

The Path to Perfection

By

Raymond D. Mossie, M.D.

(Emphasis added)

Jesus gave a commandment in Matthew 5:48 when He said...⁴⁸“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”¹ If God did not expect us to reach perfection in this life, then Jesus would not have given us this commandment. **The path to perfection** is outlined in what most Bible scholars refer to as the ‘Sermon on the Mount’, which is found recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7. In this teaching we will look at the command that God gave us through Jesus Christ that we should be perfect even as He is perfect. Let us begin with the Sermon on the Mount...

Chapter 5

¹And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ²Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

- ³ “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
⁴ Blessed *are* those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.
⁵ Blessed *are* the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.
⁶ Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
For they shall be filled.
⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful,
For they shall obtain mercy.
⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.
⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.
¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹²“Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot

by men. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵“Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

¹⁷“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸“For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹“Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

²¹“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ ²²“But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. ²³“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴“leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵“Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶“Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

²⁷“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸“But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. ³⁰“And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast *it* from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

³¹“Furthermore it has been said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³²“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

³³“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ ³⁴“But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; ³⁵“nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶“Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

³⁸“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’
³⁹“But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰“If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have *your* cloak also. ⁴¹“And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴²“Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵“that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶“For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷“And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Chapter 6

¹“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²“Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³“But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴“that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

⁵“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ⁶“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. ⁷“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸“Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. ⁹“In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
 Hallowed be Your name.
 10 Your kingdom come.
 Your will be done
 On earth as *it is* in heaven.
 11 Give us this day our daily bread.
 12 And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors.
13 And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

¹⁴“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵“But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ¹⁷“But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸“so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰“but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³“But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

²⁴“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷“Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁸“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹“and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith? ³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²“For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.

Chapter 7

¹“Judge not, that you be not judged. ²“For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? ⁴“Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? ⁵“Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye. ⁶“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

⁷“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸“For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹“Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰“Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! ¹²“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

¹³“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴“Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶“You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷“Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸“A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰“Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

²¹“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²“Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³“And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

²⁴“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: ²⁵“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” ²⁸And so it was, when Jesus had ended

these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, ²⁹for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.²

*The path to perfection has a specific pattern laid out by Jesus. The first set of scriptures in chapter 5:1-12 makes it clear that this is a teaching and that **our attitude is the first and foremost important character trait**. In fact these scriptures are called the **'beatitudes'**, because they outline the blessings that will come to those who have the heart and mindset as described therein, (i.e., if we have or will 'be of this attitude'). We all want the **blessing of God**, because we know that with this blessing come all kinds of good things, even material and other types of wealth, (see Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and Proverbs 10:22).*

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 -

Chapter 28

¹“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. ²“And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God: ³“Blessed *shall you be* in the city, and blessed *shall you be* in the country. ⁴“Blessed *shall be* the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ⁵“Blessed *shall be* your basket and your kneading bowl. ⁶“Blessed *shall you be* when you come in, and blessed *shall you be* when you go out.

⁷“The LORD will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. ⁸“The LORD will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. ⁹“The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways. ¹⁰“Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall be afraid of you. ¹¹“And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. ¹²“The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow. ¹³“And the LORD will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe *them*. ¹⁴“So you shall not turn

aside from any of the words which I command you this day, *to* the right or the left, to go after other gods to serve them.³

Proverbs 10:22 -

²² The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.⁴

*We can only receive this blessing if we deserve it. It is something that must be earned, and does not come only by asking. The wealth mentioned in this scripture is not only material but more importantly, it is the **wisdom from above**, which is eternal. **This wisdom is shown in the meekness of our Christian walk as exemplified by our actions, (see James chapter 3).***

Chapter 3

¹My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ²For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. ⁴Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

¹³Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. ¹⁷But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield,

