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## Perfection

(Required in the New Testament)

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### Hebrews 6

1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

### Matthew 5

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

### Hebrews 5

9 And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;

### Hebrews 2

10 For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

### 1 Peter 5

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

Heb.6:1 lists **seven doctrines**: the doctrine of Christ, perfection, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. The seven doctrines of God are very important to our salvation. One of these is the doctrine of **perfection** (not the doctrine of imperfection!). Let's examine the scriptures to see what they say about perfection.

In Mat.5:48, **perfection is a commandment** of God spoken by Jesus. It states "**Be ye therefore perfect..**" In Joh.14:15, Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Since perfection is one of Christ's commandments, then we must do it to prove we love Jesus. This same verse tells us the standard of perfection we are to reach; it is that of God himself. Jesus said, "...even as your Father which is in heaven is **perfect**." This perfection is spiritual because God is a spirit (Joh.4:24). Some religions claim that humans cannot be perfect on this Earth, but this is not true according to scripture. The commandment to **be perfect** would not have been given unless it was possible to do so. God gave the commandment and also gave the **power** under the new covenant to **become perfect**.

Heb.5:9 and 2:10 prove that Jesus was not **born perfect**, but was **made perfect** as he learned about his heavenly father, God. Some religions teach that Jesus was the only perfect person on Earth. Heb.2:10 shows that Christ was **made perfect through sufferings**. 1Pt.5:10 states "...after that ye have **suffered** a while, **make you perfect**.." This shows the same process for Jesus and other humankind. We must **suffer** in our battle against evil and then grow up spiritually to **become perfect**.

Hebrews 12

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

Galatians 3

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

Hebrews 7

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Ephesians 4

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

2 Timothy 3

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

James 1

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

James 3

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

The fact that the new covenant **requires perfection** and furnishes the power to **make humans perfect** is shown in Heb.12:23, "...to the spirits of just **men made perfect**." This portion of Hebrews chapter 12 contrasts the two covenants; the old covenant given on Mt. Sinai and the Mt. Zion new covenant. The contrast was that under the old covenant **perfection** was **not** attainable, but **perfection was** attainable under the new covenant.

Gal.3:3 asks, "...having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made **perfect** by the flesh?" Paul contrasted the old and new covenants and asked the Galatians if the flesh depth of spirit under the law could make them perfect. The answer is no. However, the New Testament power depth of grace **could make them perfect**.

The same contrast is made in Heb.7:19, "For the law made nothing **perfect**, but the bringing in of a better hope **did**..." Did what? **Did make things perfect!** So, the Old Testament **did not perfect humans** but the New Testament **did**. Jesus was the first human to become perfected.

He ascended up on high and gave gifts unto men (Eph.4:8). The gifts he gave are listed in Eph.4:11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

Eph.4:12 tells the purpose of these gifts is, "For the **perfecting** of the saints..." The power that Christ used to **become perfect** is the same power given to the saints to **become perfect**. Verse 13 shows we can become perfected like Christ, "Till we all come ... unto a **perfect man**, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Paul wrote this same thought to Timothy, saying, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God ... That the man of God may be **perfect**..." This shows that scripture was given to perfect mankind in the same way that the gifts were given to perfect saints.

James also believed and taught that people could become perfected, saying "...ye may be **perfect** and entire..." This proves that scriptures teach mankind can **be perfect** under the new covenant grace depth of spirit.

James not only taught perfection in the above scripture, but here states, "the same is a **perfect man**."

Hebrews 13

20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,  
 21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 11

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Hebrews 7

11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

Hebrews 10

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Hebrews 9

9 Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

2 Corinthians 13

9 For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong; and this also we wish, even your perfection.

Heb.13:20,21 makes two points; 1) God will make you **perfect**, and, 2) it is through the **blood** of the **everlasting covenant**. The blood of the everlasting covenant is symbolic of the New Testament grace depth of spirit that brings this perfection.

This set of scriptures contrasts the old covenant with the new covenant. Heb.11:40 says, “they [people under old covenant] without us [new covenant people] should not be made **perfect**.” The old covenant could **not bring perfection**. The new covenant **did** bring the power to **make believers perfect**.

Heb.7:11 says that if the old covenant, which had the Levitical priesthood, could have **perfected** people, there would have been no need of a new covenant. Therefore, the new covenant **does** contain the power to **perfect** a soul.

Heb.10:1 states that the sacrifices offered under the old covenant **does not perfect believers**. The new covenant has a deeper power level and can **perfect** believers.

Heb.9:9 states that the old covenant **did not bring perfection** to the conscience.

Heb.9:11 continues to contrast the old covenant **without perfection** to the new covenant **with perfection** as it states, “a greater and more **perfect tabernacle**.”

In 2Co.13:9 Paul, a minister of the new covenant grace depth of spirit, makes this statement, “...this also we wish, even **your perfection**.”

Why would a qualified apostle of the new covenant wish for such a thing if it could not be attained (as some religions teach)? Paul knew they **could reach perfection**, proven by scriptures already used in this article, so this was not wishful thinking; it was a reality. The saints **could reach perfection**, as in Eph.4:12, “For the perfecting of the saints...”

John 17

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Colossians 1

28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

Colossians 4

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Luke 13

32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

Luke 8

14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

Hebrews 10

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Philippians 3

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.  
13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

Here Jesus prayed to God his Father that the apostles might be “**made perfect in one.**” He continued, “...that the world may know that thou hast sent me...” The Christian world agrees that God sent Jesus, therefore they should also understand that the apostles were **made perfect in one.**

Preaching and teaching the message that Christ brought makes it possible to present “**every man perfect**” in Christ Jesus. The apostle Paul taught the **purpose of the gospel was to make believers perfect.** Paul further stated in Col.4:12, “...that ye may stand **perfect** and complete **in all the will of God.**”

Jesus said, “I shall be **perfected.**” It is important to note that at this point Jesus was not *already* perfected, but he would be perfected *in the future*. This agrees with Heb.2:10 and 5:9 that say Christ was **made perfect**, showing he was **not born perfect**.

