

A MORE **PERFECT** YOU

THE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION IN CHRIST

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STUDENT WORKBOOK

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A More Perfect You

The Pursuit of Perfection in Christ

Mike Mazzalongo

The Bible tells us to seek perfection yet we know that perfection is not attainable in this sinful flesh. These contradictory ideas are reconciled in this study of Christian perfection.



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1. Perfection: The Absolute Standard

There is something wrong with the title of this series, can you spot it? Here it is: You cannot have a 'more' perfect something or someone. You are perfect or you are not. Once something is perfect (without blemish or error) you cannot improve on it.

Intro – What’s wrong with the title of this series?

Different People Seek Different Perfection

There is a difference between what Christians and non-Christians seek.

A. Atheist / Humanist

Be the Best you can be _____

I’m OK, you’re OK _____

B. Eastern Religions

C. Jews/ Muslims

D. Pagans

E. Christians

1. Jesus Christ is perfection _____

2. Sin causes imperfection _____

3. There will always be unrest _____

4. Christians are not afraid _____

What is a Christian's attitude?

1. Perfection is the absolute _____

2. Perfection is a choice _____

A. Perfection confirms one's own imperfection _____

B. Perfection gives vision _____

C. Perfection provides a measure _____

D. Perfection offers a choice _____

- II Peter 1:5-7 _____

Two Kinds of Perfection

If we choose perfection, we need to understand the two kinds:

1. Condition Perfection _____

- Galatians 3:26-27 _____

2. Actual Perfection _____

“If I am considered perfect, why strive for actual perfection?”

Christians pursue actual perfection for seven reasons:

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____
- E. _____
- F. _____
- G. _____

2. Conditional or Actual Perfection?

For believers, becoming more perfect in Christ is the essence of life. Of course, this only makes sense if you understand that there are two aspects of perfection in the Christian's understanding.

Intro - How can one be "more perfect?"

Perfection from a Christian's perspective in twofold:

A. Conditional Perfection

- Mark 16:16; Acts 2:37

- John 3:3

- Romans 3:24

- I Corinthians 6:11

- I Peter 1:18

- I Corinthians 1:30

These are all ways to express _____

When we are judged, we will be judged in light of _____ perfection

- Romans 3:27-28

B. Actual Perfection

Jesus actually earned His perfection by His actions and life.

How can we “perfect” (conditionally) people pursue imperfection?

The Bible refers to actual perfection in various ways:

- Romans 6:19

- III John 5

- Ephesians 6:18

- Colossians 3:12

As those who are considered perfect in Christ,
we choose to pursue actual perfection through Christ. (Romans 12:1-2)

And so, we have two:

1. Conditional Perfection

2. Actual Perfection

For the Christian, there is no other option in life.

Not to pursue actual perfection in every aspect of life is either:

- a sign _____
- a compromise _____
- a lack _____
- a show _____

In Galatians 5, Paul lists a “sampling” of both types of conduct.

3. The Holy Spirit and Perfection

In this lesson, we look at how the Holy Spirit works in creating these states of conditional and actual perfection.

Intro – We have discussed “perfection” and how this Biblical idea affects our lives.

1. Conditional Perfection _____

2. Actual Perfection _____

Actual perfection is a way of life. _____

The Holy Spirit and Perfection

Most TV religions promote “manufactured spirituality.”

Much of the efforts at changing worship styles stem from the notion that:

The true results of this approach are twofold:

1. Elitism

We see this in our brotherhood in the guise of the progressive/traditional debates.

Both sides are right **and** wrong.

A. Progressives _____

B. Traditionals _____

2. Loss of Faith

- Romans 10:17 _____

For example, the Boston/International Church of Christ movement

The phenomenon that is present in Pentecostal or charismatic churches
is creeping into ours too.

Spiritual feelings/experiences are legitimate if they are produced by the Holy Spirit.

