

DAILY BIBLE VERSES AND PRAYER THOUGHTS

MONDAY - VERSES: Hebrews 2:9-10; 5:8-9; Luke 6:40 PRAYER THOUGHT: Lord, Help me to look toward Jesus the only perfect example that there is.

TUESDAY - VERSES: Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 3:12-14 PRAYER THOUGHT: Father, help me to never stop growing toward perfection in my Christian life.

WEDNESDAY - VERSES: 2 Corinthians 7:1 PRAYER THOUGHT: God, forgive me for those times that I fall and come short of the standards that you have set for your children. Help me to truly repent.

THURSDAY - VERSES: Hebrews 12:22-24 PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank you for sending Jesus to die so that my imperfections could be covered by His perfection. Help me to never abuse that gift or take it for granted.

FRIDAY - VERSES: James 1:2-4; Colossians 1:27-29 PRAYER THOUGHT: Master, use me to encourage others to reach for perfection in their Christian lives and help me to be encouraged to follow the example of others who are striving for perfection.

SATURDAY - VERSES: Luke 8:14; Revelation 3:2 PRAYER THOUGHT: Heavenly King, help me always remember that there are consequences for failure as well as rewards for success.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Daily read over this material and read or sing the song.
2. Place the scripture where you will see it each day.
3. Think of areas in your life where you have been content with the way things are and have not grown.
4. Each day write down one way that you have grown or have tried to grow.
5. Plan to tell the class about an area you are working toward perfection, or tell about an area where you have been complacent.

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David D. Glass, former CEO of Wal-Mart, when asked whom he most admired, responded: Sam Walton (Wal-Mart founder). He went on to note, "There's never been a day in his life, since I've known him, that he didn't improve in some way." -- Forbes Magazine, 1988

Oh, that this description might be true of every one of us as Christians. Let's trust God to improve.

SPIRITUAL HEALTH REGIMEN - WEEK 60

PROGRESS - 9-15-13 to 9-21-13

SCRIPTURE - Hebrews 6:1-3 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, {2} Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. {3} And this will we do, if God permit."

COMMENT – We often use as an excuse the old adage, ‘nobody's perfect’. We convince ourselves and try to convince others that it is impossible to be perfect and therefore we will just be content with ourselves spiritually at whatever level we happen to be. To be blunt and frank, this is as unchristian an attitude as we could possibly express. While Jesus calls for sinners and takes us in where we are, we deceive ourselves if we think He will be pleased for us to remain just as we were when He bought us. If we are not growing we are dying.

SONG - HIGHER GROUND

1. I'm pressing on the upward way, New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day;
Still praying as I onward bound, "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

CHORUS: Lord, lift me up and let me stand, By faith, on heaven's tableland; A higher plane than I have found, Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

2. My heart has no desire to stay Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Tho' some may dwell where these abound, My prayer, my aim is higher ground.

3. I want to live above the world, Tho' Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught the joyful sound, The song of saints on higher ground.

4. I want to scale the utmost height, And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till heav'n I've found, "Lord, lead me on to higher ground."

THOUGHTS

When change is successful we look back at it and call it growth! - John Maxwell

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"All growth depends upon activity." - Samuel T. Coleridge

"While it is true that you can only be young once, with very little difficulty you can manage to be immature all your life." - Frank Hughes

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High in the Alps is a monument raised in honor of a faithful guide who perished while ascending a peak to rescue a stranded tourist. Inscribed on that memorial stone are these words: HE DIED CLIMBING. A maturing, growing Christian will die climbing.

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The true Christian never has to give up anything (of course I am not speaking of sins), but there are a lot of things that will give him up. They will go one by one. There will be no grief. It will be the way childish occupations are abandoned. I never had to give up playing with tops and marbles. I never had to come to the place where I said, "Oh I am a big boy now, and big boys shouldn't play marbles. So I will make a great effort to give up playing marbles." It did not happen that way. One day I was playing marbles with a group of small boys and some older boys came by. They looked at me and said, "Hey, kid, can you field a ball?" "Sure I can," I replied with more vigor than accuracy. "Well," they said, "we are short a fielder. Get out there and see what you can do." I went out and was ready to play my head off to keep up with the older fellows. When it was my turn to bat I was ready to swing till I burst, and to run till I dropped, and do all that I could to keep up with the bigger company I was in. And when the game was over and we older boys, as I then classed myself, walked down the street past the little fellows who were playing marbles, I did not go back to marbles. I had graduated. I did not give up marbles, marbles gave me up. -- The Epistle to the Romans, Donald Grey Barnhouse

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A.B. Cooper said that one autumn day he went to a chrysanthemum show and observed some wonderful blooms. He inquired of a gardener, "How in the world do you manage to produce such marvelous flowers?"

"Well, sir, we concentrate all the strength of the plant in one or two blooms. If we would allow it to bear all the flowers it could, none would be worth showing. If you want a prize specimen, you must be

content with a single chrysanthemum instead of a score."