Jesus taught perfection in the parable of the sower. He said that the seed which fell among thorns are they that bring no fruit to perfection. In contrast, the seed sown in good ground **would bring** forth fruit to **perfection**.

This shows one must be sanctified in order to **become perfected**. Sanctification is a process of growth in the new covenant grace depth.

In verse 12, Paul says he had not yet attained **perfection**, but that he was following after, or striving to **become** perfect.

In verse 13, Paul again states he has not yet reached perfection, but he is forgetting the past and “**reaching forth unto those things which are before.**” Perfection is one of those things he is reaching toward.

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

#### Luke 6

40 The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

#### Matthew 19

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

#### Psalms 138

8 The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: for-sake not the works of thine own hands.

#### Psalms 18

32 It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

#### Psalms 101

2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

#### 1 Corinthians 1

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

In verse 14, the **mark** that Paul is working for is perfection. The prize is eternal life that he would get when he fulfilled his calling.

In verse 15, Paul states that those who desire to “**be perfect**” must strive to reach it. He also states that if anything in your mind hinders you from reaching perfection, God will reveal this unto you.

This scripture shows that Jesus taught that people could reach **perfection**. Jesus refers to himself as their master or teacher. He became **perfect** (Luk.13:32; Heb.2:10, 5:9) and we can become as our master and be **perfected** too.

This verse shows that Jesus taught that mankind could reach **perfection**.

This Old Testament scripture is a type, or picture, of Christ. It says that God would **perfect** him. So, we understand that Jesus was to reach this mark of **perfection**.

This is another Old Testament prophecy of Christ, stating that God would make his way **perfect**. Again we understand that Jesus was to reach the mark of **perfection**.

This Old Testament prophecy concerning Christ states he would behave himself wisely in a **perfect way** and would have a **perfect heart**. By reading this prophecy, Jesus would know that he was to reach this **mark of perfection** while in this life. This is another Old Testament prophecy stating that Jesus could and would reach perfection.

In this verse, Paul teaches that **perfection** is in the mind and that each saint and minister is to be **perfectly joined together in the same mind**. Paul would not ask this of them if it were not possible to do. This also shows the only way a group of people can work as a many-membered body is by having the same mind and the same judgment. Where this perfection does exist, there are no divisions among people, as in Joh.17:23, “...that they may be made **perfect** in one...”

1 Corinthians 2

6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

This verse states that some people **were perfected** in the early church. The verse does not speak in the future tense, saying that people would *later* become perfect, but speaks in the present tense, saying that people **are** perfect.

2 Corinthians 13

11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

This is a salutation, used by Paul, the apostle who wrote 13 books of the New Testament. He taught **perfection**. The New Testament taught **perfection**. So, now we repeat Paul's words, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be **perfect**, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

## Words and definitions used in this article

Str. Conc.	Definition	Translated	Scripture
Greek 739	thorough, complete, capable, proficient, able to meet all demands	<u>perfect</u>	2Ti.3:17
2005	to finish, complete, end; to perfect, attain a goal; (mid.) to undergo	perform, accomplished, accomplish- ing, do, finish, <u>made perfect</u> , make, perfecting, performance, performed	Gal.3:3
2675	to restore, put in order, mend; to make complete, equip, train; to prepare, ordain	<u>perfect</u> , <u>make perfect</u> , mending, fitted, framed, perfected, <u>perfectly joined</u> <u>together</u> , prepared, restore	1Pt.5:10 Heb.13:21 Luk.6:40 1Co.1:10 2Co.13:11
2676	perfection, completion	<u>perfection</u>	2Co.13:9
2677	preparation, training, equipping	<u>perfecting</u>	Eph.4:12
5046	perfect, mature, finished	<u>perfect</u> , full age, men, <u>more perfect</u>	Mat.5:48 Eph.4:13 Jam.1:4 Heb.9:11 Col.1:28 Col.4:12 Jam.3:2 Php.3:15 Mat.19:21 1Co.2:6
5047	perfection, maturity, completeness	<u>perfection</u> , perfectness	Heb.6:1
5048	to perfect, complete, finish; (pass.) to reach a goal, be fulfilled, completed, made perfect	<u>made perfect</u> , <u>perfected</u> , finish, <u>make perfect</u> , fulfilled, consecrated, finished, <u>perfect</u>	Heb.5:9 Heb.9:9 Heb.2:10 Heb.12:23 Heb.7:19 Heb.11:40 Heb.10:1 Heb.9:9 Joh.17:23 Luk.13:32 Heb.10:14 Php.3:12

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## Words and Definitions used in this article *(continued)*

Str. Conc.	Definition	Translated	Scripture
5050	perfection, accomplishment, fulfillment	<u>perfection</u> , performance	Heb.7:11
5052	to mature (to fruitfulness)	bring to perfection	Luk.8:14
Hebrew 1584	to bring to an end, fail; fulfill	ceaseth, come to an end, fail, <u>perfect</u> , performeth	Psa.138:8
8537	blamelessness, integrity, innocence	integrity, uprightness, upright, venture, full, perfection, <u>perfect</u> , simplicity, uprightly	Psa.101:2b
8549	without defect, blameless, perfect	without blemish, <u>perfect</u> , upright, without spot, whole, uprightly, sincerely, complete, full, sincerity, sound, undefiled	Psa.18:32 Psa.101:2a

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