Here's the point: Legitimate spiritual feelings and experiences within the Christian life are generated by the Holy Spirit when _____

The spiritual experience of the cross is limitless and timeless. It does 4 things for me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Pursuing actual perfection brings harmony.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit perfecting me, I become a _____

True worship, therefore, takes place when _____

4. Paul's Teaching on Perfection

Mike examines the words and ideas that Paul lays before us in Galatians 5 as he describes the actual perfection Christians can achieve through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Intro - Review

1. Conditional Perfection _____

2. Actual Perfection _____

When we describe Christ, we are really _____

In Galatians 5:13-25, Paul uses words that describe _____

Galatians Background

A letter to defend against the false teachers in the churches Paul had established in Galatia.

In the letter, Paul establishes seven points:

1. Those who pervert the gospel _____ **Galatians 1:6-8**

2. Paul as a legitimate _____ **Galatians 1:11-12**

3. Paul was ready _____ **Galatians 2:11-16**

4. Paul reviews the manner in which one received _____ **Galatians 3:26-28**

One might ask “what about the things people do in response to faith, aren’t these works?”

These are things one does but they are not works of Law because:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

5. Paul points out what is at stake, _____ **Galatians 4:3-7**

The revelation of God “frees” a person.

6. Paul _____ the Christians. **Galatians 5:2-4**

One question that arises,
“What is so alluring about the false teachers and their teaching in the first place?”

Adherence to rules and law for salvation is tempting for three reasons:

A. It is _____

B. It appeals to our _____

C. It offers _____

7. He encourages them to pursue _____ **Galatians 5:13-16**

Paul answers the question,

“If I am perfect in God’s eyes, what do I do about the imperfection I see in me?”

False teachers answered _____

Paul answers _____

Summary

1. Paul is responding

2. False teachers are promoting the idea

3. Paul refutes

4. He reminds the Galatians of:

- The manner _____
- The message _____
- The messenger _____
- The stakes _____
- The way _____
- The lifestyle _____

5. Actual Perfection

In this lesson, Mike explains the reasons why the pursuit of Actual Perfection is not another form of "Law keeping."

Intro - Review

1. The two senses of perfection in the Bible:

A. _____

B. _____

2. The title of the book is a reference to _____

3. The key passage (Galatians 5:13-15) _____

The Look of Imperfection - Galatians 5:16-18

The term flesh or fleshly refers to imperfection.

vs. 16 - This is a summary reference to what has been said so far.

This is where theologians disagree.

- Baptist / Evangelical / Pentecostal _____

- New Testament Christianity _____

This passage is a continuation of God's offer of salvation.

This would be another form of Law-Keeping except for important differences:

A. The things pursued were _____

B. The things pursued were _____

C. Walking by the Spirit is not _____

The part that you contribute to actual perfection is
the same part you contribute to conditional perfection.

In the world, there are many ways to obtain a measure of perfection.

vs. 17-18 – Paul explains how the dynamics of perfect and imperfect work with in the individual.

Paul explains that the Spirit is limited by the material He works with – imperfect human flesh.

Those who are led by the Spirit are not under Law and this has two advantages:

A. _____

B. _____

Summary

1. The desire of the flesh is _____

2. Those who desire imperfection are _____

3. Law-Keeping does not and cannot _____

4. The Law was given _____

5. God's gift through Christ is _____

6. God's help through the Holy Spirit is _____

6. The Deeds of the Flesh

In this lesson, Mike examines the four groups of activities that Paul describes and condemns as those that will lead a Christian away from the kingdom of God.

Intro – Paul’s refuting and rebuking false teachers at the Galatian churches.

Paul encourages them to “walk by the Spirit” as a way to maintain and confirm their conditional perfection.

Paul gives a “sample” of the things that identify those who walk by the flesh rather than by the Spirit.

The Deeds of the Flesh – Galatians 5:19-21

Group #1 - _____

Human sexuality and how it is handled is a common issue among all.

The sexual deeds are of the flesh when they produce the following:

A. Immorality _____

B. Impurity _____

C. Sensuality _____

Group #2 - _____

A. Idolatry _____
B. Sorcery _____

Group #3 - _____

A. Enmities _____
B. Strife _____
C. Jealousy _____
D. Outbursts of Anger _____
E. Disputes _____
F. Dissensions _____
G. Factions _____
H. Envy _____

Group #4 - _____

A. Drunkenness _____

B. Carousing _____

The Warning - vs. 19-21

After having given a cross section of the types of things that define a person not walking after the Spirit:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Paul issues a twofold warning:

1. _____

2. _____

7. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit – Part 1

In this first of a two-part lesson, Mike describes the way that spiritual life and character are actually produced in the life of every disciple great and small.

