

# Be Ye Perfect

We can be washed clean of sin in a moment  
– Perfection takes a bit longer

**[Mt 5:44-48] But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; <sup>45</sup>That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup>For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? <sup>47</sup>And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? <sup>48</sup>Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

Can we ignore this?

Man says, “No one’s perfect”  
God says, “Be ye perfect”

Who do we listen to?  
Not asking who SHOULD we listen to, but who DO we listen to?

God even gives the extent, “Even as your Father in heaven”.

And that’s the key,  
He’s the Father, we want Him to CLAIM us as his CHILDREN.

Contextually he is saying, “Go beyond man’s inclinations”.  
Love your enemies,  
Bless them that curse you,  
Do Good to them that hate you,  
Pray for them that persecute you.

Why? V45  
That we may be children.  
Children do deeds of father.

**[Jn 8:39] They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham.**

If you were Abraham’s seed you would do deeds

To “be a child” is not a command like to “sing” or “be baptized”  
It’s a statement of fact  
We don’t DO things to BE God’s children.  
No, BECAUSE we’re God’s children, we do these things.  
If we ARE God’s children, we’ll be like HIM

If the world says, “nobody’s perfect”, then to be NOT of the world,  
what must we do? – Be Perfect!

You might say, "Sure, I Love others and Do Good!" –

**[Luke 6:32-34] For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. <sup>33</sup>And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. <sup>34</sup>And if ye lend to *them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.**

BE CAREFUL – DON'T BE FOOLED

Do we love them -- that love us?

Do we do good -- to those that do good for us?

Who are we like then?

God's children are different from the children of the world.

### **WHY PREACH THIS?**

Because man says, and you've heard this a million times, "Nobody's perfect".

What do you hear to oppose this? Nothing

Or, **[Rom 3:23] All have sinned ...**

This popular belief can hurt us.

If everybody is saying it, or doing it, it must be right, Right?

Barnabas, a good man, was carried away by the dissimulation or actions of others around him that Christ was for the Jews only.

We too can be carried away by popular, but wrong opinion.

Do you want to come before the judgment seat of Christ and offer as an excuse, "Nobody's perfect"

The Jews are an example of this. Their traditions, teachings, supplanted those of God:

**[Mt 15:6-9] Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. <sup>7</sup>Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, <sup>8</sup>This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. <sup>9</sup>But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.**

You've made commandment of no effect

This is the problem every time you hear "Nobody's Perfect".

We don't need to believe the doctrine of men

What doctrine do you believe? RIGHT NOW! WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?

That we can be perfect, or that "Nobody's Perfect"

### **DO YOU BELIEVE YOU CAN BE PERFECT??**

Not sure? Are you saying to yourself, "I don't know WHAT to believe, How can I be perfect?"

Ahhh! That's the point of this lesson. What does it mean to be PERFECT!

Men use the word "perfect" to mean merely without fault.

By implication, "Sinless".

God doesn't use that word this way, his meaning is much broader.

Don't use man's definition, use God's!

## **PERFECT**

**Greek "TELIOS" 5046 brought to its end, finished  
wanting nothing necessary to completeness - COMPLETE**

Used here:

**[James 1:2-4] My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup>But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing**

Let patience have her perfect work, that you be entire

God wants us to be complete, not lacking any necessary part  
Common sense, your car, how good is it if it lacks 1 thing.

Paul's goal/job That we may present every man perfect

**[Col 1:28] Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus**

From this we see that Perfection, completeness, is NOT something instantly attained.  
We can be cleansed of our sins in an instant!  
But PERFECTION requires TIME, "Patience" as it says in James.

An understanding of Perfection is NECESSARY to understanding the purpose of the church.

Why do we "go to church"? Why is it important???? Do I HAVE to go every Sunday.  
Is it ok if I just take the Lord's Supper then leave?

**[Eph 4:11-13] And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; <sup>12</sup>For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: <sup>13</sup>Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ ...**

In the church God has established positions and put people in them for this very purpose. To make us COMPLETE  
End result: Unity of Faith, Knowledge, ... PERFECT MAN!

Fit to measured against the stature of the fullness of Christ

**Fullness Ple-roma 4138 – WHAT fills him – the Qualities of Christ**

MEASURED IN WHAT WAY? In Godly Qualities that Jesus had, and has today:

Love  
Obedience  
Mercy  
Patience  
Humility  
Faith and  
Faithfulness

The context of “Be Ye Perfect” is the Sermon on the Mount.

