

NOT PERFECT, BUT PERFECTED

ser4050 A Father's Day Sermon

June 20, 2021 E & L

I. (HOOK) POINT OF INTRIGUE

What we're about to do next is in three parts: A.

(Part 1) Say with me, *"Not perfect, but perfected."*

B. (Part 2) Find someone you can speak to comfortably and say, *"You're not perfect, /pause/ but you're being perfected."*

C. (Part 3) Time to be honest with ourselves. Now, look up to Heaven and say, *"I'm not perfect, but I'm being perfected."*

We're not done! Let's all say, "Thank you, Jesus!" And the Church said, "Hallelujah!"

II. (BOOK & LOOK) IF WE WERE TO SEARCH THE HOLY SCRIPTURES FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION, WHO WOULD WE IDENTIFY AS PERFECT?

A. Adam?

No! He messed it up for all of us.

B. Noah?

No! He built an ark by God's command and saved the

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planet, but then got drunk and ... well, if you want to know the rest of the story read *Genesis 9*.

C. Abraham?

Maybe? After all, he is the father of all who believe. He is also a "perfect" (staying with the word) example of a father who was the *provider, protector, and priest* of his household. Let's look at it!

Genesis 18:17-19

¹⁷Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do? ¹⁸Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. ^[c] ¹⁹For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that ***the *LORD will bring about for Abraham what He has promised him.***" **emphasis mine*

But Abram lied about his wife and kept lying until he was rebuked by a heathen king. It also took Abram 15 years to obey fully the LORD's command to leave his father and mother and follow the LORD's roadmap for his life.

And of course, we know about Sarai, Abram's wife and Hagar and Abraham—that was a fiasco.

YET God made a promise to Abram. He said: “The LORD will bring about what He promised for Abraham.” Sounds to me like Abraham wasn’t perfect, but he would *be perfected* by the hand of the LORD. **Stay with me, we’ll get there.**

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D. Jacob?

No way! Right? He was a weasel, scamming his bother Esau out of his birthright and blessing, then tried to make a deal with God concerning the tithe, and clung to his mommy’s skirt until he was 80 years of age. I’m not so sure he’s a guy you or I would like. Yet, God names a nation after Jacob. Let’s watch it! **(VIDEO: Superbook, Season 1, Episode 3, Jacob & Esau (16:36-18:42 (2:02))**

What does God see in Jacob that we don’t see on the surface? Why does God make what is imperfect perfect? **Stay with me, we’ll get there.**

E. King David?

No! We know his story: adulterer and murderer. If David wasn’t the king, he would have been sentenced to life in prison. Yet, God says of David what He says of no other person in the Bible, “[David] was a man after God’s own heart” **(1 Samuel 13:14)**. But that’s not the end, Jesus the Messiah reigns in spirit of David during the 1000-year reign of Christ on earth **(Jeremiah 30:9 & Ezekiel 37:24)**. Let’s look at it!

Jeremiah 30:8-11 (selected)

⁸ “‘In that day,’ declares the Lord Almighty, ... no longer will foreigners enslave them.

⁹ Instead, they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

¹⁰ “‘So do not be afraid, Jacob my servant; do not be dismayed, Israel,’ ...

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Jacob will again have peace and security, and no one will make him afraid.

¹¹ I am with you and will save you,’ declares the LORD.

How about ...

F. Job or Daniel?

Certainly, they are a **yes**, right?

God says of Job “he was blameless and there was no one like him on the earth” (**Job 1:8 & 2:3**) And God said of Daniel, “he was highly esteemed” (**Daniel 10:11**).

Yet, God says to Job in **chapter 40:8** “Will you discredit my justice and condemn Me just to prove you are right?”

And Daniel when confessing the sins of Israel includes himself saying,

I went on praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, pleading with the LORD my God for Jerusalem, His holy mountain. **Daniel 9:20**

How about one more... no two more?

