

BE PERFECT!

Paul Anderson

BLAMELESS

“Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commandments and regulations blamelessly” (Luke 1:6). What does a blameless life look like? This couple was rock-solid in the life of God and in the Scriptures.

“Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe” (Phil. 2:14,15). Those without fault, like Daniel, will stand out in a depraved world. Quit doing two things, and it will propel you into a place of blamelessness—complaining and arguing.

“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it” (I Thess. 5:23,24). How do we become blameless? He will do it, and we cooperate with His work as we believe.

“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (2 Peter 3:14). We have a big part to play. We are not passive participants in the call to holiness. ‘Effort’ is a good word.

“He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful” (I Cor. 1:8,9). We can be without blame by God’s faithfulness.

“I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Tim. 6:14).

PERFECT

“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). Why would Jesus command it if He did not expect us to obey? We are to love as we have been loved, even loving enemies. What a high standard of holiness! What a secure God to call us to this and make provision for it!

“Finally, brothers, good-bye. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you” (2 Cor. 13:11).

“...so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ” (Col. 1:28).

“Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (James 1:4).

“If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check” (James 3:2).

“...because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy” (Heb. 10:14). We are perfect positionally (our legal status in Christ). What is true objectively can become true subjectively (experientially) in an incremental way as we make our position our possession. We are being changed from one degree of glory to another. Sanctification is the process of becoming what we are. The more we meditate on what we will be, the more we become like that image (I Jn. 3:2,3).

TRUTHS ABOUT PERFECTION

1. God's highest goal for us is "to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29). For God to have any lower standards for us would be a mockery of the cross. Mediocrity is an unworthy goal. Where Christlikeness is lacking, we are honest and ask for God to help us rather than pretending. The closer we get to the light, the more we see the darkness within. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). Forgiveness cleanses us from all unrighteousness. How long can we stay there? The Scriptures never say, "You are bound to sin, so learn to live with it." It says, "Sin shall have no power over you, for you are not under law but under grace," giving us the hope of rising above sin.
2. Perfectionism is a false picture of perfection. It is our attempt in the flesh to look good. We are self-critical and judgmental of others to look better. Perfection is a road laced with grace. God is within both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Perfectionism is a focus on peripheral matters, like how I look, feel, and appear to others. Perfection focuses on character, how I am. Perfectionism is fueled by jealousy and insecurity. It creates doubts about God and myself, while perfection establishes a true identity of self and God. Perfectionism arises from a sinful human nature; perfection arises in the spirit that longs for and strives for the perfect (Phil. 3:12-14). The end result of perfectionism is disappointment and depression. The end of perfection is being conformed to Christ. God is at work to make me godly, like God. Grace works with honest assessment, not pretense. Perfection comes from a desire to please God. Perfectionism focuses on beauty, brains, and brawn and comes with a scorecard. Those striving for perfection throw away the card (Phil. 3:7-10). Perfectionism is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it leads to defeat and death, Perfection is the tree of life. Striving in the Spirit is good and godly, coming against passivity. Procrastination is sign of perfectionism because of the fear of failure. Perfectionism has bad fruit—jealousy, criticism, fear of failure, control, laziness, anorexia. We are never good enough, fit enough, smart enough. Perfectionism makes excuses for not loving or not attaining. Performance-based Christianity and perfectionism are siblings with the same parent—the law. Grace overcomes law. We can tell perfectionism by our level of anxiety when we don't have control. It kills creativity, spontaneity, and love. To be perfect is to love fully. The answer to the problem of perfectionism is perfection, perfect love.

PERFECTIONISM VS. PERFECTION

Compare	Look to the Perfect one
Fear of failure	Childlike courage & trust, willing to risk
Tree of knowledge	Tree of life
Creates laziness	Creates drive, healthy striving
Legalism	grace
Pretense	vulnerability
Condemnation	acceptance
Flesh	Spirit

