

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

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Perfection takes Discipline

Perfection Identified

Jesus said, “*Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*” (Matt. 5:48). The apostle Paul wrote of Christians desiring that they would, “*Stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God*” (Col. 4:12). The author of Hebrews wrote of the “*weakness and unprofitable*” character of the Mosaic law in that it did not have the power to make man “*perfect*” (Heb. 7:18-19). The apostle Paul tells the Philippians that he had not attained unto perfection (Phil. 3:12) yet then turns around and said, “*Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded:*” (Phil. 3:15).

The subject of Bible perfection perplexes many. Consider the Greek word *teleios* found in each of the text above. The meaning of the word varies with the context under consideration. *Teleios* means “complete, accomplished, and ready to apprehend divine things” (LS 797, Moulton 400, Thayer 618). Man may be perfect in that he is “completely” washed clean of sins (the obvious meaning of the word “perfect” at Hebrews 10:1-2). Man may also be “perfect” in that he has “accomplished” his life on earth having faithfully served the Lord (Phil. 3:12). A third way that man is depicted as perfect is the manner in which he or she approaches life. The “*perfect*” life, from this perspective, lives in such a way that illustrates an intense desire to gain eternal life with the Lord in heaven (see Phil. 3:14-15). This type of perfection is under consideration at Matthew 19. A rich young ruler asks Jesus, “*Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*” (Matt. 19:16). Jesus answers the rich young man by telling him that he must keep all the law. The rich man tells Jesus that he has done these things and then said, “*What lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou would be perfect, go, sell that which thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me*” (Matt. 19:20-21). Note that there were things for this rich

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Please keep the following members in your prayers:

Pam Husak had a bit of a set back last week. She developed an infection and unfortunately is allergic to all the medicines that can speed the healing process up. She is slowly getting better at this time.

Nina Gray's recent visit was somewhat disappointing. She will probably make a final decision as to whether or not she has eye surgery after a March 12th visit to a neuro-ophthalmologist.

Tom Witherspoon is down to 10 more treatments as of Friday (February 13th). Continue to pray that all will go well for Tom.

Women's Bible Study:

The Ladies Bible study is off to a great start. The first class was this past Friday and the next one will be Friday February 27 at 12:30 PM. The class meets at the church building with Kasey Robertson doing the teaching. If you have lady friends that have expressed a desire to learn more about the Bible please do invite them to come.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

young man to "**do**" if he were to be depicted as "*perfect*" which is the striving after "*eternal life*" in heaven.

The "*perfect*" man is one who is striving, pressing, giving diligence, and doing all within his power to make it to heaven. The perfect man is obsessed with heaven. The perfect man has adapted the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and the Christian virtues of II Peter 1:5-8. This perfect disposition and character is identified as the "*divine nature*" (II Pet. 1:4) and the state of being perfect as God is perfect (Matt. 5:48).

Perfection is Founded upon the Authority of God

Israel of old was taught what to do in relationship to spiritual living. Those divine things that they saw and heard were to be followed and anything else was to be rejected (Deut.4:9-19). Likewise, the apostle Paul tells New Testament Christians the same thing (Phil. 4:9). That which the Christian is to "do" to be identified as perfect is live lawfully. Obedience to the Lord's commandments will see one to "*eternal life*" (Rom. 6:16, 23). To "believe in God" is to obey (Jn. 3:36). To "love" God is to obey (Jn. 14:15). To "fear" God is to obey (Deut. 6:2). The "*doing*," that identifies one as perfect, is obedience to God's laws.

A disciplined mind

Some claim to believe, love, and fear God yet they do not obey His commandments. The perfect mind is one that not only says they believe, love, and fear God but they manifest such faith in their lives of obedience (see Heb. 11:1ff). Our problem, as Christians, is not generally Bible knowledge but possessing the **discipline** to put God's laws into practice in our lives. We are a people who generally have good intentions yet when the fire is hot we get burned. James said, "*For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbles not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also*" (James 3:2). To bridle the whole body would take an immense amount of **self discipline**. Paul said, "*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (Rom. 3:23). The fact of the matter is that no matter how convicted I may be I have to live with the fact that I have failed God in many areas of life. I have sinned. I cannot maintain sinless perfection without His help and sacrifice. The disciplined mind; however, will keep trying the very best he can to live lawfully. Paul calls this perfect manner of living "pressing" (Phil. 3:14). Those who do not press into heaven are those who have failed to understand that God demands my efforts (Matt. 13:16ff). When I do fall He will always be there to pick me up if I call out for his help (Heb. 2:18). The perfect life is the life that gets up in humiliation, wipes the shameful dirt of sin off, and purposes not to do so again. Heaven is at stake.

The LOVE Chapter

Introduction:

Valentines Day... love is in the air... cards, flowers, candy, BIG RED HEARTS, balloons, and acts of affection administered to those we love. The first Bible book that comes to most Christian's mind when contemplating love is I Corinthians 13. This lesson shall examine the subject of love as it is revealed by the apostle Paul in the love chapter. Be forewarned, you may learn some things about love in this lesson that you have not previously considered.

I. Events Leading up to I Corinthians 13:

- A. Corinthians lacked love
- B. Confused Motives

II. Expository Examination of Text:

- A. Character traits of love
- B. The greatest gift is love

III. Love Lessons:

- A. No profit for the one who performs acts of mercy for the wrong reasons.
- B. No love equates to "sounding brass and clanging cymbals."

Conclusion:

One may have all the charisma, speaking ability, talent, able to sing, give great amounts of money into the church treasury, take care of the poor, and say beautiful prayers yet if he or she lacks genuine their acts are a mere "*sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.*" Genuine Bible love is exhibited by one who truly cares and desires the best for his fellow man. Acts performed, in the name of love, are never done to be seen but rather done to benefit.

