

Falling Short of the Glory of God

By Paul R. Blake

Introduction:

- A. "You exist, according to the purpose of God, for the praise of His glory."
(Jason Hardin)
- B. "Christians are God's manifestation of His Deity in this world." (Paul R. Blake)
- C. Proof
 - 1. Jesus Christ is, was, and always will be greater than the angels
Heb. 1:1-8
 - 2. Jesus Christ became a man that he might be brethren to men
Heb. 2:5-18
 - 3. Jesus Christ is, was, and always will be a Son in God's House; the angels will never be more than servants - Heb. 3:1-6
 - 4. We, as the brethren of Jesus Christ are sons in the house of God, greater than the angels, and we will share in the Son's inheritance.
Rom. 8:16-18
 - 5. When we get to heaven, we will be glorified just as Christ, not the angels. The only thing we lack to be like Him in the present is the incorruptible form that cannot be touched with sin and death
1John 3:1-3; 1Cor. 15:42-58
 - 6. In this world as Christians, we share in the Divine Nature (Godhead, Godhood) - 2Peter 1:3-4
 - 7. In this world as Christians, we are the visible representatives of that Deity - 1John 4:17
- D. As God's manifestation of the Divine Nature in this world, all sin is to be considered beneath our interest and participation - Rom. 6:1-18
- E. Then why do we sin?
 - 1. Rom. 3:23 - "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" - Fail in manifesting and attaining the glory of God
 - 2. Ecc. 7:20; 2Chron. 6:36; Prov. 20:9; Rom. 3:9-10; Gal. 3:22
- F. The greatest men in the Bible sinned with only one exception, Jesus
Heb. 4:15; 1Peter 2:22
 - 1. Noah became drunk - Gen. 9:20-21
 - 2. Abraham lied twice - Gen. 12:10-20, 20:1-18
 - 3. Moses disobeyed God - Num. 20: 7-12; Psalms 106:32-33
 - 4. David committed adultery with Uriah's wife and had him killed to cover up his sin - 2Sam. 11-12
 - 5. Peter denied the Lord and swore a false oath - Matt. 27:69-75
- G. How shall we use this truth?
 - 1. We can attempt to use it as an excuse for sin.
 - a. Some say: "Well, nobody's perfect."
 - b. That is like:
 - 1) A soldier who is AWOL comparing himself to the man who is on sick leave recovering from wounds received in battle.
 - 2) A car dealer selling a car with four of six cylinders firing.

2. We can use it as an excuse for giving up the fight against sin.
 - a. "What's the use? I tried and failed!"
 - b. That is like:
 - 1) A quarterback who quits and goes home after his failure to score a touchdown on his first series of downs.
 - 2) A salesman who turns in his sales kit because he fails to sell in his first call.
3. There are some helpful ways in which to approach this common but unfortunate characteristic of being human

I. WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH THESE PARADOXICAL TRUTHS?

Learn from them:

- A. It should produce humility
 1. Why do so many only admit sin when caught?
 - a. David is a good example - 2Sam. 12:1-14; Psalm 51:1-17
 - b. Though others may never discover it, God knows - Psalms 69:5; Heb. 4:13
 - c. Far too many professed Christians would rather hide their sins than cover them
 2. Christ taught disciples to admit their sins when they pray - Luke 11:1-4
 3. A Christian should never be self-satisfied, but pray and confess his sins every day - 1John 1:9
- B. It should help to view neighbors and their sins differently
 1. The tendency is to condone in self what one condemns in others:
 - a. "I just make mistakes, but my brother sins."
 - b. "I could see my faults as well as anyone, if I had any!"
 2. One must never view the faults of others in a way he would refuse to have himself reviewed - Matt. 7:1-2
 - a. Must begin with examining self - 2Cor. 13:5; 1Cor. 11:28, 31 "I began with examining myself, and when I finished, I discovered I had no time remaining to examine my neighbor."
 - b. Forgiveness of sins is predicated upon forgiving others
 - 1) Matt. 6:14-15; Mark 11:25
 - c. One must learn to show compassion and mercy toward the weak and erring - Heb. 2:17
 3. It should never lead one to: Be tolerant of sin
 - a. Compromise with sinners while they are still in sin
 - b. Peter (the ex-denier) was firm in his treatment of the sins of others - Acts 5:1-4, 8:18-23
- C. It should teach one to avoid thinking of men more highly than he ought
 1. All humans have sinned, past, present, and into the future
 2. Jesus is the only sinless being who lived in this world
 - a. 1Peter 2:22; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15
 3. Not even the very best of Bible men were sinless. They have been acknowledged as blameless
 - a. Zacharias and Elizabeth - Luke 1:6

