

# “Are you saying I must be Perfect?”

by Bill McKeever

Experience has shown me that whenever I attempt to discuss the topic of New Testament grace with Latter-day Saints, they will point to their good efforts as if this is what is essential to achieve the best their God has for them in the next life. Anticipating this rebuttal, I tend to focus on just a few key verses from LDS scripture that proves that no Mormon is prepared as well as they should be if Mormonism is true. These include:

**1 Nephi 3:7**— “...for I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.” I ask, “Is this passage insisting that you are quite capable of keeping all of God’s commandments?” They always say yes but admit they don’t always do this.

**Alma 11:37**— “And I say unto you again that he [God] cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins.” I ask, “Do you struggle with sin? If so, doesn’t this tend to prove that you, as a Mormon, are still ‘in your sins?’”

**Moroni 10:32**— “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you....” I ask, “Have you denied yourself of all ungodliness? If not, doesn’t this verse tend to prove that you have yet to receive the grace that will cleanse you of your sin?”

**D&C 25:15**— “Keep my commandments continually, and a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive. And except thou do this, where I am you cannot come.” I ask, “Do you repent on a regular basis? If so, doesn’t this prove that you break the commandments on a regular basis since only commandment breakers need to repent?”

**D&C 58:43**— “By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them and forsake them.” I ask, “Have you forsaken all of your sins? If this verse is true, doesn’t that mean you have not truly repented?”

**D&C 1:31**— “For I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance.” I ask, “In light of the answers you’ve given to the above questions, how do you think God will judge your continual sinning?”

What invariably happens at this point is the Mormon will ask me (usually very incredulously) if I am implying that they must be perfect. I ask how they arrived at this conclusion when I personally never used that word. The point I am trying to make is, despite their insistence that no one but Jesus was perfect, their own scriptures certainly state that they should be since forgiveness of sin is granted only after the Mormon has successfully stopped sinning.

Mormons will correctly note that mercy cannot be given at the expense of justice, but they fail to understand that this necessary justice was fully met in Jesus’ substitutionary death on the cross — not our ability to keep commandments.