

# Coach House Church BEACONS

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## I ' M N O T P E R F E C T

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Would everyone who believes he/she is perfect please put your hand in the air? What? Nobody put their hand up? How can that be? We are Christians! We are regular churchgoers! We read our Bibles! Well then we ought to be perfect! Right. No! We are not perfect. The thing is that's what people who don't go to church expect of us! They expect us to practice what we preach! They expect us to act like Christians. When we don't, they love it! They think that gives them an excuse for staying home and not coming to church. Christians are not Perfect. We are all far from being perfect. I know right - quite a shock.

In the book of Philippians in the Bible Chapter 3 verse 12, Paul writes:

**I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection.**

The Apostle Paul declares: "I am not perfect"! He's being honest. Paul knows that he frequently sins. 1 Timothy 1:15 he also says:

**This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I am the worst of them all.**

and in 1 John 1:8 says:

**If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.**

So anybody who thinks they are a good person is only fooling themselves. When we give our lives to Christ, Jesus does not destroy bodily weakness. We still have sickness, pain, and many health problems. Our bodies are not perfect. Our souls continue living in a corruptible body. We are going to sin! I make mistakes every day! None of us can be absolutely perfect. None of us can be absolutely flawless. None of us are above being tempted. All of us have moments when our hearts are not completely pure.

We will make mistakes as long as we live... and every mistake is a sin. So, every mistake...if it were not for the Jesus dying on a cross for our sins would leave us unprotected and heading for eternity in hell. But as Church people we should always be striving for perfection.

Back to the Philippians Chapter verse 13 & 14:

**Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us..**

Paul didn't stay the way he was before he met Jesus. He knew he hadn't achieved perfection...But he pressed on toward it. This was his, Paul's, God-given purpose. When Jesus saved Paul earlier in the Bible on the Road to Damascus, that was just the beginning. He had been saved to live for Jesus and to serve Him. Paul was going to try to live like Jesus did. And that is what we are all called to do! The word "press" in Verse 14 comes from a Greek word διώκω (diōkō) which means to follow after, to pursue just like a runner in a race. Jesus saved Paul for perfection! Jesus saved us for perfection!

1 Corinthians 9:24 says:

**Don't you realise that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!**

When I'd compete in the 100m sprint in high school... I always ran to win that race. Yes I'm not the slenderest of people, but my feet are fast. What if I had said to myself, "There are 10 other boys in this race." "I not going to win, so I won't try!" Well, that's foolish! Sometimes won and sometimes I didn't! Was I disappointed when I didn't win the race? Of Course, but since I ran as fast as I could I was satisfied! Did my PE teacher get mad at me for not winning? No, because he knew that I had run as fast as I could!

What about you? Are you striving for perfection? Saved people are not perfect, just forgiven. verses 8 & 9 say:

**Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ**

Every Christian...no matter how long we've been saved... no matter how close our relationship is with Jesus.... has the constant need for the grace of Jesus.

1 John 1:8-9 says

**If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.**

**But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.**

That word "confess" is translated from a Greek word ὁμολογῶμεν (omologōmen)... It says to speak the same, to agree - Which indicates that it is NOT a one-time thing. In other words, it's a continual process! We keep on "confessing" and God keeps on forgiving our sins! Amazing stuff! Forgiveness is a gift that we must receive daily from Jesus.

Hebrews 9:27 says:

**And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment**

We are not judged on our ability to be good Christians. Whether we go to heaven or hell...is based on our dependence on Jesus. Even the most holy of people need Jesus. Christian perfection is dependence upon Christ! As Christians we should become more and more aware of our imperfections.... and with this we are convinced of our need for Jesus! And as we become more aware of our need for Jesus, we become more and more sensitive to the will of God. Therefore, we must "press on to take hold of that which Christ Jesus took hold of" Paul writes in verse 13

**No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing:**

**Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead**

This does not mean that we simply forget about our sinful past, but we must leave it behind us! Look at what Paul says in this passage. He's basically saying: "If anyone has reason to be miserable by his mistakes...it's me!"

Paul had persecuted Christians. He held the coats while Stephen was stoned to death! Paul had been a Pharisee. Pharisees worked real hard at being righteous people. But now Paul considers all that as rubbish! He no longer wants anything to do with "a righteousness" of his own that comes from obeying rules.

He wants the righteousness "which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith." As Christians we must keep our minds on growing and maturing in Christ. We are all called by God to be perfect in Christ Jesus!

Therefore, we must keep our minds on perfection. Sometimes this is very difficult to do because we live in a world that is gripped by the lust ... by a desire for comfort and ease... by a desire for pleasure and plenty... by a desire for more. We are very blessed to have the The Holy Spirit which pricks our hearts...revealing when we are failing and coming short. He tries to get our minds back upon living like we should...upon pressing for perfection. We will never be perfect in these earthly bodies... But we can be forgiven through confession of our sins... And faith in what Jesus did for us on that old rugged cross! There are no perfect Christians and there are no perfect churches. We are all sinners! People who don't go to church need to admit that they are sinners. They need to do that before it's too late! They need to accept Jesus as their Savior... And become an active member of a Bible-believing church. People who go to church need to remember that people are watching them. It may not seem fair, but Christians are held to a higher standard. Church people need to make sure they aren't providing someone with an excuse for not going to church. Though we are sinners saved by grace... Our goal should be the same as Paul.

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## To press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus



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