

# God Has No Envelope

## God's Expectations and Our Limitations

Philippians 4:13; I John 1:7; Luke 17:10

There is a tension in Scripture that carries over into life. God, being holy in the absolute sense, cannot expect less than perfection in our personal holiness (Ps. 99:3, 5, 9). This level of expectation cannot, however, be met (Lk. 17:10). Nevertheless, walking in the light of fellowship with Jesus allows sinners to be cleansed of all their sins (I Jn. 1:7). The tension is, therefore, that we cannot be sinlessly perfect, but we can do all things through Christ (Phil. 4:13). Let us consider how God has resolved this problem.

### We Never “Arrive”

- God has no “envelope” since He is the complete personification of all that is holy (Isa. 46:5)
- Thus, we cannot approach the envelope of God's holiness (Lk. 17:10)
  - Mere mortals such as ourselves will always fall short (Rom. 3:23)
  - We cannot perfectly do what we are commanded to do (I Jn. 1:8)
  - The law always wins and we always lose (Jas. 2:10)

### However, The Way to Heaven is Attainable

- We must first enter into Christ to begin our journey (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4; Matt. 28:18-20)
- A faithful walk in Christ will then continually remove the stain of sin (I Jn. 1:7)
- There is, however, a seeming contradiction for the Christian, doing godly things and sin are an unavoidable combination
  - A key to resolving this tension is found in the fact that not every combination works (Rev. 2:10b)
  - Faithfulness is, consequently, a necessity in our success (Jas. 2:26)
- Character counts (I Jn. 3:4-6)
  - John tells us our walk of faith must define us.
  - The overarching reality of who we are in the content of our life determines if we are faithful
  - As with Abraham, though he had failings, his life considered as a whole allows him to be regarded as “the father of the faithful” (Rom. 4:16)

### We Can Do This!

- Jesus allows to fall short and yet succeed (I Jn. 1:7; I Pet. 2:24)
- Through Him we can do all God needs to see in our lives (Phil. 4:13)
- In a life of faithful light walking in Christ, we therefore find ourselves with two envelopes
  - God's nature which we can never push (Rom. 3:23)
  - Our personal progress of faith which requires growth (II Pet. 1:5-11)
- This second envelope found in association with our faith raises questions

- What is the next step in my walk with Jesus?
- What is the challenge of my “right now” experience?
- What is currently challenging me to further grow and mature as a Christian?
- Remember, if you are not going somewhere you need not expect to get there.

## **The Paradox Explained**

- God cannot ask us to aim at anything less than perfect holiness (Lev. 19:2; Matt. 5:48; I Pet. 1:13-16)
- Jesus, however, allows God to accept our faithfulness and count it as righteousness/holiness (Gal. 3:6-9, 24-27, 29)
- The standard remains that of God’s Holy nature
  - Anything less would be an inadequate challenge
  - Anything less would not evoke a sense of awe
  - Anything less would not sufficiently motivate thanksgiving

## **Conclusion**

- God has no real envelope because His nature is the ultimate envelope
- His holiness is, therefore, the unavoidable standard
- His mercy and grace have, however, provided Jesus to pay the price for our unpayable indebtedness
- We can be faithful and we can know Jesus is there for us in our walk in the light
- What are you planning to do with your life knowing Jesus is there for you?
- Where is the envelope of faith in your walk with Jesus that you are right now willing to push
- While God has no envelope, in the system of faith, we do
- Our limitations are real, but God still expects us to bear fruit (Jn. 15:1-11)

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October 30, 2011 (AM)