

- How has God perfected what is lacking in you? How have your strong points overcome or compensated for your weaknesses?
- Commit yourself to reaching out to someone you know who is struggling in some way. How can you bring God's presence into his or her life?

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES ON PERFECTION

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul’ the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psalm 19:7)

“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:48)

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2)

“But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.” (1Corinthians 13:10)

“And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” (2Corinthians 12:9)

“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” (Hebrews 2:10)

“Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?” (Hebrews 7:11)

“To the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect.” (Hebrews 12:23)

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts our fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.” (1John 4:18)



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CHRISTIAN LIVING



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THE BIBLE

Offers inspiration and encouragement, especially when stress, strife, or feelings of hopelessness seem to destroy our quest for perfection in Christ: “All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be perfect, equipped for every good work” (2Timothy 3:16-17).

THE WRITINGS OF THE HOLY FATHERS

Also offer direction in our daily lives. Many of their writings are nothing more than discourses on spiritual themes and scriptural passages designed to strengthen our faith and inspire us to accept the challenge to live a more perfect Christian lifestyle.

PRAYER

Our own, as well as those offered by others on our behalf - is essential in seeking perfection. Prayer enables us to “be perfect and fully assured in all the will of God” (Colossians 4:12). “Night and day” writes St Paul, we are called to “pray beyond measure” and to “perfect that which is lacking” (1Thessalonians 3:10).

SEEKING GRACE

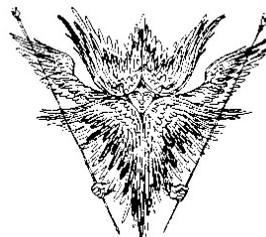
Grace is the presence of God in our lives. By acknowledging and responding to His loving presence, we recognise our weakness. “And He said unto me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.’ I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me” (2Corinthians 12:9).

SUFFERING

Enables us to identify with Christ by putting those all-consuming self-concerns in their proper place. “The God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory through Christ Jesus will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little” (1Peter 5:10)

THE SAINTS

Those who have already attained perfection and holiness in God - constantly remind us that *ordinary* people can indeed respond to God’s presence in an *extraordinary* way. Their lives challenge us to “cleanse ourselves from every defilement of the flesh and spirit, making holiness perfect” (2Corinthians 7:1).



WORSHIP AND THE SACRAMENTS

Bring God’s presence into our daily lives. In *Baptism*, we enter into our relationship with God and His People, the Church. In *Chrismation*, the Gift of the Holy Spirit seals and confirms our baptismal commitment. When we fall short of God’s grace, we are *reconciled* with him and with those around us through Confession, while the *Eucharist* brings us into a *common union* with Christ and one another. We are spiritually and physically healed through *Holy Unction*, while our calling in life is sanctified through *Marriage* and *Ordination*.

At every stage of our lives - from cradle to grave - the sacraments and worship challenge us to attain holiness and perfection.

AND FINALLY,

We are continually reminded to avoid anything which prevents us from attaining perfection. This is perhaps the greatest challenge to our lives as Christians today: “As for those that fell among thorns, after they have heard, they go forth and are choked with cares and riches and bear no fruit to perfection” (Luke 8:14).

FOR PRAYER AND REFLECTION...

- In what ways is God calling you to perfection and holiness? What gifts and talents has He given you? How does He challenge you to develop them? How might your gifts and talents be employed in your search for perfection?