

Made Perfect; Hebrews 11:39-40

- I. Perfect
 - a. We define this word as 'without flaw'
 - b. Webster's defines it as 'entirely without fault or defect, flawless'
 - c. We are in a constant state of searching for perfection
 - i. The perfect body
 - ii. The perfect golf shot
 - iii. The perfect politician to vote for
 - d. We often translate that into our Christianity – the perfect Christian
 - i. One who is at worship service and study every time
 - ii. One who is generous, caring, and loving all the time
 - e. But, when the Scriptures talk about us (or the people of the Old Testament) being made perfect, God does not mean without flaw or entirely without fault or defect
 - f. We are all sinners – we fail that definition before we even become a Christian
- II. A Shadow
 - a. A mere representation of something real, shadow ¹
 - b. Hebrews 10:1–4 (ESV); ¹ For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. ² Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? ³ But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.
 - i. Since it was a shadow of the kingdom to come, it could not provide what the kingdom provides – completeness
 - ii. The Law of Moses (with all the sacrifices) and all the trappings – the tabernacle, the lampstand, the altar, the ark, the table of showbread – were all a shadow of the coming kingdom
 - iii. But a shadow has to have a substance to cast the shadow – that substance is Jesus
 - iv. When an Israelite would take his trespass offering, his sin offering, his guilt offering, his freewill offering, any offering to the temple for sacrifice, it was a shadow of the sacrifice of Jesus
 - v. Colossians 2:16–19 (ESV); ¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions, puffed up without reason

¹ William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 929.

² Ibid, 996

by his sensuous mind,¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

- c. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law of Moses – Jesus completed the Law
- III. Complete
- a. John 19:28–30 (ESV);²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), “I thirst.”²⁹ A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth.³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
- b. Perfect – To complete an activity, complete, bring to an end, finish, accomplish²
- c. Hebrews 12:1–2 (ESV);¹ Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- d. We are incomplete without Jesus
- i. The ‘whole’ person concept – not just academics, not just productivity, but attitude and character
 - ii. We are constantly trying to complete ourselves with things instead of Jesus
 - iii. Addiction (drugs, alcohol, sex, work, etc.) runs rampant in the USA (and the whole world) because of our desire for completeness
 - iv. For some reason we think that if we are without flaw, entirely without fault or defect, flawless (perfect), then we are complete
 - v. We spend our lives striving for perfection when all we need is completeness
 - vi. We can never be perfect (without flaw) – all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)
 - vii. But we can be perfect (complete)
 - viii. Romans 6:23 (ESV); For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- e. Christians are not perfect people, they are people perfected by Christ
- IV. Perfected
- a. We need to stop striving for perfection
 - b. We need to submit to Jesus to be perfected
 - c. Hebrews 11:32-40
 - d. We are made perfect in Christ Jesus
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