

## THE ODDITIES OF GOD'S CHOSEN

Even the best of the Bible were less than perfect:

- **Adam** it's all his fault
- **Eve** it's all her fault
- **Noah** got drunk
- **Abraham** lied about wife
- **Sarah** doubter
- **Lot** covetous
- **Jacob** greedy for birthright
- **Joseph's Brothers** treacherous
- **Judah** solicited prostitution
- **Moses** disobeyed God
- **Aaron** idol maker
- **Samson** weak for women
- **Eli** bad dad
- **Saul** disobeyed God
- **David** adultery & murder
- **Samuel** bad dad
- **Solomon** turned to polytheism
- **Elijah** lost courage
- **Hezekiah** did not glorify God
- **Jonah** despised God's grace
- **Peter** disavowed Jesus
- **Mary & Martha** blamed Jesus
- **12 Disciples** no comment
- **John Mark** desertion
- **Judas Iscariot** a weasel
- **Paul** persecutor

This sampling of the squalid history of Bible characters can easily betray one's sense of respectability. But God's grace overruled the sordid failings of these men and women (Romans 5:20) that could have disqualified them outright from being His teammates (in some cases they were—by their own choice).

**Perfection isn't freedom from human imperfections or absolute sinlessness. We still have weaknesses in our present bodies:**

1. Humanity is imperfect (Phil. 3:12; 1 Cor. 15:51-53)
2. Knowledge is imperfect (1 Cor. 13:12; Job 42:3; Rom. 11:33; Jam. 1:5)
3. We are still tempted (1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 7:18; 1 Thes. 3:5; Jam. 1:13; 4:7)
4. Our bodies are weak (Rom. 7:14-23; 8:23-25; 2 Cor. 5:2, 4)
5. Opinions/views are imperfect (Exo. 18:13-24; 2 Sam. 7:3; 1 Kin. 8:17-19; Luke 7:20; 9:33; Acts 10:14, 28; 16:7; 27:10, 22, 23; Rev. 10:4)
6. Feelings/passions still weak (1 Kin. 19:3; Acts 15:39)

We will always have weaknesses of body and mind, thought processes and emotions. These imperfections are not deliberate, sinful acts (although unchecked, can lead to sins).

## IN CHRIST ALONE

In spite of imperfections, there is perfection:

1. A continual **relationship** with Christ is the only way to Christian perfection, here and in the next life (1 John 5:11, 12)
2. A continual **imitation** of Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; Col. 2:6; 1 John 2:6)
3. Moral development, which is ongoing (Rom. 8:4-14; 12:1, 2; Jn. 14:15; 17:17; 1 Jn. 2:29; 3:7; 4:17; 5:3; 1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Eph. 3:16; Gal. 5:16-25)
4. To live on the level of Spirit-filled love in the heart:
  - Love for God (Deut. 6:5; 1 Jn. 3:24)
  - Love for others (Mat. 22:39; 1 Jn. 3:11-18)
5. A continual development of Christ-likeness throughout eternity. We will never reach a point of perfection where development stops.

**It is very counterintuitive to see ourselves as perfect in Christ, or developing in perfection, when we can identify more with the Bible characters on the reverse. But the heart of Christian reality is that we must keep on the journey of faith, not fixating on ourselves, but keeping our focus on Christ:**

*"Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" (Colossians 3:1-4).*

*"We need to be refined, cleansed from all earthliness, till we reflect the image of our Saviour, and become 'partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust'...But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotless and infinite purity, we shall feel as did Daniel, when he beheld the glory of the Lord, and said, 'My comeliness was turned in me into corruption.' We cannot say, 'I am sinless,' till this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. **But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus**, the blessed hope is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; **complete in Christ, robed in his righteousness and perfection.**"*

Ellen White, *The Signs of the Times*, March 23, 1888