human 'do'ing."

Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2006/6/29 9:02

Sorry brother I didn't really understand your last 2 posts. I'm a simple man. And I don't want to pull apart the above statements. Your other submission was way over my head. Sorry for being so simple minded :-(.

The question in the heading of the thread and the posts that followed were two different things.

QUESTION: "Is moral perfection possible". I suppose first the Author needs to define Moral and perfection. then we can go on from there.

Webster defines moral as ethical; virtuous; supported by reason and probability. General conduct as right or wrong; mode of life.

The post that followed were on sinlessness, two different things. That was my point.

Re: We are COMPLETE in Christ - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/6/29 9:35

Modern usage of words heavily influences our understanding of Biblical terms. Consider the typical usage of the word Perfect. We define something as perfect in relation to what it is without a flaw— that is, it is without flaw. So a perfect piano solo (I teach piano) to many means that there are no slipups, no flaws. And indeed, a performance may very well be perfect, but it may also be dead and dry— void of life and expression. Young or inexperienced musicians cannot comprehend the deeper dimension of music. It takes time. But a topnotch stirring performance is far from flawless, though the musician is always working to decrease them. The flaws are the risk one takes when moving beyond the risk-free haven of the perfectionist stage (filled with fear of the imperfect)

I prefer to use the word, COMPLETE. By doing so, we define something more by what it IS than what it is not.

“And he is able to save COMPLETELY those who come...” Heb. 7:25

“He will save his people FROM their sins.” Matt. 1:21

“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them, you may participate in the divine nature, and ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION in the world caused by evil desires.” 2 Peter 1:3–5

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form and you have been given FULLNESS in Christ...” Col. 2:9

“He must increase, I must decrease.” As I decrease, and as he increases, so does the expression of his fullness at work in and through my life. Is that not the path we take in order to live a blameless life?

Diane

Re: - posted by RevKerrigan (), on: 2006/6/29 10:26

Christinyou...that was a very well written and very true post. I think that one of the true measures of someones Christian maturity is not whether they are sinlessly perfect or not but how much of a sinner they recognize that they are. That as a Christian grows closer and closer to the Lord, he/she realizes that they are not there yet. That they have not arrived. It is like walking towards a mirror. The closer you get the more faults you see in your appearance. They may not be recognizable from far away, but the "small" blemishes become much more recognizable as you see your appearance more clearly. Look at what happened to Isaiah in chapter 6. Read some of the biographies of some men who have been used greatly of God throughout the centuries. Read the biographies of some of the most Holy men there have ever been and they will testify they are still sinners greatly in need of the Grace of God. Most times when a Christian says they don't sin anymore they are called prideful. But, I think 1 John 1:8 says it all. They aren't prideful, just deceived...

Re: - posted by habakkuk3 (), on: 2006/6/29 10:38

Quote:

-----Moral perfection, as I believe I have stated already, consists in obedience to God in the best way you know how.

Amen, I think we need to walk in the light that we already know as Paul said in Philippians 3:16 "Only let us live up to what we have already attained."

From my limited understanding, all I can say is that sanctification is a work of the Spirit, not of the flesh.

Here is a portion from Wesley's Sermon 14 which sums up what sanctification is about.

From what has been said we may easily learn the mischievousness of that opinion, -- that we are wholly sanctified when we are justified; that our hearts are then cleansed from all sin. It is true, we are then delivered, as was observed before, from the dominion of outward sin; and, at the same time, the power of inward sin is so broken, that we need no longer follow, or be led by it: but it is by no means true, that inward sin is then totally destroyed; that the root of pride, self-will, anger, love of the world, is then taken out of the heart; or that the carnal mind, and the heart bent to backsliding, are entirely extirpated. And to suppose the contrary is not, as some may think, an innocent harmless mistake. No: it does immense harm: it entirely blocks up the way to any farther change; for it is manifest, "they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." **If, therefore, we think we are quite made whole already, there is no room to seek any further healing. On this supposition it is absurd to expect a farther deliverance from sin, whether gradual or instantaneous.**

