



# PERSPECTIVES

## TOPIC NO. 7: CAN CHRISTIANS REACH A STATE OF PERFECT SINLESSNESS?

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Monday Night Bible Fellowship

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### A. THE BIG QUESTION

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Have you ever met a Christian who claimed they no longer sin? Imagine believing that after salvation, it's possible to live without ever sinning again. Now ask yourself—if we are made new in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit, why do we still struggle with sin? This creates a tension: if God calls us to holiness, is it possible to reach a point of perfect sinlessness in this life, or are we always going to fall short? Let's explore what the Bible says on both sides of this powerful and deeply personal issue.

### B. ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING THE POSSIBILITY OF PERFECT SINLESSNESS

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Some Christians believe that it is possible, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to live a life free from sin. This view often emphasizes the transformative power of salvation and sanctification.

#### **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)**

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"*

This verse highlights the radical transformation that happens at conversion, suggesting a complete break from the old sinful nature.

#### **Romans 6:6-7 (NIV)**

*"For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin."*

Paul emphasizes freedom from sin, which some interpret as meaning sin no longer has any power or influence.

**1 John 3:6 (NIV)**

*"No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him."*

This verse is often cited to support the view that genuine Christians do not continue to sin habitually.

**Matthew 5:48 (NIV)**

*"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."*

Jesus' command here is sometimes interpreted not just as a goal, but as a spiritual possibility through divine help.

**Philippians 4:13 (NIV)**

*"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."*

This verse supports the idea that even the seemingly impossible—like living sinlessly—can be done through Christ's strength.

## **C. ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF PERFECT SINLESSNESS**

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Many Christians hold that while we are called to holiness, sinless perfection is not fully attainable in this life due to the ongoing battle between the flesh and the Spirit.

**1 John 1:8 (NIV)**

*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."*

John explicitly warns against the idea that anyone is completely without sin.

**Romans 7:18-19 (NIV)**

*"For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing."*

Paul acknowledges the ongoing internal struggle, even as a mature believer.

**Ecclesiastes 7:20 (NIV)**

*"Indeed, there is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins."*

This Old Testament wisdom remains true even in light of the New Testament's call to holiness.

**James 3:2 (NIV)**

*"We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check."*

James implies that complete perfection is extremely rare—perhaps hypothetically possible but not realized.

**Galatians 5:17 (NIV)**

*"For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want."*

This verse points to an ongoing spiritual battle within the believer.

## D. WHAT IS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THIS ISSUE?

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Fill in the space below with your perspective on this question.

## E. WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS ISSUE

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Here are several resources for deeper exploration:

### Books:

- *"The Pursuit of Holiness"* by Jerry Bridges – Encourages believers to live a holy life while acknowledging human frailty.
- *"Christian Perfection"* by John Wesley – Presents the Wesleyan view of entire sanctification.
- *"Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners"* by John Bunyan – An honest look at spiritual struggle and grace.

### Scripture Passages for Study:

- Romans chapters 6–8
- Galatians 5
- 1 John 1–3
- Hebrews 10:10-14
- Philippians 2:12-13

### Theological Resources:

- *The Wesleyan Understanding of Sanctification* – Many Methodist traditions teach "entire sanctification" as a second work of grace.
- *Systematic Theology* by Wayne Grudem – Offers a balanced and scholarly treatment of sanctification and sin.