

WHOLE WHEAT

The truth is simple...just simply not known.

A PUBLICATION FOR BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING

Practice Makes Perfect

Psalm 4:4 says, "Tremble and do not sin." Generally, religious people today do not fear God to such an extent that they tremble when they sin. **People claim they cannot help but sin, because we are all sinners and people who say they have no sins are liars.** They use 1 John 1:8, as an excuse to continue sinning.

Yet, at the same time, Jesus says we are to [be perfect](#) as the heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48). Jesus also commanded one person to go and sin no more lest something worse would come upon him.

Was Jesus' command unreasonable, or can we be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect? Did Jesus teach this seemingly unreasonable doctrine about not sinning and being perfect to His disciples? One thing for sure is, not many people know the answer to this Bible mystery.

The apostle Paul had the attitude that he had not obtained the state of perfection yet and therefore, he felt he wasn't worthy to come up in a resurrection to eternal life (Phil. 3:11, 14). What a far cry his gospel is from those today who preach, "Give your heart to the Lord and just believe; you'll be saved." Some even go so far as to say you cannot lose your salvation once you have it. They use only certain Scriptures and avoid others that will not back up their false doctrines of half truths.

Jesus Himself, who cannot lie, said you have to be considered worthy to attain to the age of the resurrection (Luke 20:35).

Doesn't He know what He's talking about? Jesus told those who follow Him to beware of the teachings of the Pharisees (Matt. 16:6-12). Those Pharisees, or hypocrites, exist today much more than they did in Jesus' day. Remember, there is only one true teaching and that comes from Jesus Christ alone (John 14:6).

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[To learn more about the subject of 'righteousness' click here.](#)

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Practice Makes Perfect

Let's see what God's word, the Bible, has to say about being perfect and not sinning. There is a word that is not used much or understood in God's word. It is a word that few people realize is a key that unlocks the true gospel. That word is practice. We've all heard the expression, "Practice makes perfect," but not many people take that phrase seriously. Yes, practice, when it is connected to [righteousness](#), does make one perfect, as Jesus said in Matthew 5:48. Ironically, the key word "practicing" is used for the first time, in the New Testament, in the very next verse. In Matthew 6:1, Jesus Christ Himself says to His true disciples; "Beware of practicing your righteousness to be noticed by men." These words show that true disciples of Jesus Christ practice righteousness, and it isn't just a few hours a week. It's *all* the time.

We've all heard the expression, "Practice makes perfect," but not many people take that phrase seriously.

Why are true followers of Jesus Christ continually practicing righteousness—continually doing good? The first reason is, they are imitating their Savior, Jesus Christ, who continually went about doing good (Acts 10:38). Were Jesus Christ's true disciples abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which they continually did? The answer is, yes (Acts 9:36)! This is how the Father in heaven is glorified and it is the Way a true disciple, or overcomer, let's his light shine before others (Matt. 5:16).

The second reason disciples of Jesus Christ are practicing righteousness is, for overcoming. You see, they are disciplining themselves daily for the purpose of godliness (1 Tim. 4:7). Jesus gave His true followers instructions on righteousness and warned

them that the righteousness they were practicing had to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, or they would not be converted. In other words, they would not enter the [kingdom of God](#) within until their righteousness came from their hearts. They would not receive the new nature, Jesus Christ's nature formed in them, until their righteousness was no longer done hypocritically (Matt. 5:20; Gal. 4:19; Luke 17:21).

God says we are to do His Will from the heart, and then we will have His nature formed in us.

All God's Ways are righteous (Psalm 145:17). All Jesus' Ways were righteous. All our ways must be made righteous before God. How can this be? God's Ways are God's Will, so then, God's Will is righteousness. God says we are to do His Will from the heart, and then we will have His nature formed in us (Eph. 6:6; 1 Peter 5:10). There will be a certain amount of testing or suffering, but you can be sure it is nothing compared to the new nature and the revelation of His glory (1 Peter 4:12-13).