On the contrary, a deep conviction that we are not yet whole; that our hearts are not fully purified; that there is yet in us a "carnal mind," which is still in its nature "enmity against God;" that a whole body of sin remains in our heart, weakened in deed, but not destroyed; shows, beyond all possibility of doubt, the absolute necessity of a farther change. **We allow, that at the very moment of justification, we are born again:** In that instant we experience that inward change from "darkness into marvellous light;" from the image of the brute and the devil, into the image of God; from the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, to the mind which was in Christ Jesus. **But are we then entirely changed? Are we wholly transformed into the image of him that created us? Far from it: we still retain a depth of sin; and it is the consciousness of this which constrains us to groan, for a full deliverance, to him that is mighty to save. Hence it is, that those believers who are not convinced of the deep corruption of their hearts, or but slightly, and, as it were, notionally convinced, have little concern about entire sanctification.** They may possibly hold the opinion, that such a thing is to be, either at death, or some time they know not when, before it. But they have no great uneasiness for the want of it, and no great hunger or thirst after it. They cannot, until they know themselves better, until they repent in the sense above described, until God unveils the inbred monster's face, and shows them the real state of their souls. Then only, when they feel the burden, will they groan for deliverance from it. Then, and not till then, will they cry out, in the agony of their soul,

*Break off the yoke of inbred sin,
And fully set my spirit free!
I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly lost in Thee.*

And it's not about self-improvement or trying harder either. Here's the last paragraph of this wonderful sermon.

We may observe, Thirdly, a deep conviction of our utter helplessness, of our total inability to retain anything we have received, much more to deliver ourselves from the world of iniquity remaining both in our hearts and lives,

teaches us truly to live upon Christ by faith, not only as our Priest, but as our King. Hereby we are brought to "magnify him," indeed; to "give Him all the glory of his grace;" to "make him a whole Christ, an entire Saviour; and truly to set the crown upon his head." These excellent words, as they have frequently been used, have little or no meaning; but they are fulfilled in a strong and deep sense, when we thus, as it were, go out of ourselves, in order to be swallowed up in him; when we sink into nothing, that he may be all in all. Then, his almighty grace having abolished "every high thing which exalted itself against him," every temper, and thought, and word, and work "is brought to the obedience of Christ."

Re: - posted by CJaKfOrEsT (), on: 2006/6/30 8:30

Quote:

roadsign wrote:

I prefer to use the word, COMPLETE. By doing so, we define something more by what it IS than what it is not.

I think you hit something here. I have noticed that people try to water down the word **perfect** by referring to it as **complete**. When you think about it, the presence of **sin** is really just evidence of **incompletion**.

Often I compare the gospel with an invitation to dinner given to a poor man, which has instructions of how to get there, and is coupled with taxi fare, in order to make the one hour drive, to get arrive before the doors close in two hours. Have you ever noticed that there are many who insist on trying to walk? You can never walk a distance that takes one hour to drive, in less than two hours. It is impossible.

God has presented us with an impossible standard, that being **perfection**. He then went on to provide the means of attaining this standard, which is God's **mercy** that is expressed as **forgiveness** and **cleansing**, as the result of **confession** of sins, on the basis of Christ's vicarious sacrifice (see *1 John 1:9* and *Hebrews 4:16*).

To many people people reduce **perfection** to a **theoretical concept** and by so doing bring the **grace of God** by which a man is saved, **through faith**, down to a mere "Plan B" contingency plan in case mankind was to sin. They miss the fact that the **love of God** is made manifest, in that **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us**.

Perfection can be expressed in the following equations:

Quote:

SIN + GRACE = RIGHTEOUSNESS

and

Quote:

SINNER + MERCY = SAINT

So if this is what we mean by **completion**, then so be it. The fact is that as long as there is a **throne of grace** that we can **come bodily unto so that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need**, there is no excuse for anything less than **moral perfection**.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/6/30 12:47

Quote:
-----I have shown also in a former post the fact that there is yet another sense in which we will never be perfect, to wit, perfect in understanding and the subsequent outward life that follows the perfect understanding.

There is no possibility that we will not finally be perfected completely and totally as "we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is".

To say that there shall remain some imperfection is to deny the totality of Christ's redemption and the consummation of this redemption in the New Jerusalem.

