

Called To Be Supermen

by

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November 5, 2011

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(And Superwomen, too)

Early in the past century a book entitled, “Superman” was published by a prominent Austrian psychiatrist. The main thrust of the book was that, through “evolution”, men would be able to so become advanced mentally and physically that the future of the human race would be wholly in his (man’s) hands. This negated the need for a “Supreme Being”.

Later in the century, a popular comic-strip of the same name became popular, along with movies and television versions. This was pure fantasy.

As Christians, we are called to be “supermen” and “superwomen”. This is clear and unmistakable from a reading of the scriptures.

“SUPER” — “Above...of the highest degree, power, etc. To an especially high degree.”

- Not a comic-book hero with “super-powers”.
- Not Nietzsche’s ideal of super-creativity, dominance, etc.
- Not the super-being of human “evolution”.
- Not a ruthless egoist of superior cunning, strength, or force of will.

If not these, what sort of “super” being are we to be?

- “PERFECT” — “The state of being or becoming perfect”
- “The perfect embodiment or example of something”
- “A quality or trait or feature of the highest degree of perfection”
- “The art or fact of perfecting a finishing”

The Command To Be “Perfect” Presumes The Existence Of Imperfection

We Are All Sinners

- John 16:8, “*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*”
- Rom. 3:9, “*...we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;*”
- Rom. 6:17, “*...ye were the servants of sin...*”
- Rom. 6:23, “*... the wages of sin is death...*”
- Gal. 3:22, “*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin...*”
- 1 John 1:8, “*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*”

We are thus aptly shown to be errant creatures, prone to sin; furthermore, we are prone to violate God’s Law, which is the greatest sin of all.

How, Then, Can We Expect To Be Perfect?

We are commanded to be “perfect”.

- Matt. 5:48, “*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*”
- Luke 6:40, “*The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.*”
- 2 Tim. 3:16-17, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, ...That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*”

Perfect In What?

In Unity.

- John 17:23, “*...that they may be made perfect in one...*”
- Eph. 4:13, “*Till we all come...unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*”

In Patience.

- James 1:4, *“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”*

In Self-Control.

- James 3:2, *“...If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”*

In Love.

1 John 4:16-17, *“...he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect...”*

(Excludes fear) 1 John 4:18, *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear...”*

In Weakness.

- 2 Cor. 12:9, *“...My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness...”*

Imperfect Creatures To Be Perfect?

We have seen that we are imperfect creatures, and at the same time are commanded to be “perfect”. How are we to understand this apparent contradiction? As always, the scriptures provide the answer!

Abide in Christ. John 15:4, *“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”*

In the same manner as an appliance cannot perform its function if disconnected from its source of power, so we, if we are disconnected from our source of power, cannot achieve “perfection”.

What is our source of power? Rom. 1:16, *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...”*

Christ was sinless. 1 Pet. 2:21-22, *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”*

Perfection Is Completeness.

In all this, we never get the impression that our Lord or His Apostles ever taught that salvation depended on achieving a state of perfection (that is, the absence of error or sin), for that is nowhere taught in the scriptures. What the word means is “completeness”. The Lord wants us to be “perfectly” (completely) grounded in the faith of the gospel. In this way, we can abide by the teaching of the Apostle Paul in 2 Tim. 2:15, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” And again in 2 Tim. 3:16-17, “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*”

By our diligence at maintaining our life-line in its connection with our source of power, we can do “every good work”. This is the perfection that we can attain.

Strive For Perfection.

Paul, who instructed us to be “perfect”, put it all into perspective in his letter to the Philippians, Phil. 3:12-14, “*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. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*”

Not one of us will ever achieve a “perfect” existence in this life, but we can do as Paul summed up his above statement in vs. 15, “*Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*”

It is my hope that we all will strive for perfection in the knowledge of God’s word and arm ourselves to do every good work in Christ Jesus.

Your brother in Christ,
J. D. Logan

