



## Part 1 – Introduction

March 17, 2019

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### The church's job description

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2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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*How very easy it is to manipulate and even victimize our brothers and sisters! How quickly the thin thread of freedom snaps as heavy weights of perfectionistic expectations are placed on us! Christ Jesus never did that with his own. When people were near him there was an incredible magnetism because of an absence of unrealistic expectations and subtle demands and manipulative devices. He did not use pressure tactics. He simply accepted people as they are.*

*A paralysis sets in when we operate in the choking context of the performance-expectation syndrome. Fed by fear and guilt, the Christian becomes a victim of others rather than a victor in Christ.”<sup>1</sup>*

*All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. (Isaiah 64:6, NIV)*

*“There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one.” (Romans 3:10-12, NIV)*

*Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. (1 Timothy 1:15, NIV)*

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<sup>1</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1983), p. 46.

*I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.... I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? (Romans 7:18-19, 21-24 NLT)*

1 Timothy 1:12-17 (page 839 in the pew Bible)

1 Corinthians 15:9-10 (page 815 in the pew Bible)

God knows exactly what we're capable of and it doesn't deter him because he knows exactly what we're capable of!

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### Next Steps

- When have I felt more like a "victim of others rather than a victor in Christ"?
- When am I most likely to think I don't even deserve to be called a Christian?
- When am I most likely to think, "what a miserable person I am"?
- When and how did I first encounter God's grace in my life?
- Who was an example of God's grace in my life?
- What effect has God's grace had in my life?
- When am I most likely to try hard to earn God's acceptance and love?
- Do I know Christ as Savior? If not, why?