

Going On to Perfection

The background is a gradient from dark purple to blue, overlaid with a field of small white stars. Several technical diagrams are visible: a circular gauge with a scale from 80 to 210 and an arrow pointing to approximately 190; a circular diagram with concentric lines and arrows; and a circular diagram with dashed lines and arrows.

HEBREWS 6:1-3 NKJV

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to [a]perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this [b]we will do if God permits.

Two Extremes Are Common Among Believers

1. They have a knowledge of the Word of God but do not apply that knowledge to their daily lives.
2. Believers emphasize experience and ignore doctrine.

2 Dangerous Attitudes of Believers Concerning Perfection

1. To lay a good spiritual foundation and not go on to spiritual maturity or perfection
2. To attempt to build a "superstructure" of perfection on a faulty spiritual foundation.

To Address Those 2 Dangerous Attitudes of Believers We must

1. Complete the foundation. Lk.14:29-30
2. Build the superstructure or go on to perfection.
Matt.5:16;

LUKE 14:29-30 NKJV

lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'?

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Matt.5:16;

MATTHEW 5:16 NKJV

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

HEBREWS 5:12-14 NKJV

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the [a]oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are [b]of full age, that is, those who by reason of [c]use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

ISAIAH 28:9 AKJV

Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

Important Notes on Perfection

1. Jesus calls His followers to perfection: Matt.5:48
2. This perfection reflects the abiding presence of God: John 17:23A
3. Going on to perfection results in spiritual maturity: 1Cor.14:20
4. Perfection was a goal of the early church. 2Cor.13:9B; 13:11;
5. Individual perfection results in your being perfectly joined together with other believers in the Body of Christ. 1Cor.1:10

MATTHEW 5:48 AKJV

Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

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JOHN 17:23A NKJV

*I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made
perfect in one,*

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1 CORINTHIANS 14:20 NKJV

Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

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2 CORINTHIANS 13:9B NKJV

and this also we wish, even your perfection.

2 CORINTHIANS 13:11 AKJV

Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

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1 CORINTHIANS 1:10 NKJV

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all [a]speak the same thing, and that there be no [b]divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Example of Perfection

1. Jesus is the ultimate example of perfection. 1Pet.2:21; Heb.2:10; 5:9;
2. God's eternal purpose for believers is to be like Jesus who is the example of perfection. Rom.8:29

1 PETER 2:21 NKJV

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for [a]us, leaving [b]us an example, that you should follow His steps:

HEBREWS 2:10 NKJV

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

HEBREWS 5:9

And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,

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ROMANS 8:29 NKJV

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

What is the standard of Perfection

1. The standard of perfection by which believers are measured is God's Word.
2. God has set standards in His Word which are to govern our lives.
3. The first standards He gave man were called the "law" and are recorded in the first five books of the Old Testament.
4. Much of the history of the Old Testament records the inability of man to keep God's laws

What is the standard of Perfection

5. God knew man would not be able to keep the law through his own efforts.
But God had some specific purposes for giving the law
 - a. One of the purposes of the law was to show men their sinful condition.
 - b. Another purpose was to show them that they could not become righteous by their own efforts. Rom.3:20;
 - c. The 3rd purpose was to point them to Jesus so they could be justified by faith. Gal.3:22-24;

ROMANS 3:20 NKJV

Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

What is the standard of Perfection

6. God did not leave us in this hopeless condition. Through the law He promised the Messiah: Deut.18:18-19
7. In the Old Testament, various sacrifices were required by God for sin. After Jesus sacrificed His life for the sin of all mankind, the Old Testament sacrifices were no longer necessary: Heb.10:1,14;
8. Man could not keep the standards of a righteous God through self-effort. The law showed the need for a Savior and led man to Jesus Christ. It is through Christ, not self-effort, that you are perfected. Heb.7:19; Gal.3:22-24

DEUTERONOMY 18:18-19 NKJV

I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

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HEBREWS 10:1 NKJV

For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

HEBREWS 10:14

For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being [a]sanctified.

GALATIANS 3:22-24 NKJV

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, [a]kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our [b]tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

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HEBREWS 7:19 NKJV

for the law made nothing [a]perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

Levels Of Perfection

1. **Initial Perfection:** Also known as positional or instantaneous sanctification; this is the possession of every believer. We are perfected, sanctified, set apart and recognized as holy by the blood of Jesus immediately we get born again irrespective of our character or behavioral flaws. 1Cor.1:2; 2Cor.5:17; Rom.6:1-2, 4, 6;
2. **Progressive Perfection:** Also known as progressive or experiential sanctification, this is the process by which we bring our lifestyle and experiences in harmony with our position in Christ Jesus. Gal.2:20; Php.3:12; Rom.7:15-23; 8:10-11,13; 1Jn.1:9; 4:4;

ROMANS 6:6 NKJV

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be [a]done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 NKJV

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

ROMANS 6:1-2 NKJV

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

ROMANS 6:4 NKJV

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

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GALATIANS 2:20 NKJV

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

PHILIPPIANS 3:12 NKJV

Not that I have already attained,[a] or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

ROMANS 7:15-18 NKJV

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. 17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

ROMANS 7:19-23 NKJV

19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. 20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 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.

ROMANS 8:10-11 NKJV

And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies [a]through His Spirit who dwells in you.

ROMANS 8:13 NKJV

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

1 JOHN 1:9 NKJV

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 4:4 NKJV

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Requirements For The Process Of Perfection To Occur

1. A Good Foundation. Heb.6:1-3;
2. Response To The Word Of God. 2Tim.3:16; Jas.1:21-25; 1Jn.2:5
3. Prayer: Prayer results in perfection. Col.4:12;
4. Consecration: A life sold out to God. Rom.12:1-2
5. Gifts Of The Holy Spirit; Eph.4:11-13

2 TIMOTHY 3:16 NKJV

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for [a]instruction in righteousness,

JAMES 1:21-25 NKJV

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and [a]overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

1 JOHN 2:5 NKJV

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God [a]is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

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COLOSSIANS 4:12 NKJV

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and [a]complete in all the will of God.

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ROMANS 12:1-2 NKJV

I beseech[a] you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your [b]reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

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EPHESIANS 4:11-13 NKJV

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [a]edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Requirements For The Process Of Perfection To Occur

6. Submission to proven ministries: 1Thess.3:10; Col.1:28; 4:12; 2Cor.13:9B
7. Suffering or Trials: 1Pet.5:10; Jas.1:4
8. Self-control: 2Cor.7:1; Jas.3:2
9. Responding to spiritual correction: Gal.6:1
10. Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Matt.3:11-13

1 THESSALONIANS 3:1 NKJV

night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?

COLOSSIANS 1:28

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

COLOSSIANS 4:12 NKJV

Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and [a]complete in all the will of God.

2 CORINTHIANS 13:9B

and this also we wish, even your perfection.

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1 PETER 5:10 NKJV

But [a]may the God of all grace, who called [b]us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, [c]perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.

JAMES 1:4

But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be [a]perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

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2 CORINTHIANS 7:1 NKJV

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

JAMES 3:2

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a [a]perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

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GALATIANS 6:1 NKJV

Brethren, if a man is [a]overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.

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MATTHEW 3:11-13 NKJV

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit [a]and fire. 12 His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

Prayer

Father in the name of Jesus, empower me and every member of this church to strive towards perfection through the diligent application of Your word to our lives and the power of the Holy Spirit in the name of Jesus. 2im.3:16; Matt.3:11