The imperfection which yet does remain and which Paul spoke of is indeed that fact that as yet he had not experienced the transfiguration of the body and the elimination of the sinful fallen flesh which still remains as long as we are in this present life and age.

But if this alone is what Paul is speaking of then there is nothing to "press forward unto" and nothing to "lay hold of". But rather just to wait for the Lord's coming to be transfigured.

What was Paul pressing on to? What did He strive to lay hold of? What was the "goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus?"

He told us, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering being conformed to His death in order that He might attain to the resurrection from the dead."

If this were fully completed in him then there is nothing more to know, no more of Christ's resurrection life to experience, and no more conformity to His death to enter into. But this was not Paul's testimony. But rather his goal. Which would issue in his participation in the resurrection of the "First Fruits". To be among those overcomers who experienced the harvest of the First fruits prior to the general harvest of the fully ripe. To attain to the "resurrection from the dead".

This was indeed His testimony in the end, That "I have run my race, have finished my course, and there is laid up for me the Crown of life and not only to me but also to all those who love His appearing..." But this was only his consciousness when his course was finished and his race was run and he had "fought the good fight" and kept the faith. He had the witness of the Spirit that God was satisfied in him and that he now was awaiting the final stage of salvation, the redemption of the body.

This is not the testimony of eternal salvation which we have in regeneration, but rather the testimony of the Spirit to His completed work in transformation and conformation to Christ's image and the testimony of the reward of the Kingdom. But not with regard to the Eternal age.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/30 14:33

Quote:
-----There is no possibility that we will not finally be perfected completely and totally as "we shall be like Him because we shall see Him as He is".

To say that there shall remain some imperfection is to deny the totality of Christ's redemption and the consummation of this redemption in the New Jerusalem.

In what sense do you think this verse teaches that we shall be like Him? Are you suggesting that we shall be omniscient

? If we will not be omniscient then we will be ever learning better and more perfect ways to please our God. Correct? What I mean by saying that we shall, **in some sense**, never be perfect is that we will never be omniscient. Perfect knowledge is knowledge that cannot be greater. Understand? I am simply suggesting that we will always be developing and learning and progressing in our future habitation.

Quote:

-----To say that there shall remain some imperfection is to deny the totality of Christ's redemption

To say that we will be perfect **every way** is to say that we will be perfect in knowledge. Perfection in knowledge would require no learning and hence we would be omniscient. Are you saying that we will be omniscient? I don't think that you are. I think that maybe you misunderstood me.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranc, on: 2006/6/30 15:02

Quote:

-----In what sense do you think this verse teaches that we shall be like Him? Are you suggesting that we shall be omniscient?

Knowledge is not perfection. To be perfected is to be fully constituted with Christ as our Life and Nature. To be fully in the New Creation. To be fully conformed to the Image of the First Born Son of God, to be free totally from all taints of the fallen, sinful, old creation, and to be wholly transformed by the Divine Life.

The great characteristic of the New Jerusalem is not the tree of knowledge but the Tree of Life which grows on either side of the River of the Water of Life which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

To be Like Him is to be a full grown, matured, son of God with His Life, His Nature throughout and our entire body, soul, and spirit to be in resurrection, permeated with the Divine Life expressing God and not our fallen Self.

Christ never suffered from any imperfection. He was sinless. Yet he grew in grace and in knowledge and wisdom as a man. And in resurrection His humanity was glorified and brought into the Divine Glory being designated the Son of God in His humanity by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:3).

In Like manner, in resurrection being fully conformed to Christ, our bodies will be transfigured and brought into the Divine Glory and as Paul says, "And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you".

Perfection is a matter of constitution and of the Divine Life and Nature and not of knowledge but nevertheless, in that day we shall also know fully according to the Bible. We shall be permeated with the Divine Life body, soul, and Spirit, fully brought into the New Creation and all that is of the Old creation, all that is sinful, all that is of Adam will be in the lake of fire forever. This is the record of scripture.

We will not be Omniscient, but we will be fully constituted with the Omniscient One as our Life, our nature and our Life supply. Just as Christ was not omniscient in His humanity but grew in wisdom and knowledge, yet in His divine nature as God he was Eternal, omniscient, and possessed all the attributes of God.