³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.⁵

*Now as we read this chapter in James we see that **the key to receiving the blessing of God, (which is His wisdom and everything that stems from it), and becoming PERFECT is controlling our tongue.** However, we see in verse 8 that James tells us that 'no man can control the tongue'. This seems a paradox, but this is where God shines. Jesus says in II Corinthians 12:9 that **His strength is made PERFECT in our weakness.** Therefore, where we are weak, God will come to our rescue and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. However, it is a matter of the **attitude of the heart**, since Jesus also said in Matthew 12:34 and Luke 6:45 that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks'. **Therefore, if there is a bad attitude in our heart, then there will be bad words coming out of our mouth. The mouth therefore is the thermostat of the heart.** If there is evil coming out of our mouth, then there is evil in our heart and God is the only one that can take out the evil from our heart. **However, since God gave us a free will, WE MUST GIVE GOD PERMISSION TO ENTER OUR HEART AND ASK HIM TO TAKE OUT THE EVIL!** Let us look at the scriptures surrounding verse 22 in Proverbs chapter 10 and see what Solomon says regarding the 'blessing of the LORD' ...*

Chapter 10

- 1 The Proverbs of Solomon:
A wise son makes a glad father,
But a foolish son *is* the grief of his mother.
- 2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing,
But righteousness delivers from death.
- 3 The LORD will not allow the righteous soul to famish,
But He casts away the desire of the wicked.
- 4 He who has a slack hand becomes poor,
But the hand of the diligent makes rich.
- 5 He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son;
He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame.
- 6 Blessings *are* on the head of the righteous,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.
- 7 The memory of the righteous *is* blessed,
But the name of the wicked will rot.
- 8 The wise in heart will receive commands,
But a prating fool will fall.
- 9 He who walks with integrity walks securely,

10 But he who perverts his ways will become known.
He who winks with the eye causes trouble,
But a prating fool will fall.

11 The mouth of the righteous *is* a well of life,
But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.

12 Hatred stirs up strife,
But love covers all sins.

13 Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding,
But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding.

14 Wise *people* store up knowledge,
But the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.

15 The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city;
The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.

16 The labor of the righteous *leads* to life,
The wages of the wicked to sin.

17 He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life,
But he who refuses correction goes astray.

18 Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips,
And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.

19 In the multitude of words sin is not lacking,
But he who restrains his lips *is* wise.

20 The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver;
The heart of the wicked *is worth* little.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many,
But fools die for lack of wisdom.

22 The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.

23 To do evil *is* like sport to a fool,
But a man of understanding has wisdom.

24 The fear of the wicked will come upon him,
And the desire of the righteous will be granted.

25 When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked *is no more*,
But the righteous *has* an everlasting foundation.

26 As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So *is* the lazy *man* to those who send him.

27 The fear of the LORD prolongs days,
But the years of the wicked will be shortened.

28 The hope of the righteous *will be* gladness,
But the expectation of the wicked will perish.

29 The way of the LORD *is* strength for the upright,
But destruction *will come* to the workers of iniquity.

- 30 The righteous will never be removed,
But the wicked will not inhabit the earth.
- 31 The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom,
But the perverse tongue will be cut out.
- 32 The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable,
But the mouth of the wicked *what is* perverse. 6

*Therefore, we see that the **blessing of the Lord is tied to RIGHTEOUSNESS, which comes through obedience, as well as the things coming out of our mouth,** as Paul tells us in Romans Chapter 6, especially verses 15-18...*

Romans 6:15-18 -

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ¹⁷But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 7

Righteous people will obey God no matter what the consequence. They will NOT lie to themselves or to others. This is how perfection is manifested, and it is exemplified by the words coming out of the perfect person's mouth. These are the perfect ones who will fully partake in the blessing of the LORD. And, according to Revelation 14:1-5, there will only be 144,000 people who will reach this place at the time of the Great Tribulation, (see also the handout entitled 'Revelation Revealed')...

Revelation 14:1-5 -

¹Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being*

⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.⁸

Again, the first step toward this place of perfection is outlined in the ‘beatitudes’ and is a matter of the attitude of our heart.

BEATITUDES, THE — the eight declarations of blessedness made by Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3–12), each beginning with “Blessed are . . .” Some scholars speak of seven, nine, or ten beatitudes, but the number appears to be eight (verses 10–12 of Matthew 5 being one beatitude).

The Greek word translated “blessed” means “having spiritual well-being and prosperity,” the deep joy of the soul (see also Luke 6:20–22). The blessed have a share in salvation, and have entered the kingdom of God, experiencing a foretaste of heaven. Some scholars render each beatitude as an exclamation: “O the bliss [or blessedness] of. . .”

