

Perfection is Freedom

John 8

³² ...you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

³³ They answered him, We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how do you say, You shall be made free?

³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin.

Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. The positive corollary would be that whoever does not commit sin is therefore free. The freedom Jesus offered is therefore freedom from sin.

Since sin is "the transgression of the law" (*1 John 3:4*), freedom from sin must mean the keeping of the law. The "law of the Lord is perfect" (*Psalms 19:7*) and therefore a man who keeps the law is a perfect man.

Sin is a tyrant. It is sin that brings bondage, or slavery. Slavery, at least to the slave who wants to be free, is not enjoyable.

The law is righteousness:

Isaiah 51

⁷ Hearken unto me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.

Therefore the law is the opposite of sin. And therefore, the law, or the keeping of the law, must be freedom, and freedom is enjoyable.

Then, perfection, which is often presented as a nit-picky standard that wears us down, must instead be the most free and natural thing in God's universe. Anyone who has been freed from the bondage of a sin that held them captive, has tasted the gift of perfection. Perhaps not in its fullness, but to a degree.

There are a few men, other than Christ, who are mentioned in the Bible, and no sin, or very few sins, are recorded against them. We know that the Lord does not hide the failures of His people, He is the truth. David's sin, Abraham's unbelief, Peter's denial: all are recorded.

So therefore, if few sins are recorded of certain ones, then we must presume that their lives were very close to perfection. Enoch, Joseph, Daniel, Job: these men certainly achieved a high level of Christian experience. Was it a horrible burden to them, to have to live perfectly? No! I'm sure if we would live like those men, we would be extremely happy in the Lord, especially when He would use us in such a way as He used them.

But these men did not go around boasting about their righteousness. When Daniel prayed, he confessed his sins and the sins of his people (*Daniel 9:5*); when Job saw the Lord, he abhorred himself (*Job 42:6*); when Joseph was degraded to a slave, and then to a prisoner, he did not complain that he was unjustly treated (which he certainly would have done if he had been proud about his own righteousness); Enoch simply "walked with God" (*Genesis 5:24*), so closely that the Lord took him from the earth without seeing death.

Most people actually want perfection, just not the kind the Lord offers them. They want:

- Perfect jobs,
- Perfect vacations,
- Perfect houses,
- Perfect trouble-free lives,
- Perfect health,
- Perfectly happy families with all the smiling faces in a picture on the perfect wall.

They devote their whole lives to trying to gain this perfection.

But this is not the Lord's perfection: *it is their own righteousness!* The Lord's perfection is accomplished by the taking away of sin and implanting of His own goodness. Often such perfection is surrounded by the most imperfect circumstances.

For example, Jesus, the crown of perfection, was poor in earthly goods, misunderstood by His family and followers, surrounded by difficulties and struggles during His ministry, and consigned to the worst kind of shameful death. This is not the kind of perfection most people want!

But during all this trouble, his spirit was in perfect harmony with the will of the Father, He never murmured nor complained, but trusted that his Father was the guide of his life, and that his Father was only giving him that which was best for the development of his character, and the furtherance of the Father's will.

Today, Jesus is admired by millions. But what are they really admiring? Do they want also to live that sinless perfect life? This is certainly a great mystery, how Jesus is worshiped and praised by masses of people, yet the idea of living a perfect, sinless life like He lived is considered dangerous, leading to pride, burdensome, and to be shunned!

Isaiah 29

¹³ ...this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me [claiming to love My perfection], but have removed their heart far from me [by their imperfect thoughts and lives], and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men [teachings that justify sin and slavery].