



Message Notes

www.CCAkron.org

Wholeness Series

Be Complete in Him: 10 Signs You Might Not Be

Pastor Zach Prosser

## 1. A New Way of Living

### 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Regenerated; refreshed; made new; Old Order; Gone away or pushed aside; Has come into being (has started and continues)

**The Old Order of Living is Pushed Aside**

**A New Way of Living has Started**

### Hebrews 10:19-20, ESV

*Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,<sup>20</sup> by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh*

### Colossians 3:10-11, The Passion Translation

*For you have acquired new creation life which is continually being renewed into the likeness of the One who created you; giving you the full revelation of God. In this new creation life, your nationality makes no difference, nor your ethnicity, education, nor economic status—they matter nothing. For it is Christ that means everything as he lives in every one of us!*

**Every day is an Opportunity to Deal with the Old Order and Continue Living in this New & Living Way**

## 2. Made Complete in Christ

### Colossians 2:9-10, The Passion Translation

*For he is the complete fullness of deity living in human form. And our own completeness is now found in him. We are completely filled with God as Christ's fullness overflows within us.*

**Fullness** – Copiousness

**John 1:16** – *For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.*

**Filled** – Completely crammed in; Made complete; Fully satisfied; To be fulfilled; Bring to Completion  
**John 15:11** – *These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

## **10 SIGNS WE NEED TO BE COMPLETE IN CHRIST**

### **1. Using God to Run from God**

On the surface, all appears to be healthy and working well, but it's not. This symptom hides behind hours and hours spent doing endless Christian activity...one book after another, one service after another, endless responsibilities...all for the sake of "God"? Such activities become detrimental when we use them in an unconscious way to escape pain.

It is the creation of "God-activity" to avoid difficult areas in life that God wants to change.

Ways you May Recognize this Happening

- Do things in God's name that He never asked you to do
- Demonstrate "Christian behaviors" so people think well of you
- Focus on certain Biblical truths, and avoid others that bring up what you want to avoid
- Make continual pronouncements like, "The Lord told me I should do this" or "The Lord told me to tell you this"
- Use the Bible to justify your sinful behavior or the sinful behavior of your family or others
- Hide behind God talk, deflecting the spotlight from yourself

### **2. Ignoring Hard Emotions**

Many believe that emotions like Anger, sadness, and fear are sinful and should be avoided, and if they are felt, then something is wrong spiritually. We develop beliefs that anger is dangerous and unloving. Sadness is a lack of faith. Depression means we are outside the will of God. Fear or doubt means we are sin. So what do we do? We inflate ourselves with false confidence to make those feelings go away. We pray, quote the Bible, fast—anything to keep ourselves from being overwhelmed with those feelings.

Have you ever been told or heard things like

- Feelings are of the devil
- We walk by faith not our feelings
- Feelings should not be trusted

To feel is human. Minimizing or denying what we feel means we are distorting God's image in our lives.

- Zephaniah 3:17: God will exult over you with joy. He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.
- Psalm 78:40: They grieved him in the desert
- Exodus 20:5: I the Lord your God am a jealous God
- Judges 2:18: The Lord was moved to pity by their groanings
- Micah 7:18: You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

To the degree that we cannot express our emotions, we remain impaired in our ability to love God, others, and ourselves.

### **3. Minimizing Who You Were Created to Be in Him**

**Luke 9:23, ESV:** *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

We are called to die to the sinful parts of who we are. The immediate impact of Adam and Eve's sin was shame, avoidance, guilt, fear, lying, blaming, detachment, and judgmentalism—these are the things we must die to—as well as the more obvious sins like murder and stealing. God does not call us to minimize or die to who He created us to be.

God never asks us to annihilate the self he created us to be. God intends that our deeper, truer selves to blossom and follow Him fully.

Signs You May Minimize Who You Were Created to Be

- Feeling like you don't matter or are valued
- Avoiding or disregarding your gifts, talents, and abilities
- Thinking you are incapable or unable to fulfill your purpose
- Believing you're not good enough or able

### **4. Denying the Impact of the Past on the Present**

When we come to Christ and are born again, the old order or way of doing things is gone. This does not mean our past is gone or the effects of our past is gone. It means how our carnal nature deals with life is done away with and we now have a new way of living in Christ. This new way of living does not deny the past but faces it and sees restoration and healing happen.

Sanctification requires that we face our past in order to break free from unhealthy and destructive patterns that prevent us from loving God, others, and ourselves the way God designed us.

### **5. Compartmentalizing "Secular" & "Sacred"**

We have an uncanny ability to compartmentalize our lives and live "secular" and "sacred" lives. We try to regulate our "Christian activities" around church and do not bring spiritual disciplines into the way we think and behave with money, marriage, relationships, the discipline of children, recreation, careers, and vacations. According to Gallup polls and sociologists, one of the greatest scandals of our day is that "evangelical Christians are as likely to embrace lifestyles every bit as hedonistic, materialistic, self-centered and immoral as the world in general.

