

(Num20:12) and struck the rock twice rebelling against God (Num 20:24). **Job** was the “*righteous*” man who was “*blameless and upright*” by God’s own testimony who said of him “*there is no one on earth like him... a man who fears God and shuns evil*” (Job 2:3). Yet Job himself acknowledged his own personal sins (Job 9:20, 14:16-17), admitted that he was not innocent but guilty (Job 9:28-29) and that he needed God’s mercy and forgiveness (Job 7:20-21, 9:15). King **David** of whom the Bible says he was “*righteous and upright in heart,*” was man who fell into the serious transgression of adultery, deceit and murder, and in the Psalms regularly admitted to many more trivial sins (Ps 19:12). **Isaiah** the prophet upon the sight of God in His throne room said, “*Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips*” (Isa 6:5). Even the righteous prophet **Daniel** confessed his sins and wickedness (Dan 9:4-16). There are several statements in the **Old Testament** that flatly **deny** the idea of **perfectionism**.

1 Kings 8:46 - 46 "When **they sin against Thee (for there is no man who does not sin)** and Thou art angry with them and dost deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near; NASB

Proverbs 20:9 - 9 **Who can say, "I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin"?** NASB

Jeremiah 17:9 - 9 "**The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick;** Who can understand it? NASB

The **New Testament** also adds clarity to this issue in many places. Jesus urged the disciples to prayer and watchfulness so they wouldn’t yield to temptation and then added, “*the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*” (Matt 26:41). The Lord’s prayer of Matthew 6:12 declares, “*Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us.*” This implies that the **daily life** of disciples is **characterized** by an **ongoing need for divine forgiveness**. Paul also speaks of his own ability in the pursuit of perfection as “*not having yet attained*” to it.

Philippians 3:10-14 - 10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 **Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.** 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and **reaching forward to what lies ahead,** 14 **I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.** NASB

In fact Paul says, “*I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet*” clearly stating the he presses on to the “*upward call in Christ.*” See in these that we are to **exert God-dependent effort** to press on toward Christlikeness, and this is the aim for which we strive but will never quite attain in this life. In this striving after Christlikeness we glorify God and have a **sure goal** that is always before us calling us heavenward to **progress in bearing His image**.

We have been **set free** from the **reigning power** of **sin** to **dominate our lives**, but it has **not been completely eradicated from us yet**.

Romans 6:5-11 - 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, **that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.** 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; **death no longer is master over Him.** **10 For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.** **11 Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.** NASB

Romans 6:17-22 - 17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and **having been freed from sin,** you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. 20 For