**Striving for “Perfection”**

I first had this lesson titled “Striving for Perfection – Living with Imperfection,” but I was afraid too many wives might think it was a sermon on marriage! It isn’t. It is a simple lesson on the “perfect” aspects of Christianity, and our efforts toward them**.**

**I. Christians have the “perfect”:**

**A. Father, Matt.5:48**

He loves us *perfectly,* Rom.5:8;

Cares for us *perfectly*, Matt.10:29-31;

Provides for us *perfectly*, Matt.6:32; 7:9-11;

Instructs us *perfectly*, warns us *perfectly*, encourages us *perfectly*, and helps us *perfectly*. What more could anyone want in a father?

**B. Savior/Brother/Head/Husband, Heb.5:9**

He was the *perfect* combination of deity and humanity, Col.2:9.

He lived the *perfect* life, Heb.4:15.

He was the *perfect* sacrifice, Heb.2:9-15.

He is the *perfect* head/husband, Eph.1:22-23 > 5:23,25-27.

**C. Law, Jas.1:25**

It is *perfect* in its scope: *for all,* Mark 16: 15.

It is *perfect* in its source, power, and aim, Rom.1:16.

It is *perfect* in its renewing and proving power: Rom.12:2.

**II. Being thus surrounded and supported by the “perfect” *Father, Savior/Brother/Head,* and *Law,* why are we so “imperfect,” or at least feel that way? Rom.7:14-23**

**A. Because we know we are not doing our best, 2Cor.7:1.**

We can never be *perfected* as long as we try to serve two masters, Matt.6:24ff; Rom.6:12-14 > 15-22.

**B. Because recognizing our own imperfections keeps us humble, and gives opportunity for the power of God to be manifested in and through us, 2Cor.12:7-10.**

The “imperfections” of our lives remind us of our complete dependence upon God and His grace. They thus provide the opportunity for His *perfecting* power to be wrought *on*, and therefore *to* us, as well to be manifested to others *through* us, cf. 1Tim.1:16.

**C. Because our complete “perfection” is an operation performed by God at the end, 1Pet.5:10.**

We are commanded to be, and are therefore expected to be, *“perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect”* in Matt.5:48. But in context, this “perfection” refers to loving as God does, cf. vv.44-45, rather than being “sinless.” The perfection of being “sinless” is a state, or condition, of which all who have sinned are incapable, Rom.3:23. But this “perfection” is granted and performed by God at the coming of Jesus, 1Thess.5:23; Phil.2:21.

**III. What does it all mean?**

**We do not have to “perfect”- just *perfected:***

* **by moving forward and progressing, 2Cor.7:1;**
* **by patiently enduring and growing, Jas.1:2-4;**
* **by learning to and loving as God does, Matt.5:44-48; 1John 4:12-17; and**
* **by keeping His commandments and ceasing from sin, 1John 2:3-6; 1Cor.15:34.**