The statistics speak for themselves. Church members...

- Divorce as often as non-church members
- Beat their wives as often as non-church members
- Giving patterns indicate they are almost as materialistic as non-Church members
- White evangelicals are the most likely people to object to neighbors of another race

- Cohabitation is increasingly more acceptable prior to marriage among young church members

## **6. Doing for God instead of Being with God**

Work for God that is not nourished by a deep interior life with God will eventually be contaminated by things such as pride, power, needing approval of and from others, and buying into the idea you cannot fail.

Doing for God in a way that is proportionate to our being with God is the only way to a pure heart and seeing God.

Signs you are doing for God instead of being with God

- Believing that spiritual growth comes primarily from spiritual activities
- Thinking “It is all up to you”
- Believing God can’t move unless you pray
- You are responsible for sharing Christ around you at all times or people will go to hell
- Things will fall apart if you don’t persevere and hold things together

## **7. Over Spiritualizing or Avoiding Conflict**

Nobody likes conflict, yet it is everywhere. One of the most destructive myths in the Christian community is the belief that smoothing over disagreements or “sweeping things under the rug” is what it means to follow Jesus.

We treat conflict like radioactive waste that needs to be contained or else.

Jesus’ life demonstrates that healthy Christians do not avoid conflict. Jesus was surrounded by conflict.

Out of a desire to bring true peace, Jesus disrupted the false peace all around him. He refused to spiritualize conflict avoidance.

Signs You May be Spiritualizing or Avoiding Conflict

- Say one thing to people’s faces and another behind their backs
- Make promises with no intention of keeping them
- Blame others
- Overly sarcastic
- Tell half-truths to not hurt others
- Say yes when you mean no
- Share with an outside person to ease your anxiety
- Send veiled texts, emails, or social posts with frustrations you have no plans of addressing personally
- Driven by fear of not being liked or accepted

## **8. Avoiding Brokenness, Weakness, & Failure**

There's a pressure to present ourselves as strong and have it all "together." We feel guilty for not measuring up, for not making the grade. We forget that not one of us is perfect and that we are all sinners. We forget that the Bible is full of scandal. Instead, we try to cover our brokenness, weakness, and failure.

David did not try to cover up his scandal. Instead, he used his power as king to ensure the details of his failure were recorded for all of history. He even wrote a song about his failure to be sung in Israel's worship services and to be published in Psalms. Paul wrote about God not answering his prayers and about his "thorn in the flesh." He thanked God for his brokenness and reminded us that God's power is made perfect in weakness. Moses was a murderer. Hosea's wife was a prostitute. Peter rebuked God. Noah got drunk. Jonah was a racist. Jacob was a liar. John Mark deserted Paul. Elijah burned out. Jeremiah was depressed and suicidal. Thomas doubted. Moses had a temper. Timothy had ulcers. John wanted to call fire down from heaven. The early church argued and complained.

### **9. Living without Limits**

Many of us have probably been taught that Christians are to constantly give and tend to the needs of others without limit. You are never supposed to say no to opportunities to help and never request help because that would be selfish. Guilt of never doing enough often leads to discouragement and discouragement to isolation from "needy people" or opportunities to serve.

Jesus modeled this for us as a human. He did not heal every sick person in the places he visited. He did not raise every dead person. He did not feed all the hungry beggars or set up job centers for the poor of Jerusalem. He didn't do it, and we shouldn't feel we must. We must take appropriate care of ourselves. We do not have to live frantic, exhausted, overloaded, and hurried lives.

Self-care is never selfish—it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift. I was put on earth to off others. – Parker Palmer

### **10. Judging Other's Spiritual Journey**

Perhaps you believe it is your responsibility to correct people in error or in sin and to always counsel people who are mixed up spiritually. Maybe you even feel guilty when you're supposed to fix someone's problem and have to admit that you don't know how to or don't know what to say.

Another great danger of this symptom is believing you are the spiritually superior or spiritually "right" one. From this position, we cannot receive from others considered to be peers and will only receive from those we consider experts or professionals.

We turn our differences into moral superiority or virtues. We judge people because their music is too soft or too loud, or dressing too formally or too casually, or for the movies they watch or cars they buy.

This superiority leads to the formation of our own define groups like

- Those artists and musicians are so flaky.
- Those engineers are so cerebral. They're cold as fish.
- Men are idiots and socially infantile.

- Women are overly sensitive and emotional.
- The rich are self-indulgent and selfish.
- The poor are lazy.

It continues inside the church with definitions like

- The Presbyterians are too structured
- The Pentecostals have no structure
- Episcopalians are those who light candles and read written prayers
- We judge Catholics because of their view of communion

By failing to let others be themselves before God and move at their own pace, we inevitably project onto them our own discomfort with their choice to live life differently than we do.