The Beatitudes describe the ideal disciple, and his rewards, both present and future. The person whom Jesus describes in this passage has a different quality of character and lifestyle than those still “outside the kingdom.”

As a literary form, the beatitude is also found often in the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms (1:1; 34:8; 65:4; 128:1), and often in the New Testament also (John 20:29; Rom. 14:22; James 1:12; Rev. 14:13). Also see SERMON ON THE MOUNT.⁹

The Sermon on the Mount

Jesus’ long discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5–7) is so named because He taught His disciples and the crowds that followed Him from a mountainside at the beginning of His public ministry (Matt. 5:1). The traditional site of the Sermon is marked today by a beautiful little church, the Chapel on the Mount of Beatitudes one of the major stopping points for tourists who visit the Holy Land.

The central theme of the Sermon is summarized in Matthew 5:48, “You shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” The word perfect does not refer to sinless or moral perfection. It indicates completeness, wholeness, maturity—being all that God wants a person to be. This goal, although we never attain it in this life, should continually challenge us to greater service for the Lord.¹⁰

⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁹Ronald F. Youngblood, general editor; F.F. Bruce and R.K. Harrison, consulting editors, *Nelson’s new illustrated Bible dictionary: An authoritative one-volume reference work on the Bible with full color illustrations [computer file], electronic edition of the revised edition of Nelson’s illustrated Bible dictionary, Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995.

¹⁰Thomas Nelson, Inc., *Nelson’s complete book of Bible maps and charts: Old and New Testament [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1996.

As you can see from this statement taken from a popular Bible teaching tool, most teachers of the Bible will tell you that 'no one expects you to be perfect'. I believe that this is a wrong teaching and leads to laziness and complacency in the Christian walk. I also believe that it is a lie that the enemy has continually encouraged Christians to believe in order to delay the return of Christ. This plan of God in the earth for perfection in the Church of God is laid out in the Bible and is summarized by Paul in Ephesians chapters 4-6...

Chapter 4

¹I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ²with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴*There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore He says:

“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.”

⁹(Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) **¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.**

¹⁷This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; ¹⁹who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰But you have not so learned Christ, ²¹if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: ²²that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to

the deceitful lusts, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one *of you* speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. ²⁶“Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷nor give place to the devil. ²⁸Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³²And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Chapter 5

¹Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ²And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. ³But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; ⁴neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them.

⁸For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ¹¹And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. ¹²For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. ¹⁴Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”

¹⁵See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*. ¹⁸And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

²⁰giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹submitting to one another in the fear of God.

²²Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord *does* the church. ³⁰For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife *see* that she respects *her* husband.

Chapter 6

¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²“Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: ³“that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” ⁴And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

⁵Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether *he is* a slave or free. ⁹And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of

salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints— ¹⁹and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

²¹But that you also may know my affairs *and* how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; ²²whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and *that* he may comfort your hearts. ²³Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. 11

*As you can see from Ephesians 4:11-16 above, God gave the Church gifts through Jesus in the form of the so-called 'five-fold ministry', (i.e., apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers). These 'giftings' are to be used by each Christian in order to help **all of us collectively to grow up in Christ** and come to this **place of perfection**. This will to be completed when we all learn to walk in **perfect love**. Then, and only then will Jesus come back to finish His work in the earth. This is why the teaching about a pre-tribulation rapture does not line up with what the Bible as a whole teaches, and is also a lie that leads people of God into complacency. There is a warning in the Sermon on the Mount scriptures that tells us that if we break one of the least of God's commandments and teach others to do the same, then we will be called 'least in the Kingdom of Heaven', (see Matthew 5:17-20 above). Again, Jesus said in Matthew 5:48 that **WE SHOULD BE PERFECT**. I believe that this is a commandment from God. If you reject this, then you do not abide in the love of Christ Jesus who said it, and by definition you reject God who sent Jesus, (see John 15:9-27).*

John 15:9-27 -

⁹“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full. ¹²“This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁴“You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit,

and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. ¹⁷“These things I command you, that you love one another.