G. John Michael Sofia? (Show picture of my father, next page)

I would say, my dad was pretty close. He was closest person to “perfect” I’ve ever known.

Now the *person on his lap*—no way! I remember when we were meeting in the Theatre. I had given an illustration referencing my own sin and a man came up to me and said,

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“Please, I don’t want you to tell me about your sins; I have



enough sins of my own. I want a pastor who isn’t like me.” Sheryl and I talk about this often. I do believe that over the years I have treated people rich and poor, black and white, brown and yellow with equal justice; and have never taken a dime of the church’s money other than a humble salary.

However, I am not without my own sins and daily confess my transgressions. The psalmist said, “If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the LORD would not have listened [to me].” *Psalm 66:18*

The reality is in more cases than not we like our sin. However, it is one thing to like our sin, it's still another thing to treasure it in our heart.

Jesus said, "The flesh is weak, but the spirit is willing" (*Matthew 26:41*). Paul said, "It is not I that sins but the flesh living in me" (*Romans 7:17*). Let us therefore pray daily, "Search my heart, oh God, and see if there is any wicked way in me."

Let's take a moment and do that now. (Piano under our 30 seconds of silence.)

My only perfection lies in Christ. For those of you in the

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Aaron – Hur group, thank you for your daily prayers.

H. (Last one.) How about Saint Paul?

Yes or no? Certainly, he was zealous for the Lord. Yet the LORD had to give him a thorn in the flesh so that he would not become spiritually puffed up or conceited therefore disqualify himself from God's calling.

I. Ladies, the reason I've used all men for illustrations this morning is because it's Father's Day. LOL!

III. (TOOK) THE BOTTOM LINE

A. The bottom line is NO ONE is perfect. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. As people of

flesh, we gravitate towards judging sins that can be seen, but God does not judge as man judges, He sees the heart. Over and over again God gives us examples: **1.** Rahab the harlot.

2. Tamar Judah's daughter-in-law.

3. The publican (common sinner) on Solomon's portico.

4. The self-righteous Pharisees (Not all Pharisees were hypocrites.)

5. The sinful woman who anointed Jesus' head and feet. **6.** The woman at the well.

7. The parable of the wine skins.

8. ... and the list goes on.

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B. What I love are God's examples of making the imperfect perfect.

Recall when I said of Abraham and Jacob, "Stay with me we'll come back to them." God called Abram at 75 years of age; He changed his name to Abraham at 100 years of age. God called Jacob at 80 years of age; He changed his name to Israel at 100 years of age.

What do the name changes of Abram to Abraham and Jacob to Israel represent? /**pause**/ God making the IMPERFECT PERFECT. *Not perfect, but perfected.* (Say with me, "Not perfect, but perfected." And I love that it took most of their lives for God to accomplish His purpose in them. It gives us all hope. LOL! And the Church said, "Amen.")

C. Final words:

1. So believer, don't give up regardless of how many times you blow it. God hasn't given up on you. "He who began a good work in you will complete it." *Philippians 1:6*
2. For those of you who have yet to receive Christ as your personal Lord and Savior—why not get a name change today. Give Him your life and become a NEW CREATION in Christ (*2 Cor 5:17*).

VI. (Here's how.) INVITATION

Admit— your sins have separated you from God.
(*Psa 14:1-3; Rom 3: 23*);

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Believe – that God did something about your sins through Jesus Christ. (The final Pascal Lamb/Messiah.)
(*Lev 17:10; Heb 9: 19-22*);

Commit – yourself to His righteousness by confessing Jesus as Lord and Savior. (*Isa 53:5; Col 1:22*);

Do it today! (*Isa 49:8; 2 Cor 6:2*).

Father in Heaven, I'm sorry for the things I've done that are wrong: I am a sinner; forgive me. Thank You for loving me and sending your Son, Jesus, to pay the penalty for my sin. Holy Spirit come into my heart; Jesus be my Lord and Savior. I give You my life. Amen.