

Pursuit of Perfection

Sunday Morning, October 16, 2016

The Bible teaches us and in fact commands us to be perfect!? Why would God command us to do something that we know is impossible this side of heaven? Everyone has a sinful nature and lives in a sinful world. When we come upon scripture that does not make sense to us, then we've come to a place in scripture that has a deep truth for us to learn.

Let's look at this command to be perfect in

(Matthew 5:48)

Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Note: The word for us to be "perfect" here comes from the Greek word "teleioi". It means to be complete or mature and more specifically, one who continues to grow in the Lord.

So when scripture commands us to be "perfect" it doesn't mean that we are to be pompous arrogant people who walk around with a superior attitude over others. Being perfect here is a command to pursue the perfect ways of God in our life. Making us a more complete vessel for God. One that continues to grow maturely in the Lord.

Look at **(Philippians 3:12)**

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.

Also, **(Matthew 5:43-48)** tells us how to identify this perfecting work in our lives.

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you & persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

This passage reveals the growing nature of God's character in our lives. It compares our original nature in contrast to the nature of God. The command to be perfect is a command to be like Him/Jesus. Our imperfect nature is being transformed into His perfect nature.

Let's compare our imperfect nature with an example of our Heavenly Father's nature, and determine for ourselves if we are actively pursuing the perfection of God in our lives.

For example: How do we deal with our enemies?

Let's look again at **(Matthew 5:43-48)** *(look above)*