In effect, when you practice righteousness each day for God, you are overcoming the evil one, overcoming your evil side, your evil nature, your satanic nature. Every time you resist the evil impulses of your snake-like nature, the snake and the evil impulses grow weaker. The food that keeps the snake strong and healthy in your body is sin (Gen. 4:7). Satan is put to death in your body by practicing righteousness for God and His glory (Rom. 12:21). This allows God to crush Satan and put him under your heel or authority (Rom. 16:20). Psalm 37:27 puts it all together when it says, "Overcome evil by doing good, so you will abide forever [live forever]."

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You are righteous in God's eyes when you practice righteousness to please Him each day.

Many do not know that being born again is the [i overcoming](#) process. The one Scripture that is never mentioned by those who falsely say they are born again is 1 John 2:29. It is saying if you know that Jesus Christ is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is truly born of Him. True disciples practice righteousness daily for God's glory, for God's blessings and rewards, and for overcoming their evil natures. They practice righteousness so they can have Christ's nature formed in them, and enter God's rest as mentioned in Hebrews 4:10 and Galatians 4:19.

Now, here is a point on righteousness about which many remain deceived. First John 3:7 says, "The one who practices righteousness [for God] is [considered] righteous just as God is righteous." God's word said it, we believe it, and that settles it. You are righteous in God's eyes when you practice righteousness to please Him each day.

God gives His Spirit only to those who will obey Him.

What about those who will not overcome by practicing righteousness daily for God? They remain of the devil, according to God's word, which cannot lie (1 John 3:10; Heb. 6:18). Jesus overcame the world. He was tested in all things and Satan could not find any fault in Him (John 14:30; 16:33). We, too, are to overcome the evil pulls of the flesh and put them to death with the help of God's Spirit (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:16). If we don't or won't obey Jesus Christ, we won't be covered by the

blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:2). God gives His Spirit only to those who will obey Him (Acts 5:32). [i We must live as Jesus Christ gave us example to live](#), and overcome our evil natures by keeping His works. We must endure to the end keeping them, if we are to be covered by His blood (John 14:12; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; 21:7). The only exception for anyone is a situation similar to that of the thief who was dying on a cross. Otherwise, there is no excuse for refusing to overcome.

They do not hold out on God in certain areas of their lives, but are wholeheartedly devoted to pleasing God.

The word perfect, in the Bible, means spiritually mature. See the margin note in Philippians 3:15. Mature followers of Jesus Christ no longer practice sin in their lives, but only practice righteousness toward God for His glory. They do all the good that they do in the name of Jesus Christ as they have been commanded in Colossians 3:17. They do not hold out on God in certain areas of their lives, but are wholeheartedly devoted to pleasing God. They are perfect in attitude, perfect in gratitude. They have developed honest and good hearts, if they didn't have them to begin with (Luke 8:15). They have been made complete (2 Cor. 13:9, 11). They have rested from all their works of the flesh and have entered the [i kingdom of God](#) within, which is God's rest (Heb. 4:10; Luke 17:21).

Yes, practice does make perfect and idleness is the devil's hand tool. That fact has been explained, and proven in great detail, in this study. If you want to be perfect, then you had better start to practice the faith of Jesus Christ, because there is only one faith (Eph. 4:5). God bless you in your walk with God. □

Satan's Number One Weapon



'Feeling Sorry For Yourself'

People who feel sorry for themselves indulge in the flesh and its corrupt desires (Rom. 8:13). The symptoms of feeling sorry for self include grumbling, complaining and finding fault with others (Jude 14-24; 1 Cor. 5:7; Gal. 5:16, 19-21).

Consider the force that motivate those who practice the deeds of the flesh mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21. One thing they all have in common is the fact that they feel sorry for themselves. Before a man robs a bank, he must first think of the idea. Then he must dwell on it (James 1:14-15). He must then justify his actions by feeling sorry for himself; then the act is committed. These people have been overcome by Satan's number one weapon—self pity.

If you are honest with yourself, you must admit that when you feel sorry for yourself, you open yourself up to Satan.

Now take a moment and reflect upon your sins of the past and how feeling sorry for yourself was an integral part of each sin. If you are honest with yourself, you must admit that when you feel sorry for yourself, you open yourself up to Satan. When you allow Satan to make you feel sorry for yourself, he will tempt you to continually justify what you want that you shouldn't have, until the evil deed is accomplished.