¹⁸“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹“If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

²⁰“Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹“But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²²“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³“He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴“If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵“But *this happened* that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’

²⁶“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷“And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. ¹²

²⁶“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. ²⁷“And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. ¹²

King David tells us in His song recorded in II Samuel 22, that God’s way is perfect and it is God Himself who makes our way perfect, (see verses 31-33).

II Samuel 22:31-33 -

³¹ *As for* God, His way *is* perfect;
 The word of the LORD *is* proven;
 He *is* a shield to all who trust in Him.
³² “For who *is* God, except the LORD?
 And who *is* a rock, except our God?
³³ God *is* my strength *and* power,
 And He makes my way perfect. ¹³

*This is repeated in Psalms 18:30-32. **God will give us the strength and power through the Holy Spirit to make us perfect.** It is with and through the power of the Holy Spirit that we proceed down the path to perfection. God does not expect us to go it alone. This is why Jesus said that He would go back to the Father and pray to the Father, so that the Father would send us the Helper or Comforter, (i.e., the Holy Spirit), who would help us and give us power to do what we must do. However, even this is tied to obeying His commandments, (see John 14:15-18, John 15:26-27 above, John 16:5-15, and Acts 1:4-11).*

¹²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹³The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

John 14:15-18 -

¹⁵“If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— ¹⁷“the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.¹⁴

John 16:5-15 -

⁵“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ ⁶“But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹“of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰“of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹“of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. ¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴“He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you. ¹⁵“All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.¹⁵

Acts 1:4-11 -

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “*which,*” *He said,* “*you have heard from Me;* ⁵“for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

⁹Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

¹⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹¹who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”¹⁶

*Therefore we see that the **baptism of the Holy Spirit and of fire** is necessary for us to have the **power** to serve God and properly preach the Gospel. So any church that does not teach the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, (which comes from Jesus – see above and Matthew 3:11-12, Luke 3:16-17, and John 1:33), again does not understand the plan of God and how things are supposed to work.*

Matthew 3:11-12 -

¹¹“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²“His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”¹⁷

Luke 3:16-17 -

¹⁶John answered, saying to all, “I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷“His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire.” ¹⁸

John 1:33 -

³³“I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’¹⁹

These scriptures clearly tell us here that Jesus is the one who will do the baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire. He is the One who will separate the wheat, (i.e., true Christians) from the chaff, (i.e., fake Christians). The wheat will be gathered into the barn, (i.e., the Kingdom of God), and the chaff will be tossed into the lake of fire, (see Matthew 13:36-43, 47-51, 24:45-51, Luke 13:22-30 and Revelation 20:14-15).

¹⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

Matthew 13:36-43 -

³⁶Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” ³⁷He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸“The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. ³⁹“The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰“Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴²“and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!²⁰

Matthew 13:47-51 -

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, ⁴⁸“which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹“So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, ⁵⁰“and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” ⁵¹Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” ²¹

Matthew 24:45-51 -

⁴⁵“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶“Blessed *is* that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷“Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸“But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ ⁴⁹“and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰“the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹“and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.²²

Luke 13:22-30 -

²⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²²And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, ²⁴“Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵“When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ ²⁶“then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ ²⁷“But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ ²⁸“There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. ²⁹“They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. ³⁰“And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”²³

Revelation 20:14-15 -

¹⁴Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.²⁴

Jesus is the only way to eternal life with God. He is the ‘narrow gate’ that leads to life and it is difficult to find. Anyone who teaches anything else is operating under the influence of the antichrist spirit and will likely end up in the lake of fire, even if they call themselves Christians, (see John 14:6, 17:1-3, Matthew 7:13-14, I John 2:15 through 5:5, II John 7-11, and Matthew 7:15-22,).