- b. Christians can be described as blameless - 1Cor. 1:8; Phil. 2:15; 1Thes. 5:23; 1Tim. 3:2, 10; Titus 1:6-7; 2Peter 3:14
 - 4. There is a significant difference.
 - a. We follow men only when they follow Christ
 - b. 1Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17
 - 5. Every human being will eventually fail in certain particulars; Christ is the only perfect one. Consider:
 - a. Some who have quit the church because they have been upset by some preacher, elder or member they admired.
 - b. In disappointment, they return to the world - 2Peter 2:20-21
 - c. "I didn't come to church because they..." Answer: You want everyone else to be perfect without being so yourself. Did it ever occur to you that these people are on the same journey as you? The same grace and benefit of the doubt that you want, why are you having so much trouble giving it to them?
 - d. You presume to be so judgmental of them?! Are you so jealous of someone doing better than you that you must pull them down to your level of spiritual weakness?
 - e. Had their faith been centered in Christ, the entire congregation could digress without affecting their faithfulness - 1Cor. 2:1-5
- D. It should increase one's appreciation of his dependence on the grace of God.
 - 1. Rom. 3:24, 5:8-11, 7:24-25; Eph. 2:1-9; Col. 1:21-22; Titus 2:11-12
 - 2. Remembering his past life in sin, Paul felt strong dependence upon the mercy of God. He was saved because God saved him - 1Cor. 15:9-10
 - a. The account of the Anglican cleric John Newton illustrates the disposition of mind one must acquire (from Stories for Preachers). "Two or three years before the death of that eminent servant of Christ, the vicar John Newton, an aged friend and brother in the ministry called on him at breakfast. Family prayer followed, and the portion of Scripture for the day was read to him. In it occurred the verse, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am' (1Cor. 15:10). After the reading of this text, he uttered this affective soliloquy: 'I am not what I ought to be, ah! How imperfect and deficient! I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good. I am not what I hope to be. Soon, soon, shall I put off mortality, and, with mortality, all sin and imperfection. Yet though I am not what I ought to be, nor what I wish to be, nor what I hope to be, I can truly say I am not what I once was, a slave to sin and Satan; I can heartily join with the apostle and acknowledge, 'By the grace of God, I am what I am.'"
 - b. When one realizes his own sinfulness, he recognizes there is no room at all for pride - 1Cor. 1:30-31
- E. It should cause one to cultivate character
 - 1. Cultivate vigilance over self. The man who has a tendency to stumble will usually be careful how he walks
 - a. 1Cor. 9:27; Phil. 2:12; Rom. 11:20, 22
 - 2. Cultivate confidence and avoid despair. God did not cast off Abraham, David, or Peter because they sinned - Psalms 37:24
 - a. The Lord forgives those who repent - Acts 3:19, 8:22
 - 3. Cultivate endurance to finish the race - Heb. 10:36-38

Conclusion:

- A. Everyone sins. The difference between the Christian and the high-handed sinner is the way they respond to that fact - Psalms 19
 - 1. One repents and renounces his wrongs. The other refuses.
 - 2. The Christian loathes his sins and longs for a time when he will be completely free of sin.
 - 3. The rebellious sinner loves his sins and revels in them.