Love your enemies,  
Bless them that curse you,  
Do Good to them that hate you,  
Pray for them that persecute you.

What qualities would we have to have to do that?

Wisdom, knowledge, integrity, physical appearance, money, speaking ability?

Instead, how about:

Love  
Obedience  
Mercy  
Patience  
Humility  
Faith and  
Faithfulness

If God saw those qualities in us, what would He think?

**[John 14:8,9] Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. <sup>9</sup>Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father**

You've seen me, you've seen the Father.  
To be **children** of God, we MUST be like him.  
People must be able to tell we're of God.  
Jesus told this to Philip.

These qualities of God, of Jesus and of US are illustrated and taught throughout the scripture. When we read the scripture we should be looking for these things:

Love – **[John 15:12-13] Greater love hath no man than this**

Obedience – **[V14, Matt. 26:39]** – Jesus in the garden, Not my will but yours!

Mercy – **[Rom 5:8 God commends love towards us]**

Patience – long suffering, **[2 Peter 3:9 All may be saved]**

**[Lk 17:3,4 how often to forgive]**

Humility **[Jn 15:14,15 Wash Peter's feet]**

Faith and Faithfulness **[Luke 4:1-4] Tempted of Devil – man shall not live ..**

To be perfect then is to have ALL the Godly qualities.

## **BUT THERE'S ALSO A MATTER OF DEGREE**

Common usage of the word PERFECT implies all or nothing – it is, or it isn't. And, to be perfect in God's sight, we MUST have ALL these qualities. We might have these qualities to a lesser, or greater, extent, BUT ALL must be present. When ONE is missing, the others are useless

**[1 Cor 13:1-3 have not charity]** <sup>1</sup>Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become *as* sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. <sup>2</sup>And though I have *the gift of prophecy*, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup>And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

But there are DEGREES to which we possess these qualities. Job noted for patience, Abraham for faith and obedience. I mention this because it's necessary that we WORK ON THESE THINGS!

**[Jn 15:13]** Greater love – there is a LESSER love

**[Mt 5:20]** Righteousness must EXCEED that of the Pharisees.

**[1 Thess 4:9,10]** But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. <sup>10</sup>And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more

You have brotherly love ... Good! get more

**[1 Peter 2:2]** As newborn babes ... grow

**Grow in WHAT??**

**Love, Obedience, Mercy, Patience, Humility, Faith and Faithfulness**

How do we grow – the milk of the **word!**

When we read our bibles we LOOK for examples of these things:  
Love, Obedience, Mercy, Patience, Humility, Faith and Faithfulness

We're taught by these examples.  
That's why example is important – in Elders, in our OWN behavior.

To be PERFECT we must work at it, constantly, we have to attain the goal.  
That's why I despise that saying, "Nobody's Perfect"  
It strips us of the will and desire to work and press towards the goal

The KJV translators knew this.  
Telios – not always translated "perfect".

**[1 Cor 14:20]** Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

In understanding be men

**[Heb 5:14] But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

Strong meat belongs to them who are of full age – Telios – Perfect!

## **CONCLUSION**

So, “Be Ye Perfect” - not optional, something we must all understand and WORK FOR!  
Coming up out of the waters of baptism, you may be sinless, but you likely aren't PERFECT – we MUST GROW, to be MORE:  
Loving, Obedient, Merciful, Patient, Humble and Faithful.

If you have these qualities, the qualities of our Father the Great God of Heaven,  
If you follow the example of Jesus, then indeed you ARE PERFECT!  
According to the ONLY one that matters: GOD!  
Then GO and increase your Love, Obedience, Mercy, Patience, Humility and Faith.

## **INVITE**

But are you FIT to be perfect?  
Can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear.  
No use if you are still listening to the world saying, “Nobody's Perfect”.  
Not if your mind is still attached to the world,  
Not if you think more of the opinions of men than the word of God.

You can't study the examples in the scripture to grow in these qualities IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IN THEM!

Is there a God?  
Did His Son Jesus come to this world to SHOW us the QUALITIES OF OUR FATHER and the WAY TO HIM?  
Do you think you should change?

Do you think God will have you WITH your sins?

If you've decided to stop living for yourself, and instead live for your Creator and thereby have the hope of heaven – that's REPENTANCE.

The old man is dead – we bury dead things.  
Come now, bury the old man, rise to walk in newness of life, growing in the Qualities of God so indeed he will WELCOME YOU AS HIS CHILD!!!!!!

**[MATTHEW 5:45,48]**

Ed Kelleher, West Columbia church of Christ, South Carolina