For the same reason, God sends trials to prune from our lives the useless blooms of self, popularity, and comfort, so that He may perfect in us one exquisite white blossom of holiness.

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Christ died to save us "from our sins," not in our sins. It is not a good sign to hear a believer either defending or excusing his sin. We agree with A.J. Gordon, who said:

We gravely fear that many Christians make the Apostle's word, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves," the unconscious justification for a low standard of Christian living. It were almost better for one to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp after holiness, than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness.... If we regard the doctrine of sinless perfection as a heresy, we regard contentment with sinful imperfection as a greater heresy.

Many believers are prone to ignore John's pointed word to us: "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." God wants a cleansed and righteous people. A sincere believer must want to be rid of all sin for all coming time.

And how true the word that "if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanses us from all sin."

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GOING ON TO PERFECTION

INTRODUCTION - HEBREWS 6:1-3; MATTHEW 5:46-48

L.S. - TO BE PERFECT AS GOD WANTS WE MUST. . .

I. HAVE THE RIGHT AIM - 1 PETER 2:21; PHILIPPIANS 3:7-16

II. HAVE PATIENCE - JAMES 1:4; 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1

III. DEPEND ON GOD - 1 PETER 5:10; HEBREWS 10:14

IV. HAVE SINCERE LOVE - 1 JOHN 3:17; 2:4-5; COL. 3:14

V. HAVE A SELFLESS CHARACTER - MATTHEW 19:21; 10:8;
LUKE 6:38

VI. HAVE A STRONG DESIRE FOR UNITY - 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10; JOHN 17:22-23

CONCLUSION - 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11

GOING ON TO PERFECTION

INTRODUCTION

A. HEBREWS 6:1-3 "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, {2} Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. {3} And this will we do, if God permit."

B. MATTHEW 5:46-48 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? (48) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

L.S. - TO BE PERFECT AS GOD WANTS WE MUST. . .

I. HAVE THE RIGHT AIM

A. THE PERFECT MARKSMAN - The king's army was looking for good archers and were put on the track of one who seemed to be the best in the kingdom. Every arrow was dead center of the bull's-eye and they had to find this perfect marksman for the king. When they finally caught up with him and tested him he missed the target badly. They could not understand and questioned whether they had the same man who had shot all of the arrows they had seen in the center of the target. He assured them that he was the one. When pressed to explain he told them that he had a different technique from the one they used when testing him. He always shot the arrow first and then drew the target around the place the arrow landed.

B. DO WE LIVE OUR LIVES AS WE SEE FIT AND THEN DRAW THE TARGET?

C. DO WE TELL OURSELVES WE ARE DOING OUR BEST, OR THAT WE ARE AS CLOSE TO PERFECT AS WE CAN GET?

D. 1 PETER 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

E. PHILIPPIANS 3:7-16 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. (8) Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (9) And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (10) That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; (11) If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. (12) Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. (13) 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, (14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (15) Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. (16) Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

II. HAVE PATIENCE

A. THE WOODCUTTER'S AX - Two woodcutter's were chopping wood in the same area. One was older and seemed weaker and slower than the other and on the first day he did not get nearly as much done as the younger man, who thought that it was because the older man took breaks throughout the day while he worked straight through with only one short break to eat. As the week went on, however, the younger man found that he was the one falling behind in the amount of wood he produced. He determined to beat the older man and even came to work earlier and stayed later. He became truly frustrated when he saw the older man taking breaks and chopping less yet still out producing him. He finally approached the other and asked, "How is it possible that, I, a younger stronger man who works harder and longer accomplish less than you even though you take breaks and are not as muscular?"

The older man asked if he had noticed what was done during those breaks that were mentioned. He explained that he was not simply resting during those times, but was sharpening his ax.

B. DO WE SETTLE FOR SPOTTED LIVES

C. DO WE THINK WE ARE GOOD ENOUGH BECAUSE WE DON'T DO ANY OF THE 'BAD' SINS

D. JAMES 1:4

E. 2 CORINTHIANS 7:1

III. DEPEND ON GOD

A. FALLING OFF THE ROOF - A roofer was working on an extremely steep roof and lost his footing. When he realized he was slipping and would fall off the roof, probably to his death, he began praying and promised God he would do several things if God would save him. Just as he was finishing the list of promises his tool belt caught on a nail and he stopped sliding. He quickly finished his prayer saying, "Never mind, Lord, this nail caught me."