John 14:6 -

⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”²⁵

John 17:1-3 -

¹Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ²“as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”²⁶

²³The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁴The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁵The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁶The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

Matthew 7:13-14 -

¹³“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴“Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.²⁷

I John 2:15 through 5:5 -

¹⁵Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

¹⁸Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. ²⁰But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. ²¹I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²²Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. ²⁶These things I have written to you concerning those who *try to* deceive you. ²⁷But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

²⁸And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. ²⁹If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

Chapter 3

¹Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been

revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

⁴Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. ⁵And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. ⁷Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. ⁸He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

¹⁰In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor *is* he who does not love his brother. ¹¹For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹²not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. ¹⁵Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

¹⁶By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²²And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

²⁴Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Chapter 4

¹Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ²By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. ⁴You are of God, little

children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵They are of the world. Therefore they speak *as* of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

¹²No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *as* Savior of the world. ¹⁵Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

¹⁷Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love Him because He first loved us.

²⁰If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God *must* love his brother also.

Chapter 5

¹Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ²⁸

II John 7-11 -

⁷For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. ⁸Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward. ⁹Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.²⁹

Matthew 7:15-22 -

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep, but are really wolves that will tear you apart. ¹⁶ You can detect them by the way they act, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit. You don’t pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles. ¹⁷ A healthy tree produces good fruit, and an unhealthy tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. ¹⁹ So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Yes, the way to identify a tree or a person is by the kind of fruit that is produced.

²¹ “Not all people who sound religious are really godly. They may refer to me as ‘Lord,’ but they still won’t enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The decisive issue is whether they obey my Father in heaven. ²² On judgment day many will tell me, ‘Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Go away; the things you did were unauthorized.’³⁰

These are frightening words. I believe that people do not fear God, as they should. They fear what other people think of them, losing their thing, and even the Devil more than they fear God! They do not spend time with God, and thus they really do not know Him. Therefore the wisdom of God and understanding what He is doing in the earth escapes them, (see Psalm 111:10 and Proverbs 9:10).

Psalm 111:10 -

¹⁰ The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom;
A good understanding have all those who do *His*
commandments.
His praise endures forever.³¹

²⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁰*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

³¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

Proverbs 9:10 -

¹⁰ “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.³²

*God is about to allow the Devil to bring his wrath on the earth, (see Revelation 12:12). This will be followed by the wrath of God. **Hope in the false doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture will NOT save you from the tribulation, but becoming perfect may!** We must become absolutely obedient to God, if we want to escape the wrath to come, and even then we must watch for the end and pray always that we are counted worthy to escape these things, because the time is at hand (see Luke 21:34-36 and the preceding scriptures, Revelation 3:7-13, especially verse 10, and the handout entitled ‘Revelation Revealed’).*

Revelation 12:12 -

¹²“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”³³

Luke 21:34-36 -

³⁴“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵“For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”³⁴

Revelation 3:7-13 -

⁷“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,
“These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens”: ⁸“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. ⁹“Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. ¹⁰“**Because you have kept My command to**

³²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. ¹¹“Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. ¹²“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. ¹³“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ³⁵

In Matthew 5:21 through 7:6, (see above), Jesus outlined the way we should behave ourselves, if we want to be obedient to God. He told us in Matthew 7:7-11 to be consistent and persistent with our seeking of God and His promises. Jesus summed up this walk in Matthew 7:12 with the ‘Golden Rule’, that we should treat EVERYONE, even our enemies, with the same respect we would want to have shown to us. He told us in Matthew 7:15-20 to beware of false teachers of God’s word and that we can identify them by their fruit, (i.e., the way they act). Therefore, if we teach perfection, then we must be moving in that direction ourselves, or else we are hypocrites and liars, and we may have our portion in the lake of fire! In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus tells us that if we follow these teachings, that we will be wise and like the person who builds their house on the rock, and that when the storms of life come, (especially the tribulation), then our house will stand.

There is only one place of escape from the Great Tribulation, which is just a short time away. It is a place known in the Bible as the ‘wilderness’. A person can only get to this ‘wilderness’ by being ‘counted worthy to escape all these things’, (see Luke 21:36 above, and Revelation 12:6 & 14). This is what the Bible refers to as ‘Zion’ or ‘Mount Zion’. The word ‘Zion’ literally means ‘wilderness’. This is a hidden meaning, since there is no place geographically on earth called Mount Zion. Therefore it is a place in the spirit, where God dwells. It is physically represented on the earth by the ‘wilderness’. Geographically the wilderness or Mount Zion could be almost anywhere, but it is probably in the vicinity of Jerusalem. God will have prepared a place for the first wave of Christians to be taken out of harms way when the Devil brings about his wrath, and just 3½ years before God brings His wrath directly on the earth. The group of ‘firstfruits to God’ will be 144,000 people. After this group multitudes will come out of the tribulation, (see Revelation 7 and chapter 14:1-5). This Mount Zion is the same as the ‘holy hill’ or ‘holy mountain’ of God. The Bible tells us that this is a place of safety in God, and there are certain requirements in order to be able to dwell there, (see Psalm 2, 3, 15, 43 and 99). Becoming perfect is the only way to be able

