

SAINTS, HOLINESS AND PERFECTIONISM

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I see so many Christians today who seem to fail to really understand what the words "holy", "sanctified", "sacred" and "saints" actually mean in the Holy Scriptures. As I explain in my two-part article entitled "Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?", this is due in large part to the fact that they depend on organized religion -- that is to say, the church system -- to tell them the truth, when most churches simply do no such thing. Instead, they purposely tickle the ears of their congregants, and they tell them what they want to hear, even if they are damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, as we see by the following group of verses:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

2 Timothy 4:3-4, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"

1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Hebrews 13:9, KJV

So because of these lies and false doctrines, many people have erroneously been given the rather false impression that unless they live perfectly sinless lives, there is no chance whatsoever for them to ever make it to Heaven. However, let me inform you that contrary to what so many Christians have been deceived into believing, as long as we exist in this mortal flesh, we will have to fight against sin and the old man for the rest of our lives. There is simply no way around this reality. Thus, you really need to accept that it will be a lifelong battle. There is just no off ramp. There is no arriving at some state of sinless perfection while we are in the flesh. Just forget that vain, foolish idea once and for all.

In fact, as I have mentioned on previous occasions, this is precisely what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans chapter 7. Using his own personal experiences and his own battles as a backdrop, Paul wrote that it is a constant battle with the mind and the Spirit on one side of the ring, and sin and the flesh on the other side of the ring. These two are constantly

fighting it out throughout our lives. Consider the following group of verses:

"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Romans 7:15-25, KJV

Now, tell me something, dear friend. If even the Apostle Paul had such fierce battles against his sinful flesh, and admits that he never reached some sinless state of perfection in the flesh, what in the world makes you think that you can do it? As Paul also wrote:

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

Philippians 3:13-14, KJV

To reiterate, contrary to what certain Christians want to believe, we will NEVER be perfect -- or complete, which is the real meaning of the word in the original Koine Greek -- as long as we are in the flesh. To believe otherwise is to deceive ourselves. The ONLY thing that makes us perfect and complete, is Jesus Christ. Why? Because He did what we can't possibly do. And what is that? As all Christians know, Jesus gave His very own life, and shed His own precious blood on a Roman cross as the Perfect Sacrifice, and as the FULL ransom

price and FULL atonement for our sins. He met His Father's requirements. Thus, we have been purchased by Christ, and our price has been paid in FULL by Him. Consider this group of verses:

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Matthew 20:28, KJV

"For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."
Mark 10:45, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
Acts 20:28, KJV

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."
1 Corinthians 6:19-20, KJV

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men."
1 Corinthians 7:23, KJV

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."
Ephesians 1:13-14, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."
1 Timothy 2:5-6, KJV

So if the price of our Salvation has ALREADY been paid in FULL, what more is there for us to do other than to believe? Thus, because Jesus Christ alone paid the FULL price for our Salvation, we can now become perfect and complete ONLY when

we are symbolically washed in His blood. That's it, folks.
End of story. Consider the following group of verses:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD:
though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as
snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as
wool."

Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and
without shedding of blood is no remission."

Hebrews 9:22, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the
first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of
the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our
sins in his own blood,"

Revelation 1:5, KJV

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me,
These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have
washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the
Lamb."

Revelation 7:14, KJV

"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."

1 John 1:7, KJV

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours
only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:2, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved
us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it,
and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take,
eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks,
and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is
my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for
the remission of sins."

Matthew 26:26-28, KJV

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."

Mark 14:22-24, KJV

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:14-20, KJV

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"

Romans 3:25, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Ephesians 2:13, KJV

"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Hebrews 9:16-17, KJV

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"

Hebrews 10:19-20, KJV

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate . . . 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, 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 13:12, 20-21, KJV

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:2, KJV

Sadly, as I said a moment ago, some Christians seem to have deceived themselves into believing that Christ's Sacrifice was not quite enough to save them. Thus, they work so hard in their own flesh to perfect themselves, and to try to free themselves from their sinful nature, as if that is really humanly possible. But the very worst of them are those who foolishly claim "Oh, I don't sin anymore! I haven't sinned in ages!" What a proud, self-righteous, holier-than-thou attitude to have. Then, on top of it all, they use their air of superiority to look down on other Christians, as if they are better than them. Shame, shame, shame!

As I mentioned earlier, many Christians do NOT understand exactly what the words "holy" and "sanctified" and "sacred" and "saints" mean in the Scriptures. If you look up the original Hebrew and Koine Greek words, you will discover that they actually mean to be set apart, and separated for future use by the Lord. There are so many Bible verses which make this meaning clear, yet so many Christians still just don't get it. For example, consider the following group of verses which make this point very clear:

"Wherefore COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM, and BE YE SEPARATE, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"

2 Corinthians 6:17, KJV

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because YE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, but I have chosen you out

of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

John 15:19, KJV

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because THEY ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

John 17:14-15, KJV

"Jesus answered, MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is MY KINGDOM NOT FROM HENCE."