IN the natural realm a flower may not possess the knowledge which we possess, but its perfection lies in its being a flower to express its innate life as a flower. And in that day, our perfection will not consist in our knowledge, but in our expression of the Divine Life which constitutes us.

There is no record of growth in the New Jerusalem, but rather the eternal enjoyment of God, the eternal expression of God, the eternal flow of the River of Water of Life and the Eternal Divine/human incorporation of the Eternal God with His redeemed, regenerated, transformed, conformed and transfigured tripartite believers ever being their Life and Life supply and them being His eternal expression having the Glory of God and living from God as her source of Life. He is the Temple and they are the tabernacle of God. "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among men.

She is the Wife of the Lamb, the City of God, the House of God, the tabernacle of God (the dwelling place of God) and the expression of God for eternity.

Romans 8:29: "For whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate to become conformed to the Image of His Son, that He might be the First Born among many Brothers"

2 Cor 3: "For we with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror, the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit..."

Rev. 21:9-11 "Come here, I will show you the bride, the Wife of the Lamb. And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God, Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper, as clear as crystal..."

The New Jerusalem, God's building is built completely from the Divine materials of Gold, Silver and precious stones. She is built up by the Spirit's work in the believers today by the ministry of Christ and will be consummated as the New Jerusalem in the New earth. Today she is the church, the body of Christ, the household of God, In that day she will be consummated as the New Jerusalem, built of the materials of the Triune God. The Gold of the Divine Nature, the Silver of Christ's redemption, and the precious stones of the Spirit's transforming work.

She will be totally like Him, the same as He is in Life and nature but not in His Godhead. He will ever be the Divine Source, Christ will ever be the Bridegroom, and the First Born, and we will forever be constituted with Him and derive our Life from Him as the flow of the Living Water.

As Eve was built out of Adam's nature and substance, so the New Jerusalem, as the Wife of the Lamb is built out of His Life and Nature to be His eternal counterpart, His corporate Bride, wholly like Him and wholly dependant upon Him and without spot or wrinkle.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/6/30 23:41

Quote:
-----Knowledge is not perfection. To be perfected is to be fully constituted with Christ as our Life and Nature. To be fully in the New Creation. To be fully conformed to the Image of the First Born Son of God, to be free totally from all taints of the fallen, sinful, old creation, and to be wholly transformed by the Divine Life.

You won't hear me squabble about your definition of **Christian** perfection, however, perfection is a term that can be used to explain the condition of a great many things.

We will not be perfect in knowledge when we are in heaven or at any time **because we are finite beings**.

I think that I agree with the rest of what you said.

Re: - posted by Graftedbranch, on: 2006/7/1 0:52

Quote:
-----We will not be perfect in knowledge when we are in heaven or at any time because we are finite beings.

I am not sure to what is encompassed in "knowledge" but scriptures says in 1 Cor. 13:12 "For now we see in a mirror obscurely, but at that time face to face; now I know in part, but at that time I will fully know even as also I have been fully known".

I am not sure whether "knowing fully" includes knowing the details of thermal nuclear dynamics or the true nature of quarks and strings or such things. But as to the Divine revelation in that day we shall know fully as we have been known for

we shall "be like Him because we shall see Him as He is and we will be fully conformed to His image.

We are not talking about heaven here but rather the New Jerusalem which is the consumation and end of the Bible. The Bible does not end with heaven but the new earth under the new heavens (Revelation 21-22). But I do believe from scripture that in that day, in the eternal age we will not be debating theology or disagreeing over scripture. Not because we agree to disagree, but rather everything will be brought to light and we will be fully constituted with Christ who is the way, the truth and the Life. And in Him there is no darkness.

IN that day no one will say, "know the Lord" for all will know Him from the least to the greatest"

I will add that even today in our own experience, when we gain the Spirit's Light in His Word we can see in one moment more than we can understand in a lifetime of study and mental gymnastics. And when the Veil of this fallen life is removed, our perception and understanding will be in keeping with the eternal nature of our indwelling Christ.

