

What Saith the Scripture?

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Perfection

"And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"

(Ephesians 4:11)

by Katie Stewart

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Perfection is not an end in itself.

Genesis 1:1, " In the beginning God", points us to the One Who is our means to an end. Ephesus lost their first love, which was due to Him Who is first. It was their reasonable service, and they didn't do it. When that happens, all else is lost - and rightly so.

Since He is the Word, faith comes by Him. And since we are supposed to live by faith, we are supposed to live by every word that proceeds from His mouth. This is why doctrine is important. It's His mind and mouth, causing our life to be lived wholly through, and by Him. He is Our Means. And since He is, He is also Our End. He is truly Our Author And Finisher, Our Alpha And Omega. He is Our Portion.

This verse points us to Our Means.

1 Thessalonians 5:24 "Faithful is He that calleth you, Who also will do it."

Do what ? Bring what to pass ?

The common doctrine of the day emphasizes that the trip to eternal glory is the important thing the LORD will do. Yet, while this trip is an everlasting blessing to the one who makes it, the trip is not the means to an end. The importance of the above verse, is not that we get the "freebies" of an everlasting Heaven. It is the honor due His Name, for all eternity, that He worked this holiness in us. The work of faith, on our part, is to believe Him for it. Man ought to obey GOD, just because He is due that. GOD commands obedience from His people, and man is able to obey. But man, of himself, never has, and never will. All have sinned, and come short. It is only our Saviour, Who became man, Who has destroyed the works of the devil.

2 Thessalonians 3:3, "But the Lord is faithful, *Who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.*"

1 Thessalonians 5:23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; *and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Love is the Foundation. "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Since the Savior did this wonderful thing for us, in destroying the works of the devil, *why don't we* live like it !?

1 Timothy 1:5, "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

Pure doctrine purifies. The LORD is our daily deliverance from sin. The works that we do should not deny what we say with our mouth. Remember, faith without works is dead. What is true for one, is true for all. GOD is no respecter of persons.

Those who love much, are forgiven much. And to whom much is given, much is required.

Luke 7:47, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." Luke 12:48, " For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required".

The sinner that agrees with GOD about her sin, recognizes the full shame of her deeds against this Holy GOD, Who loves her much. She, in turn, *turns from* sin, and loves much the One Who Loves Much. She has been given much, and much is required from her, from then on.

If she offers GOD "a little repentance", while knowing full well what He has done for her, then she...

1. Doesn't love much, and only gives to get.
2. Her opinion of sin isn't as awful as GOD's. Therefore she doesn't hate her sin as much as GOD does. She sees her "little" sins as not as bad as "bad people's" sins.
3. Since her view of sin is less than GOD's, her view of holiness is also less than GOD's. Her view of GOD Himself, is less than GOD Himself is. *How* can she love much a GOD she doesn't know much?

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not every one that saith unto Me, LORD, LORD, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in Heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, LORD, LORD, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, *ye that work iniquity.*"

The LORD is just as strict and firm as His Word makes Him sound -- because He is His Word. And when He says "ye that work iniquity", He is talking to the one who is presently working iniquity -- *whosoever* that may be. When He says, in Hebrews 12:14, "holiness, without which *no man* shall see the LORD", He means nothing less than exactly that. By their fruits ye shall know them.

The first two commandments, and all the law and the prophets, are founded on love. When a man does not obey GOD, it is because he does not love GOD. This is the plain, and very simple truth of it.

1 John 2:5, "But whoso **keepeth His Word**, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him."

You cannot know you are a Christian, if you abide in sin. You can say you know, but you deceive yourself, because the Spirit is **only** given to those who obey Him.

Acts 5:32, "And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given **to them that obey Him.**"

Read this carefully, with an honest heart, desiring to know the very character and person of Jesus Himself.

1 John 3:5-10, "And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not: *whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him.* Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. *For this purpose* the Son of God was manifested,

that He might destroy the works of the devil.

Whosoever is born of God **doth not commit sin**; for His seed remaineth in him: and he **cannot** sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Yes, a Christian can backslide, but while he is stubbornly in his sin, he cannot know he is, or ever was, a Christian. This does not mean he has lost his salvation. It simply means he cannot know, in his heart or soul, that he ever had salvation. Assurance is only given, by the Spirit, to the righteous one who walks in the Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 5:19 "Quench not the Spirit."

When you "quench" the Spirit, you "extinguish" Him. That's the meaning of the Greek word for "quench". When something is "extinguished", it no longer exists. And when you "extinguish" the Holy Spirit, His Spirit can no longer bear testimony with your spirit that you are a child of GOD. The Holy Spirit is "given **to them that obey Him**".

Supporting verses:

- 1 John 1:6-7,9 "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the Truth: But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin... If we confess our sins, He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- 1 John 2:3 "**And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His Commandments.**"
- 1 John 2:4 "**He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.**"
- 1 John 3:6 "Whosoever abideth in Him **sinneth not**: whosoever sinneth **hath not seen Him, neither known Him.**"
- 1 John 5:3 "For **this** is the love of God, **that we keep His Commandments**: and His

commandments are not grievous [burdensome]."

- 1 John 5:18 "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not."
- 1 John 5:20 "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is True, and we are in Him that is True, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and Eternal Life."
- 1 John 4:13 "**Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.**"
- Ephesians 4:30 "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."
- Isaiah 63:10 "But they rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them."
- Acts 7:51 "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye."
- Psalm 51:11 "Cast me not away from Thy presence; and **take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.**"
- Isaiah 8:20 "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them."
- Revelation 2:29 "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."
- 1 John 3:24 "And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, **by the Spirit which he hath given us.**"
- 1 John 2:3 "And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His Commandments."

And as for love, please read this:

- John 14:15, "**If** ye love Me, keep My Commandments." Show me your faith by your works.
- John 14:23, "Jesus answered and said unto him, **If** a man love Me, **he will** keep My Words: and **My Father will** love him, and **We will** come unto him, and make Our abode with him." A promise that He will, *if* we will.
- John 15:10, "**If** ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's Commandments, and abide in His love." *The same way* Jesus kept His Father's commandments, and thus abode in His love, is the way we are to keep His commandments and thus - abide in His love.
- 1 John 5:2, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His Commandments." As long as I'm doing what He tells me, in the Spirit in which He tells me, and , most importantly, if my motive is love, then we KNOW that the resulting actions toward others is love...
- 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of GOD, that we keep His Commandments: and His Commandments are not grievous." It's an equation. GOD's love=obeying without grievousness. In other words, love is demonstrated in joyous obedience. No one is forcing obedience. It's the joy that comes out of an abundant heart.

Without love, knowledge puffeth up, and we are just sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Perfection brings us into closer, and closer, intimacy with our perfectly jealous GOD.

The doctrine of Christian perfection compliments GOD for His wisdom in knowing how to grow His

people, and keep them holy, even as He is holy. This doctrine of GOD reveals His character, His likes and dislikes, His hates and His loves. Perfection is what He is. Perfection is what His people *must be*. He commands us, in Matthew 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." *If we are His, then we will*

be like Him.

Philippians 2:12, 13, "...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."
Jude 21