John 18:36, KJV

"And BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:2, KJV

"No man that warreth [meaning spiritual warfare] entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2 Timothy 2:4, KJV

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is THE ENEMY OF GOD."

James 4:4, KJV

"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

2 Peter 3:13, KJV

"LOVE NOT THE WORLD, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

1 John 2:15-16, KJV

As you can plainly see, the Apostles of the First Century were called to be SEPARATE from the world, and they taught the very same doctrine in their various writings. In like fashion, the saints of both the Old and New Testament were likewise called to be SEPARATE from the world, because they were sanctified and set apart by God. And, just like our spiritual forefathers, we Christians today are also called to be SEPARATE from the world. We are in fact called to be saints, sanctified ones, separated ones, holy ones. Even in the Old Testament, the Lord told the Israelites that He had severed them and set them apart. That is exactly what the word "holy" means. Even this very verse states this truth:

"And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.
Leviticus 20:26, KJV

So for those of you who still don't get it, let me say again that "holy" does NOT mean to live a perfect, sinless life, which no one can do anyway, except for Jesus Himself. If any of us could really achieve such a lofty goal, then tell me something. Why in the world did Jesus Christ have to die for our sins? If we can achieve such a state of holiness in the flesh, what was the point of Christ's Sacrifice?

As I have stated so many times before, either we are saved completely and solely by the Grace of God through our faith in the atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, or else we are forced to foolishly and erroneously believe that we're saved through our own self-righteous works of the flesh. There is no two ways about it. You have to make a choice regarding what you believe. Is it God's Grace, or is your own works? Please consider the following group of verses:

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Galatians 2:21, KJV

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Romans 11:6, KJV

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith . . . Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

Galatians 3:11, 13, KJV

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

Galatians 5:4, KJV

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

James 2:10, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 3:10, 21-23, KJV

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Isaiah 64:6, KJV

So because of this clear Biblical truth, am I saying that we can just go out and sin as much as we want and not ever have to worry about it? Sadly, according to the opponents of the OSAS doctrine -- meaning Once Saved, Always Saved -- that is what we supposedly believe. However, as far as I know, that is NOT what any OSAS supporters believe by a long shot, and it is shameful that these OSAS opponents spread such devious lies about us. One must wonder why they spread such lies.

Speaking for myself, I most certainly do NOT believe that we can just go out and sin as we please. If anyone thinks that they are free to sin, they are seriously deceived, and they obviously do not know the Scriptures. To freely and willfully sin would be very foolish on our part, and we would obviously suffer the consequences for doing so. The Lord would give us a good spanking, as per Hebrews 12. Consider the following group of Bible verses which discuss Divine Chastisement:

"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."
Proverbs 3:11-12, KJV

"Open rebuke is better than secret love."
Proverbs 27:5, KJV

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed."
Hebrews 12:5-8, 11-13, KJV

"Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction."

Isaiah 48:10, KJV

"In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

Isaiah 54:8, KJV

So in case it is not already clear to you, my position is that we should indeed strive to avoid all manner of sin in our lives, BUT with the honest understanding that we will never arrive at some imaginary state of sinless perfection as long as we are in this weak, sinful flesh. We will make mistakes, we will fall, and we will sin. But as the Apostle Paul wrote:

"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Romans 7:25, KJV

As I explain in "Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?", this false holiness doctrine is actually the subtle invention of organized religion. Its primary purpose seems to be to keep churchgoers under bondage to, and dependent on, organized religion. The church system sets the holiness bar so high, so that you are forced to depend on them; in some cases -- as with the Roman Catholic Church -- even for your very Salvation. At least that is what they want you to think.

In conclusion, as I have now made clear, a true saint is one who has been separated -- or sanctified -- from the world by God in order to be used in His service. It is a person who wholly dedicates their life to serving the Lord. It is NOT a Roman Catholic marble statue, or some Renaissance painting, of a pious-looking Apostle Peter, or a pious-looking Apostle Paul, who looks Heavenward, with their hands in a delicate praying fashion, as if they have somehow arrived at the peak of perfection and the highest possible degree of saintliness, which the rest of us lowly humans can NEVER possibly hope to ever attain to.

Saints are human. They are not perfect. They make mistakes.

They are sinners. But they love the Lord and they are trying to do their best to faithfully serve Him. If and when they happen to fall, they ask for forgiveness, and then they pick themselves right back up again by the Grace of God, and they keep marching on for the Lord. Are you a saint? I hope so.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you have found it informative, enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Age of Accountability and Parental and Divine Discipline
Are You Committing Adultery?
Are You Saved and Sealed and Healed and Filled?
Backsliding, Divine Chastisement and the Divine Agreement
Beholding the Evil and the Good
Did the Devil Make You Do It?
Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?
Free Will and Personal Choice
Love, Mercy, Forgiveness and Chastisement
Oh Be Careful Little Eyes!
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
Strangers and Pilgrims: Are You an Alien?
Striving for Perfection: Are You a Sinless Saint?
The Battle is Not Yours Alone!
The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words
The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?
The Lord Will Lift You Up
The Nature and Consequence of Sin and God's Solution

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