³⁵The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

to dwell in this 'secret place of the Most High', where no harm can come to you, (see Psalm 91).

Revelation 12:6 & 14 -

⁶Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.³⁶

¹⁴But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.³⁷

Revelation 7 -

¹After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. ²Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred *and* forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel *were* sealed:

- ⁵ of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- ⁶ of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- ⁷ of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- ⁸ of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand *were* sealed;
- of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand *were* sealed.

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹All the angels stood around the throne and the

³⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹²saying:

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever.
Amen.”

¹³Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?” ¹⁴And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵“Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. ¹⁶“They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; ¹⁷“for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”³⁸

Revelation 14:1-5 -

¹Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred *and* forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred *and* forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.³⁹

Psalms Chapters 2-3 -

Psalms 2

¹ Why do the nations rage,
And the people plot a vain thing?
² The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*,
³ “Let us break Their bonds in pieces

³⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

And cast away Their cords from us.”
 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;
 The LORD shall hold them in derision.
 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,
 And distress them in His deep displeasure:
 6 “Yet I have set My King
 On My holy hill of Zion.”
 7 “I will declare the decree:
 The LORD has said to Me,
 ‘You *are* My Son,
 Today I have begotten You.
 8 Ask of Me, and I will give *You*
 The nations *for* Your inheritance,
 And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.
 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron;
 You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ ”
 10 Now therefore, be wise, O kings;
 Be instructed, you judges of the earth.
 11 Serve the LORD with fear,
 And rejoice with trembling.
 12 Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,
 And you perish *in* the way,
 When His wrath is kindled but a little.
 Blessed *are* all those who put their trust in Him⁴⁰

Psalm 3

A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.
 1 LORD, how they have increased who trouble me!
 Many *are* they who rise up against me.
 2 Many *are* they who say of me,
 “*There is no help for him in God.*” Selah
 3 But You, O LORD, *are* a shield for me,
 My glory and the One who lifts up my head.
 4 I cried to the LORD with my voice,
 And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah
 5 I lay down and slept;
 I awoke, for the LORD sustained me.
 6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
 Who have set *themselves* against me all around.
 7 Arise, O LORD;

Save me, O my God!
 For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone;
 You have broken the teeth of the ungodly.
 8 Salvation *belongs* to the LORD.
 Your blessing *is* upon Your people. Selah⁴¹

Psalm 15 -

Psalm 15

A Psalm of David.

1 LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle?
 Who may dwell in Your holy hill?
 2 He who walks uprightly,
 And works righteousness,
 And speaks the truth in his heart;
 3 He *who* does not backbite with his tongue,
 Nor does evil to his neighbor,
 Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend;
 4 In whose eyes a vile person is despised,
 But he honors those who fear the LORD;
 He *who* swears to his own hurt and does not change;
 5 He *who* does not put out his money at usury,
 Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
 He who does these *things* shall never be moved.⁴²

Psalm 24:1-6 -

Psalm 24

A Psalm of David.

1 The earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness,
 The world and those who dwell therein.
 2 For He has founded it upon the seas,
 And established it upon the waters.
 3 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?
 Or who may stand in His holy place?
 4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
 Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
 Nor sworn deceitfully.