We are indeed as creatures finite beings. But we are more than this. AS those who have been born of God and regenerated with His Life, we also are partakers of the Divine Nature which is the Eternal, Divine Nature of God having the attributes of God. The God who lives within us as our Life is the full and complete God with all of His eternal Divine Attributes. And it is this Life that has been imparted into us and which is growing in us and will one day be our full constitution. We are not just creatures of God, we are sons of God born of His Life and possessing His divine nature.

Graftedbranch

Re: - posted by WorldView (), on: 2006/7/10 2:13

Many of you have put forth good and interesting points. I didn't bother reading the entire thread for I do not have that much spare time.

Anyways, to address the subject. I believe that we can be sinlessly perfect, or in other words that we can get to the point that we no longer sin.

Christ's life is an example of how we ought to and can live. Jesus tells us to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect - Mat 5:48. Now I'm sure that you can start a whole new thread of what that scripture means, but let us not try to complicate something so simple and look for a hidden meaning of which there is none. Interpret it simply, just as perfect as God is so are we supposed to be. Perfect in what way? In character and nature, not necessarily physically. For example it does not mean that if you cannot bowl a 300 then you are not as perfect as God. We must take it in context of the scriptures.

Here are some other scriptures on the subject.

1Pe 1:16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."

2Pe 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

2Pe 1:4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

God has given us everything that we need to live a sinless life, for if He did not and sinless perfection is impossible then God cannot judge us according to sinless perfection. In other words, we are accountable to God for every unrepented sin that we commit, and if it were impossible to completely quit sinning, then God cannot hold us accountable to the sins that we commit, seeing as He did not make it possible to live sinlessly. By "sinlessly" I do not mean never committing a sin ever in one's life, but of getting to the point of living out the Christ-like nature that we no longer sin.

I'll be the first one to admit, I have not reached it yet, but I aim for it.

By saying that we can never be sinlessly perfect gives us an excuse never to aim for it.

Keith

Re: WorldView - posted by RandyJ (), on: 2006/7/10 3:38

Very well said. Thankyou for you post.

Re: - posted by enid, on: 2006/7/10 8:11

Haven't read all the threads, but here's my two bits worth. Let's look at the apostle Paul who wrote about half the New Testament, was he perfect? Was Moses, who spoke to the Lord, face to face, as a man speaks to his friend, Ex 33v11, perfect? There is that which God considers perfect, Heb 12v14...and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord. 1 Pet 2v9 tells us we are a chosen generation etc.

Our idea of Christian perfection is, I suppose, to be not tempted by any sin, or to say anything ungodly, as in James 3. If we think we can be as perfect as God is, I don't know if that isn't blasphemy, but I think we do err in understanding what God is saying about Christian perfection. We are to be holy, for He is holy, we are to be perfect, for He is perfect. We are to judge as He judges, be grieved at sin as He is grieved. Hate sin and ungodliness as He does. Let God perfect us. Let us not do it ourselves, it will drive us mad. Just be obedient to His word and to His voice. God bless you.

Re:, on: 2006/7/10 8:48

1 John 2:1 (NIV) -

'My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But **if** anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.'

Notice the key word in this passage, 'if.' John does not say, 'But when anybody does sin,' instead, '**If** anybody does sin.' The Greek for this, 'ean' is a conditional 'if'. We do not have to sin, but we choose to. We do not have to be imperfect, but we don't try as hard as we could. We spend 8 hours sleeping, 8 hours working, and what do we do with the other 8 hours? Probably sinning, when instead we could so easily be reading God's Word. Probably indulging in the world when we could be praying to Jesus Christ. Probably listening to secular music instead of listening to the Holy Spirit.

Moral perfection to me means knowing God enough and seeing things as he sees them; basically living in the light of God's morals. I also believe that moral perfection is achievable, however we do not try hard enough to achieve it. I am speaking to myself as much as anybody here. We need to first seek God's Face, seek His Will and seek to spend as much time as physically and mentally possible with Him as we can, and once we can truly say we have done the above with a right motive, then God will bless us and show us how he feels, and we can then begin the journey of moral perfection.

We cannot be morally perfect of our own accord, but with God's strength we can do all things for His glory.