The Apostle Paul said that he had learned the secret of being content in whatever state he found himself (Phil. 4:11). That's quite a secret and this article explains that secret in detail.

The first thing we must do is become aware of the different ways we can feel sorry for ourselves.

How can we put to death and destroy Satan's number one weapon? The first thing we must do is become aware of the different ways we can feel sorry for ourselves.

Don't allow yourself to feel sorry for yourself in any area of your life because that is not accepting the day God has for you to help you [overcome](#). It is not positive, not good, not wholesome, not uplifting, not creative and it is non-productive thinking (Phil. 4:8). Self pity turns people off on your personality. It is the source of sick self-love.

We need to train and discipline ourselves according to righteousness, according to the

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right things we should be doing for God. We need to train ourselves to be content, train ourselves to be happy, train ourselves to study God's word on a daily basis and train ourselves to pray for others as well as our own needs (1 Tim. 4:7; Eccl. 3:22; 2 Tim 2:15; James 5:16).

When we trust in God, in all things, then feeling sorry for ourselves is no longer part of our character.

When we trust in God in all things, then feeling sorry for ourselves is no longer part of our character. It has been replaced by total [i](#) **faith**. God's word admonishes us to be content with our wages (Luke 3:14). Godliness is a means of great gain, if and when it is accompanied by contentment (1 Tim. 6:6). If you have enough to eat and clothes to wear, you should be content (1 Tim. 6:8). Let your life be free from the love of money and be content with what you have. You have God as your friend, your protector, your provider. You have eternal life dwelling in you.

Can you see how much faith our brothers and sisters had in the past? Even upon martyrdom, many said with bold confidence, "The Lord is my helper, I shall not fear what man shall do to me" (Heb. 13: 5-6).

We need to continually be on guard that our hearts are not weighted down with the worries of this life.

Let us put to death Satan's number one weapon. We must destroy it by practicing contentment in the areas of our life that are not now content. We need to continually be on

guard that our hearts are not weighted down with the worries of this life. We need to become godly examples to others who are running the race and fighting the good fight. We are either God's example or we become [i](#) **stumbling blocks** to others.

We must bring all facets of our lives into the captivity of what Jesus Christ said we should do. He has given us His Spirit so that we have the desire to do what we should, and we have His personal power to help us do it. He has given us the same power that created this world. Nothing shall be impossible to us.

So, let us continue to fight the good fight of faith and not gripe or complain, bellyache or feel sorry for ourselves any longer. The time is short. Redeem this time for the days are very evil. □



**MISCONCEPTIONS
VS.
TRUTH**

***"You automatically
do good /
righteousness."***

The truth is...

Matters of the Heart



The condition of our heart really matters to our Lord. **We can try to put on a false front to those around us, but we cannot fool God.** He knows what we think and how we feel. When He chooses us, He has a very special plan for us. Part of His plan is to work with and change our heart.

He says in Colossians 3:12-13, “Those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” And, Colossians 3:14 says: **“And beyond all these things, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.”**

There is a picture to grasp from these verses. When Satan runs evil thoughts by us, we are to turn off those thoughts and think about helping others—not only with our hands, but with our minds and our mouths too. There is a saying so true, which is: “We are what we

think, not what we think we are.” When we think about what we can do to be compassionate, we can then speak and act with compassion. When we think about what we can do to be kind, humble, gentle and patient, we will then be all of these wonderful things and fulfill the law of God. In all these things, [i](#)love is the bottom line. **We can successfully carry out all God’s wonderful fruits of the Spirit when we think, and act, with love** (Gal. 5:22-23).

Another matter of the heart is peace. Colossians 3:15 talks about peace ruling in our heart. Peace rules when we think peaceful thoughts. However, one may constantly think of how evil the world is becoming. This is true; this is a fact. **But we need to think on how we can make the world a better place by showing love—saying good words and doing good works (actions) toward others for God.** We can be assured that our Lord is fulfilling His prophecies, and we can think of all the positive things happening to make this all come about.

One way I keep peace in my heart, is I love to listen to good, uplifting music. [i](#)([To hear some of Karren’s original gospel songs click here](#)) It makes my thoughts very pleasant. Colossians 3:16 says: “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in our hearts to God.” I’d say that about sums it up perfectly!

