

The Pastor's Study:

Entry Number 3 on the subject of biblical perfection and overcoming.

Perfection; God's Predetermined Will

The Apostle Paul gives a key statement of understanding; *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."* Romans 8:28-30.

The message of perfection and overcoming is very much an ingredient in God's predetermined plan. As pertains to ourselves, this is the Grace of God, and the Glory of God. The message of perfection is in God's court in a fashion that subjugates our handling of the matter. The accomplishing of his will and his plan in our lives is that we be made perfect. And, that is the Lord's provision. Therein lies the working of the Holy Spirit and mediation. The Father's supply of Grace, Holy Ghost Power, and, as per his predestined will, it constitutes the course yielding the desired overcoming transformation.

Make no mistake on this point: We *"willeth,"* we *"runneth,"* but it is *"of God that sheweth mercy."* Romans 9:16. (please note that this statement is made in the context of God's predetermined will.) All pertaining to the Lord's provision applies to the Saints collectively, the Church; *"...a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."* Ephesians 6:27.

Perfection; The Spirit is Where the Change Happens

Intercessory prayer; the Spirit power connection, is where the change happens. It is God's Spirit alive in the reconnected spirit of man that moves us along the course toward perfection. Christ's sacrifice and shed blood; the price of

our purchase, is the very entry into God's plan so that we can travel the course. Jesus is the "*door*," St John 10:1-9. Jesus is the "*true vine, and my Father is the husbandman*." St John 15:1. This similitude speaks not only to the life in the vine, but the growth that is inherently in the vine; the production of fruit.

The work is of God. Perfection is an ongoing operation of the Spirit. For that reason there must be a reconnection of man ("*spirit*") with God ("*Spirit*"). "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*" Romans 8:14-16.

Receiving the Holy Ghost is that reconnection of man's spirit with God's Spirit. To be more exact; God is Spirit. It is the sonship which Adam forfeited. On the point of "*led by the Spirit of God*," we are led in our spirit by the Spirit connection in matters pertaining to the victories we experience in our trials and testing. With Adam it pertained to dominion over the creation. With us, it matters greatly that we gain dominion relating to the wiles of the flesh, the devil and the world; spiritual dominion. Scriptural references are manifold. Rest assured, it is the message of the New Testament. Reconciliation and our perfecting happens in this auspice. It is God's court and Jesus is Lord and Mediator.

As saith the scripture; "*...yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;*" II Corinthians 5:16-18. It is a spiritual work that inherently relates to "*a new creature*" and not a reformed old man, or "*old things*." It is about dying. "*For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*" Romans 8:13. The work is of God and it is of the Holy Ghost and spiritual.

Reckoning yourself dead is akin to being alive in Christ; that would be the "*new creature*," and death to the old man Adam. Overcoming is dying to the old man and eventually giving way to the completed "*new creature*." Anything less will fall into the category of a reformed-old-man. God's plan is restoration; that is a new creature, not refitting and polishing up the old man.

Scripturally understood; perfection is God's work of redemption ongoing and finally "*finished*," St. John 17:4, in the Lord's Body of Believers; all by his

life's example. Made possible by his shed blood; "*finished*," St John 19:30. Always and without fail; perfection happens because Christ gave his life. And, his righteousness indwells our lives. And, because we are servant-like; submitted in brokenness, with humility and thankfulness.

T. F. Igler, October 21, 2020