⁴¹The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

5 He shall receive blessing from the LORD,
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
 6 This *is* Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him,
 Who seek Your face. Selah⁴³

Psalm 43 -

Psalm 43

1 Vindicate me, O God,
 And plead my cause against an ungodly nation;
 Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!
 2 For You *are* the God of my strength;
 Why do You cast me off?
 Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
 3 Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!
 Let them lead me;
 Let them bring me to Your holy hill
 And to Your tabernacle.
 4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
 To God my exceeding joy;
 And on the harp I will praise You,
 O God, my God.
 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul?
 And why are you disquieted within me?
 Hope in God;
 For I shall yet praise Him,
 The help of my countenance and my God.⁴⁴

Psalm 99 -

Psalm 99

1 The LORD reigns;
 Let the peoples tremble!
 He dwells *between* the cherubim;
 Let the earth be moved!
 2 The LORD *is* great in Zion,
 And He *is* high above all the peoples.

⁴³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

3 Let them praise Your great and awesome name—
 He *is* holy.
 4 The King's strength also loves justice;
 You have established equity;
 You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob.
 5 Exalt the LORD our God,
 And worship at His footstool—
 He *is* holy.
 6 Moses and Aaron were among His priests,
 And Samuel was among those who called upon His name;
 They called upon the LORD, and He answered them.
 7 He spoke to them in the cloudy pillar;
 They kept His testimonies and the ordinance He gave them.
 8 You answered them, O LORD our God;
 You were to them God-Who-Forgives,
 Though You took vengeance on their deeds.
 9 Exalt the LORD our God,
 And worship at His holy hill;
 For the LORD our God *is* holy.⁴⁵

Psalm 91 -

Psalm 91

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
 Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
 2 I will say of the LORD, "*He is* my refuge and my fortress;
 My God, in Him I will trust."
 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.
 4 He shall cover you with His feathers,
 And under His wings you shall take refuge;
 His truth *shall be your* shield and buckler.
 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow *that* flies by day,
 6 *Nor* of the pestilence *that* walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction *that* lays waste at noonday.
 7 A thousand may fall at your side,
 And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.

8 Only with your eyes shall you look,
 And see the reward of the wicked.
 9 Because you have made the LORD, *who is* my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place,
 10 No evil shall befall you,
 Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;
 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you,
 To keep you in all your ways.
 12 In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
 Lest you dash your foot against a stone.
 13 You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,
 The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.
 14 “Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver
 him;
 I will set him on high, because he has known My name.
 15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
 I *will be* with him in trouble;
 I will deliver him and honor him.
 16 With long life I will satisfy him,
 And show him My salvation.”⁴⁶

These things are hidden secrets that are not for everyone. That is why only 144,000 men will initially be taken out of harm's way, (probably not counting women and children). The hidden secrets of God are revealed only to a few, and typically NOT to the leaders of the church, since most of the leaders of the church today walk in denial of the deeper things of God just as the Pharisees did in Jesus day, (see Psalm 25:14 and Luke 10:21-24).

Psalm 25:14 -

14 The secret of the LORD *is* with those who fear Him,
 And He will show them His covenant.⁴⁷

Luke 10:21-24 -

²¹In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.
²²“All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the

⁴⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.”²³ Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see;”²⁴ “for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.”⁴⁸

What is the key to becoming perfect?

*The key to becoming perfect lies in John chapter 17 especially verses 20-26. In these scriptures, Jesus is praying for our perfection. **The KEY to perfection is our sharing in God’s GLORY**, (see verses 22 and 23). However, I have often heard it preached by powerful people of God that ‘God will share His glory with no man’. I believe that this wrong teaching is based on a misinterpretation of the scriptures in Isaiah 42:8, 48:11 and I Corinthians 1:29. If you read these scriptures in their respective contexts, you will see that in Isaiah 42:8, God is saying that He will not share His glory with another god. In Isaiah 48:11, God is saying that He will not give His glory to another people, other than His people, the ‘house of Jacob’ or Israel, (see Isaiah 48:1-11). We become Israelites, (i.e., children of Abraham and heirs to the promise) through Jesus, (see Galatians 3:6 and 29). In I Corinthians 1:29, Paul is saying that ‘no flesh’ should glory in His, (i.e., God’s) presence’. We are not supposed to be walking in the flesh, but according to the Spirit of God, (see Romans chapter 8, esp. v. 1, and Galatians 5:16-26, esp. v. 25). **Therefore, according to the Lord’s prayer in John 17, it is necessary that we share in God’s glory in order to move into perfection.** This is also the principle that Paul taught when he said that we should be transformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Jesus ‘from glory to glory’, (see II Corinthians 3:18). **When the Church as a whole wakes up and begins to believe this concept, then they will also begin to grow up and move toward PERFECTION. EVERY MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST MUST BECOME PERFECT AND BE IN UNITY OR JESUS WILL NOT COME BACK!** Anyone who teaches anything different does not understand the plan of God as is laid out in the Bible, (see Ephesians chapter 4, especially vv. 9-16, 5:22-32, especially v. 27, and Revelation chapter 19, especially vv. 7-8).*