Intro – Review Galatians Theme:

Last week’s lesson review four classes of sins produced by “walking by the flesh.”

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

Paul will go on to give another “sampling,” this time of the virtues produced by walking in the Spirit.

The Fruit of the Spirit is... vs. 22a

It is important to realize that the fruit comes from the Spirit, not from man.

How do the spiritual characteristics become a part of our character?

This happens in proportion

How do we actually submit to the Holy Spirit?

1. We submit to _____

- II Peter 1:21

Submitting to His word requires:

A. _____

- Acts 17:11 _____

B. _____

- Psalm 119:148 _____

C. _____

- Acts 2:42 _____

D. _____

- Matthew 7:21 _____

2. We submit to _____

Each members of the Godhead plays a specific role in our salvation:

A. The Father is the _____

B. The Son is the _____

C. The Holy Spirit is the _____

- Romans 8:28 _____

3. We submit to _____

- Hebrews 12:4-7 _____

Some people “fight” the Holy Spirit _____

Summary

If you walk in the Spirit, you will product His fruit.

We walk in the Spirit by:

1. Submit _____

2. Submit _____

3. Submit _____

We receive the Holy Spirit and begin this process at the moment of our _____

8. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit – Part 2

In this second lesson, Mike describes in detail the first of the spiritual fruit developed by God's Holy Spirit in man which is love.

Intro – Review

The Fruit of the Spirit is: Love

Paul gives a sample of virtues created by the Holy Spirit in Christians and the foremost of these is Christian Love. Galatians lists the fruit of the Spirit but it is described in **I Corinthians**.

The Character of Christian Love

1. In Christianity, Love is _____ vs. 1-3

vs. 1 _____

vs. 2 _____

vs. 3 _____

2. In Christianity, Love is _____ vs. 4-

Love has visible attributes:

A. Patient _____

B. Kind _____

C. Not jealous _____

D. Not arrogant _____

E. Not unbecoming _____

F. Not seek its own _____

G. Not provoked _____

H. Not count wrongs _____

I. Rejoices in right _____

J. Bears all things _____

K. Believes all things _____

L. Hopes all things _____

M. Endures all things _____

3. In Christianity, Love is _____ vs. 8-12

Much debate of the word "perfect" and what it refers to. _____

The Corinthians were focusing their attention on the wrong things. _____

The Greatness of Love - I Corinthians 13:13

The final conclusion "love is the greatest" - why?

1. Love is _____

2. Love is _____

3. Love is _____

Summary

The Holy Spirit creates love in us in the following way:

1. He reveals _____

2. He maintains _____

3. He creates _____

4. He completes _____

_____ begins the process

_____ completes the process

9. Three Sets of Spiritual Fruit

Mike closes out the series with a closer look at the spiritual fruit created in the believer as he continues to walk in the Spirit.

Intro - Review

The Holy Spirit produces spiritual fruit in us as we submit to His word/power/ministry

Three Sets of Spiritual Fruit

Paul mentions 9 virtues/fruit that are grouped into 3 sets:

A. Love / Joy / Peace

1. Love _____

2. Joy _____

3. Peace _____

Note that these three refer to the inner and singular experience that those who follow the Spirit enjoy.

You are not in the Spirit if the fruit of the Spirit is not in you to a certain degree.

B. Patience / Kindness / Goodness

1. Patience _____

2. Kindness _____

3. Goodness _____

These three refer to a person's relationship with other people.

C. Faithfulness / Gentleness / Self-Control

1. Faithfulness _____

2. Gentleness _____

3. Self-Control _____

When these three sets are examined we see that each address different needs and realities in spiritual living.

L / J / P _____

P / K / G _____

F / G / S-C _____

The “actual perfection” being crafted in us by the Holy Spirit in the form of these virtues/fruit is a concrete witness of the “conditional perfection” we already possess in Christ.

Summary

1. We are _____

2. Satan’s great weapon is _____

3. True faith is expressed by _____

True repentance is expressed by _____

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