B. DO WE DEPEND ON GOD WHEN THINGS ARE GOING WELL, OR DO WE SAY, "WE ARE DOING GOOD"?

C. DO WE DEPEND ON GOD WHEN THERE ARE PROBLEMS OR BLAME HIM FOR THE DIFFICULTIES?

D. DO WE LEAVE GOD OUT WHEN THE PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED AND SAY, "AREN'T WE LUCKY"?

E. 1 PETER 5:10 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: (9) Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. (10) But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

F. HEBREWS 10:14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

IV. HAVE SINCERE LOVE

A. A VISIT FROM JESUS - One night a woman dreamed that the Lord would visit her the next day. She got up early and worked to be ready for Him when He came. She was busy cooking and cleaning

when there was a knock at the door. She was not ready yet, but went to the door eagerly. When she opened the door she saw only an elderly man who asked if she could give him some water to drink. She sent him away telling him that she could not help him because she was expecting an important guest. She went back to work and as she was taking a short break to eat some lunch there was another knock at the door. This time it was a woman who was begging for something to eat. The woman again sent the stranger away empty handed. Finally, toward evening there was another knock on the door. She thought this would surely be the Lord, but when she answered the door she found only a child asking for a blanket or some clothes to keep warm through the coming night. She didn't have time for the child either. Late that night she fell asleep in a chair still awaiting the arrival of her Lord. She dreamed again of the Lord and she asked Him why He had not come as He said he would. His answer, "I came three times and each time you sent me away."

B. WE MAY PROCLAIM HOLINESS, BUT LACK A TRUE LOVE FOR OTHERS - 1 JOHN 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

C. 1 JOHN 2:4-6 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (5) But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. (6) He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

D. COLOSSIANS 3:14 And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

V. HAVE A SELFLESS CHARACTER

A. The Cold Within

Six humans trapped by happenstance in black and bitter cold
Each possessed a stick of wood, Or so the story's told.
Their dying fire in need of logs, the first woman held hers back
For on the faces around the fire She noticed one was black.
The next man looking 'cross the way Saw one not of his church
And couldn't bring himself to give The fire his stick of birch.
The third one sat in tattered clothes He gave his coat a hitch,

Why should his log be put to use To warm the idle rich?
The rich man just sat back and thought Of the wealth he had in store,
And how to keep what he had earned From the lazy, shiftless poor.
The black man's face bespoke revenge As the fire passed from his
sight,
For all he saw in his stick of wood Was a chance to spite the white.
And the last man of this forlorn group Did naught except for gain,
Giving only to those who gave Was how he played the game.
The logs held tight in death's stilled hands Was proof of human sin,
They didn't die from the cold without, They died from the cold within.

B. MATTHEW 19:20-22 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? (21) Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. (22) But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

C. MATTHEW 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

D. LUKE 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

E. DO WE REALLY BELIEVE AND PRACTICE THE PRINCIPLES IN THESE VERSES?

VI. HAVE A STRONG DESIRE FOR UNITY

A. FRECKLES AND UNITY - MY DAD USED TO SAY THAT IF ALL HIS FRECKLES WOULD GET TOGETHER HE COULD HAVE HAD A NICE TAN.

B. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

C. JOHN 17:22-23 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: (23) I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou

hast loved me.

CONCLUSION

A. ARE YOU PERFECTED? ARE YOU COMPLETE? 2 CORINTHIANS 13:11 Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

B. HAS YOUR AIM BEEN RIGHT?

C. ARE YOU PATIENT AND NOT WILLING TO SETTLE FOR A SPOTTED LIFE?

D. DO YOU DEPEND ON GOD AND GIVE HIM THE GLORY?

E. ARE YOU WILLING TO SHARE YOUR BLESSINGS WITH OTHERS?

F. ARE YOU WORKING FOR UNITY IN THE CHURCH, YOUR FAMILY, YOUR COMMUNITY, YOUR NATION, AND THE WORLD?

G. REMEMBER JESUS' LOOK AT PETER'S FINAL DENIAL. CAN YOU IMAGINE THE DEPTH OF DISAPPOINTMENT AND SADNESS AS JESUS LOOKS AT US WHEN WE SIN?

Improve the box

Plane must move forward

Woman who grew backward

(Mat 5:48 KJV) "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

(Mat 19:21 KJV) "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

(Rom 12:2 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."

(1 Cor 2:6 KJV) "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:"

(1 Cor 13:10 KJV) "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away."

(1 Cor 14:20 KJV) "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

(Eph 4:13-15 KJV) "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: {14} 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; {15} But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

(Phil 3:15 KJV) "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you."

(Col 1:28 KJV) "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:"

(Col 4:12 KJV) "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

(Heb 5:12-14 KJV) "For when for the time ye ought to be

teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. {13} For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. {14} But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

(James 1:3-4 KJV) "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. {4} But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

(James 1:25 KJV) "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

(James 3:2 KJV) "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

(1 John 4:18-19 KJV) "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. {19} We love him, because he first loved us."

(Luke 8:14 KJV) "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

HEBREWS 6:1A

"THEREFORE LEAVING THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, LET US GO ON UNTO PERFECTION; . . ."

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Hebrews 6:1a

*"Therefore leaving the
principles of the doctrine of
Christ, let us go on unto
perfection; . . . "*