Re: Some more thoughts to confuse everyone... - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/7/10 10:24

For myself, I cannot help but feel there is a disjoint between the phrase "moral perfection" and what Jesus was referring to when he said, "be ye perfect." My difficulty is that as soon as we start discussing "perfection" as a universal benchmark, we might start sounding like we are striving after the same humanistic goals as Plato, or the Greek stoics, or even Benjamin Franklin!

I cannot help conclude that, being freed from the system of law, but being completely bound to Jesus, who has perfected the law, there is another type of accountability and measurement we have to strive for.

I believe this question is much more a relational question to Jesus, rather than a philosophic or ethical one towards the Law, or some model of moral ideal. If Jesus asks us, in our fellowship with Him to do something then he expects that we can do it! Entering into a conversation about "moral perfection" with Jesus is about as fruitful as my children entering into a discussion of stoicism when I ask them to clean their bedrooms or do their chores! I have not asked my children to discuss moral merits of cleaning their room outwardly while still inwardly loving messiness or other weighty issues...only to obey me and tidy up their rooms! (stop laughin' y'all...)

My point is that I see it that my children can obey me perfectly, because I would never "measure" their perfection to that of an adult. I can expect perfect obedience in my children, because I know what they are capable of. I do not expect they can make moral choices that adults must...yet I will expect that of them soon enough. In the meantime, they can know perfect obedience to my instruction today. This is why I am wary of the phrase "moral perfection". It is a thesis calling for an antithesis question...what is perfection? Christ's call to obedience does not require an antithesis...nor does it lead to a synthesis of "sometimes, with good intentions,...or to the best of our ability ect."

God simply asks us to do something and we either obey or disobey. But to be sure, he requires more than just the standard "Every-Christians" template. Our relationship to God is not so cosmic or universal, as to be impersonal; but being much more direct, intimate, and uncompromising in His claim on my own inward heart. For the born again regenerated Christian, I feel there is a Spirit empowered move from mere 'compulsion' to impulse as spoken of in the scripture 'Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment..

In this love, I can safely know that all God requires is that I "trust and obey". To that end "God is able to make all grace abound to me, so that in all things at all times, having all that I need, I will abound in every good work."

In light of God's loving promise to me I am without excuse when I fail to obey Him, not only according to his recorded Word to men, but also according to the more piercing and individual leading, conviction, and comfort of the Holy Spirit within the trustworthy encompassment of that recorded Word. With a relationship bound wholly to Christ...and not to the law, we can live by faith that He will not ask us to do anything we cannot successfully do. So without faith it is impossible to please God. If we constantly tell ourselves that obedience is idealistic, then we are not walking in faith or relationship to God. When we use only men's standards or examples, though they be instructive, either to condemn others or to excuse ourselves, we might not be walking in obedient faith at all.

So I believe obedience that is pleasing to God, is connected vitally to faith in God, and ultimately through close fellowship with God...trusting his perfect love and call upon us, not by an outward definition of perfection that only men approve of. Various laws may only tell us what we should do but Jesus' Word is effectual in supplying every thing we need for obedience. "Faith comes by hearing... that is, the word of faith which we preach".

These are just some loosely connected thoughts on this topic.

MC

Re: - posted by bigdaveusa (), on: 2006/7/10 10:53

Once again, wisdom and logic proffered. Thanks, Ron! I so agree. The answer is: With God, all things are possible! :-)

Re: - posted by Christinyou (), on: 2006/7/11 17:33

M.C. Wrote:

"These are just some loosely connected thoughts on this topic."

Amen.

The faith we now have is the faith of Jesus Christ that is in us. Born Again by Spirit and Water, he that Has the Spirit of Christ has His life in them, that includes His Faith, this is the life we now live. Is Christ's Faith perfect?

Amen. Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Perfect? Yes in Christ we are Perfect and by this mystery Paul says we should work to that effect to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus our Lord. Colossians 1:27-29 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

May I change the last verse? Whereunto we also labor, striving according to His working, He works in us mightily.

Perfect in Christ: Phillip, above all, not perfect in self. We are not a self anymore, we are new creatures with Christ as OUR life, His Life, my life, One in God our Father.

2Cr 5:17 Therefore if any man in Christ, a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

Of the Law or not of the Law=0, but Christ in us the New Creatures= A new race of son's of God.

In Christ The Son, us as the Son, a son: Phillip