How do we know when we have reached perfection?

*The answer to this question is found in I Corinthians chapter 13, James 1:2-4, and chapter 3:4, I John 2:5-6, and 4:12 and verses 17-18. **If we walk in LOVE, then we have become perfected.** If we do not walk in love, then we are lacking. The litmus test of perfection is **fear**. If there remains in a person fear of anything*

⁴⁸The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

except God, then they have not been perfected in love. The only fear that we are to have is the reverential **fear of the Lord**, (see Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7 and verse 29, 2:5, 8:13, 9:10, 10:27, 14:26-27, 15:16 and verse 33, 16:6, 19:23, 22:4, 23:17, Isaiah 11:2-3, 33:6, Acts 9:31). **Everything that we do that is against the will of God is because we put the fear of man, or even fear of the Devil, above the fear of the Lord!** **If we fear God and love Him, and each other, then we have come to the point of perfection.** We show our love for God by our obedience, (see John 14:15, and 15:9-10 and 14, and I John 2:3-6), and our love for our fellow man, especially the brethren in Christ, by the way we treat them, **especially in the way we speak**, (see John 15:9-17, James 1:2-4, 3:2, and 4:11, I Peter 1:22, I John 2:5-11, 3:10-24, and 4:12). Unfortunately, the only way most people, even Christians, will gain the fear of the Lord and become perfected in love, is to be subjected to intense persecution during the great tribulation. The rest of the inhabitants of the earth will still not fear God, and will be subjected to the intense destructive power of God during what is known in the Bible as **The Day of the Lord**.

Finally therefore, Jesus gave us a commandment to **'be PERFECT just as our Father in heaven is PERFECT'**, therefore, we **MUST OBEY Him**, as this is a commandment from God. **If we love God, we will obey Him!** In John 14:15, 21, and 23, Jesus tells us that if we love Him, we will obey Him and keep His words. He also says in verse 24, that if we do NOT love Him, we will NOT keep His words. We also see in the surrounding scriptures that if we will obey God, He will send the Holy Spirit to help us in this regard. Therefore, we will not be acting alone, but we will be under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Our job is to decide. True love is a decision. True love is NOT double-minded. **We simply have to make up our minds and decide to do the right things and God Himself will empower us to do them, (see John 14:15-29).**

John 14:15-29 -

¹⁵“**If you love Me, keep My commandments.** ¹⁶“**And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—** ¹⁷“**the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.** ¹⁸“**I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.**

¹⁹“**A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.** ²⁰“**At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.** ²¹“**He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.**” ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered and said to him, “**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My**

word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴“He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. ²⁶“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. ²⁷“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. ²⁸“You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I. ²⁹“And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.” 49

Lack of perfection is not an option. There are essentially 2 choices, we can become perfected by dying in Christ, (see Hebrews 12:23), or we can choose to lead a holy life in Christ, through the glory of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit, so that we can become perfected and one in the Father through His Son, (see Hebrews 10:8-18 and John 17:20-24). ***If we say we love God and do not do what He says, then we are lying!*** It is as simple as that. Anyone who therefore does not teach that we should move toward perfection, and attain it, does not understand the scriptures. These people are not truly doing what God has commanded them through Jesus Christ to do. As we have seen in Matthew 5:19, anyone who breaks even the least of God’s commandments, and teaches people to do the same, will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. ***Let us NOT continue in disobedience, but let us move toward perfection!*** Amen.

© 2008 Raymond D. Mossie, M.D.
Adonai’s Agape Through Jesus Christ Ministries