Your Sister in Christ,

Karren

[i](#) [For more 'Woman to Woman' articles click here.](#)

Letter From the Editor

Dear *Whole Wheat* Readers,

Boy, am I excited about this issue! It *really* makes you think about your spiritual walk, on a day-to-day, even moment-to-moment, basis. In the *Practice Makes Perfect* article, I think about how often I must remember that this way of life is a journey, a *daily* journey. That there is a goal of perfection for us all to strive for. Am I striving for perfection in all that I do? Yikes!! This question could be a wake up call. Am I aiming for perfection at work, with my friends? Do I fight to have a good attitude in all that I do? Some days can be tougher than others, so rather than look at the whole day, break it down if that will help. I have done this, if it is a challenging day.

A big part of aiming for perfection is our attitude. When I read the article *Satan's Number One Weapon*, it makes me think of how many times feeling sorry for myself can sneak into my thoughts. If it stays there for a while and festers, then it leads to sin. This is a tricky one because many times I am not even aware of it. When you think about it, this can be a big reason for many of our problems, maybe even *most* of our problems! If practice makes perfect then this can also apply to sin. Let's perfect holiness and not sin (2 Cor. 7:1).

Paul, when he was writing to the churches, was constantly warning the people to stay alert, be on the watch for Satan, their attitude and thoughts (1 Pet. 5:8). That is really what this issue is all about. For those of you who have

been around for a while, take these articles and really examine yourselves and your life (1 Cor. 13:31; 2 Cor. 3:5). Have you fallen into the trap of being lukewarm? Can your attitude be better tomorrow than it was today? Are you feeling sorry for yourself and then using that to justify your sin? Really think about it. You might be surprised what you discover! How can we excel still more as Paul had written to the church in Thessalonica (1 Thess. 4:10)? Can you imagine, they were doing great work, but he was spurring them on to excel still *more*! Talk about pumping it up! Like a coach he was encouraging the team to the finish line, to the end. That's just what we're trying to do here at [i Whole Wheat!](#)

What a challenge we all face, in light of today's wicked world. However, if we are faithful until the end, the [i rewards of God](#) are unimaginable (1 Cor. 2:9). God is here to help us. He has not left us alone but given us a helper (John 14:16). So let's take the same encouragement that Paul gave the church. Let's continue practicing to be perfect, as our heavenly Father, examine our daily attitude and remember to continually be zealous, so there's no chance of being lukewarm. The more we do that, the more we are perfecting our walk with God and His love until, God willing, we stand in the presence of love itself (1 John 4:8). Then we have truly made it!

In His Love,

Scott

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Lukewarm

“So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth” (Rev. 3:16).

God despises those who are lukewarm in pleasing Him. Why? The lukewarm person is like a worthless employee who isn't putting out much work. He is not totally useless, yet, he is not very productive either. He doesn't merit firing from the job, nor would you rehire him for the job if he quit. He aggravates you like a festering sore that just won't heal.

What would you do if you were God and someone you were trying to convert, and form Christ's nature in, wasn't putting much effort into overcoming his old self by doing good (Gal. 4:19; Col. 3:6-9; Rom. 12:21)? What would you do with someone who was lukewarm? Well, when coffee becomes lukewarm, you put a fire under it to heat it up. That is just what God does to lukewarm people (1 Peter 1:6-7; Dan. 11:35).

If you know what you are reading is true, don't harden your heart by not living it (Heb. 3:15; Rev. 3:15-16, 18-19). God is determined to save us, even if we are not determined to overcome. The only way we can lose, then, is

to entirely quit living for God; but if we endure to the end, we will be saved (Matt. 24:13; 10:22).

Many are called to [i](#)overcome, but there will be few chosen because few will continue to overcome until they have been made complete (Matt. 22:14). The Lord says, “Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your [i](#)deeds completed in the sight of My God” (Rev. 3:2). The love of many will grow cold (Matt. 24:12). But God commands that, “In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit” (Eph. 4:22). “Put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him” (Col. 3:8-10). You must not love your old life unto death by seeking to save your old life and continuing to live a sinful life. Instead, lose your old life, [i](#)by living Christ's life, and you will save your eternal life (Matt. 10:39). It's that simple.□

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