

Is It Possible To Be Sinless and Perfect?

Sinless perfection is not only possible, but demanded by God in both old and new testaments. Being perfect as God is perfect doesn't mean a Christian makes perfect grades on math tests, knows everything, or never does something to offend someone. After all, Jesus offended many people.

The argument that I've heard so many times is, "If you were perfect, you wouldn't need God; you'd be God". After all, God ALONE is holy (Rev 15:4). BUT, there is a problem with that way of thinking... It's because God commands us to be holy. Is God giving us an impossible commandment? No! This is how it works: God in and of Himself is holy and needs no one in order for Himself to be holy, but we not only CAN be made holy through Him; we MUST be made holy through Him (1Pet 1:15-16). No one can say, "I'm a holy sinner"! That's an oxymoron. However, one can say, "I was once a sinner, but now I am righteous, thanks to God" (Rom 6:17-18). If God has placed us in an environment where it is impossible to stop sinning, He cannot send us to Hell AND STILL CLAIM TO BE JUST.

Verses on Being Sinless, Holy, and Perfect

Below are several dozens of verses that expound on Christians being holy, blameless, sinless, perfect, sanctified, and complete. At the bottom of this page are verses that are commonly referred to when preachers preach that Christians either aren't or can't be perfect.

These verses command: sanctify yourselves (STOP SINNING), be holy (SINLESS), cleanse yourselves (BECOME SINLESS), be without blame (BE WITHOUT SIN), be perfect, and to follow the commandments (TO NOT SIN).

Be Perfect

Genesis 17:1 – "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect."

Matthew 5:48 – "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Follow Commandments

Numbers 15:40 – "That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God."

John 14:15 – "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

1 John 5:2-4 – "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Be Holy (SINNLESS) For I Am Holy

Leviticus 11:44-45 – “For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.

Leviticus 19:2 – “Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy.”

Leviticus 20:7 – “Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God.”

Leviticus 20:26 – “And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.”

Romans 12:1-2 – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 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.”

2 Corinthians 7:1 – “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Ephesians 1:4 – “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”

1Thessalonians 4:3-4 & 7 – “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; ... 7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”

Titus 2:3 – “The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;”

Hebrews 12:14 – “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”

1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

2 Peter 3:11 – “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,”

Slaves to Sin / Free From Sin

John 8:34-36 – “Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

Romans 6:7 – “For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

Romans 6:16-23 – “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 8:1-4 – “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Results of Sin

Psalms 66:18 – “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:”

Galatians 6:7-8 - Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Romans 8:12-13 – “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”

1 Corinthians 3:16-17 – “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

(IF GOD IS IN YOU, YOU ARE HOLY; IF NOT, YOU ARE NOT. IF YOU SAY HE IS IN YOU AND YET YOU ARE UNHOLY, YOU ARE MAKING HIM UNHOLY – GOD DESTROYS THE UNHOLY TEMPLE)

Commands: Do Not Sin

Psalms 4:3-4 – “But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him. Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.”

Romans 6:6 – “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Romans 6:12-14 – “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

1 Corinthians 9:27 – “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

Ephesians 4:20-24 – “But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Colossians 3:5-6 – “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things 'sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:”

Colossians 3:9-10 – “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:”

2 Timothy 2:19 – “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”
(IF IT WERE IMPOSSIBLE TO DEPART FROM SIN, WHY WOULD SCRIPTURE TELL US TO DEPART FROM IT?)

Titus 2:11-12 – “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”

1 Peter 3:10-11 – “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.”

1 John 2:1 – “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:”

Men CAN Be Made Holy (SINLESS)

Luke 1:74-75 – “That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Ephesians 5:25-27 – “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

Philippians 4:13 – “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”
(THIS INCLUDES, "STOP SINNING").

Colossians 1:20-23 – “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;”

1 Thessalonians 3:13 – “To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”

1 Peter 3:12 – “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

1 John 1:7 – “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

1 John 3:5-10 – “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”

1 John 5:18 – “We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.”

IF YOU BECOME SUBJECT TO SIN AGAIN, IT IS BECAUSE OF YOUR CHOICE.

Verses on Continuing In Sin after Salvation

Below are some common verses that have been used to support the belief that once a person is a sinner, they are always a sinner and cannot be made sinless, perfect, holy, etc.

Asking God for Forgiveness Daily

Matthew 6:12 – “forgive us our debts (sin, as in Luke 11:4) as we forgive our debtors.”

This prayer is for Christians who call God Father (Matt 6:9) – NOT for those who still live in sin because God does not hear those who regard iniquity (Ps 66:18). Not everyone can call God Father. Many are children of the devil (John 8:44). Whoever sins is a slave to sin (John 8:34) and whoever sins is of the devil (1 John 3:8). Whoever is led by the Spirit is a son of God (Rom 8:14). Whoever is born of God doesn't sin (1 John 5:18). The question is, why should a son of God who is free from sin ask for forgiveness of debt/sin? It's because this verse refers to debt, not soul damning sin. All sin is debt, but not all debt is sin. For example, owing money you can't pay isn't sin, but IT IS a debt (Matt 18:23-35).

If We Say We Haven't Sinned, We're Lying

1 John 1:9-19 – “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

[we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar] – If we say we have not sinned IN THE PAST, then we are lying. This doesn't mean that born again Christians continue sinning. Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned (PAST TENSE), but 1 John 5:18 says that whoever is born of God doesn't sin...

Paul: Hadn't Already Attained Perfection

Philippians 3:11-12 – “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 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.”

[not as though I had already attained] – Paul had not already attained resurrection of the dead. Plainly put; Paul hadn't died and been resurrected from the dead yet.

[not ... already perfect] – He was not already resurrected in a complete glorified state like Jesus was. This perfection refers to glorified resurrection just as Hebrews 5:9 that says, “And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”. Since Jesus was perfect/sinless from birth and all eternity past, how would he “be made perfect” as in Hebrews 5:9 unless this refers to His glorified resurrection that made him the author of eternal salvation? Jesus was not the author of salvation UNTIL He was resurrected and made perfect, because if Christ hadn't risen, all faith in the resurrection would be useless (1Cor 15:14). This verse doesn't mean Paul was in sin, unsanctified, lacking in the spirit, deficient of grace, or that “the old man” was still alive in him. It means Paul hadn't been perfected through resurrection.

I Am Carnal, Sold Under Sin

Romans 7:17-25 – “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”

[O wretched man that I am] – This is not a picture of a redeemed soul. Paul always lived in good conscience (Acts 23:1) even while persecuting the church AND after conversion. How could Paul claim to be in good conscience before and after conversion yet still sin? He couldn't. The only logical conclusion is that this portion of scripture refers to his 3 day conversion of Acts 9 when he realized he had broken The Law of Moses and could only be saved by grace. Paul is talking in present tense, “I am carnal, sold under sin”, “that which I do”, “the evil which I would not do, that I do”, and that is what makes most believe that this was something that Paul was struggling with and therefore something all Christians struggle with. However, the very next verse is Romans 8:1 – “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” Paul is saying, ‘I am in Christ Jesus and I am not condemned because I am walking after the Spirit and not the flesh like I described in Romans 7 when I was under the Law of Moses.’ Paul wasn't under the Law of Moses, but grace (Rom 6:14). Everything Paul said in Romans 7 refers to when he was under the Law of Moses, so this passage should be understood as Paul before redemption, not afterwards.