

Study Guide
Practice Makes Perfect
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Matthew 5:48 (NLT) – “But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

When you think of the word perfect, what comes to mind?

In this verse, perfect does not mean to have no imperfections or to be without flaw; it means to reach a level of complete spiritual maturity.

Read Matthew 5:48, James 1:2-4, and Hebrews 6:1.

What do you notice about being perfect (or perfection) based on these verses?

Perfection means to graduate elementary school and to leave ABC's of faith.

Read Hebrews 6:1.

What do you consider to be the fundamentals or ABC's of faith?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2.

What does this verse tell us that we have to strip off?

Discuss the types of sin you see that you see weighing people down.

To grow in perfection, we must strip off the sin that is continually tripping us up. We can do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus. He is the perfecter of our faith.

Hebrews 5:11-14 (NLT) – “There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.”

What are some things you see today that you know are wrong, but people continually still embrace them?

An imperfect Christian is one who still cannot discern right from wrong. Many people in the church are still clinging to their sin and instead of calling it what it is – sin. We're natural born sinners, but Jesus calls us to die to self and allow Him to live His life through us. God doesn't want us pursue things that make us happy. He wants us to be holy. Pursuing happiness over holiness produces hopelessness.

Describe a time in which you pursued happiness that resulted in hopelessness.

Read Romans 12:1-2.

How do we truly worship God?

Living fully for pleasure will never bring true fulfillment. It is only when we begin to fully fulfill our purpose that we become fully fulfilled. To be perfect, we must quit practicing sin and begin to practice righteousness. We receive righteousness by believing; it is inherited not merited.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (KJV) – “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Jesus didn't sin to become sin; He was made sin. Therefore, we don't do right to become right; we are made right in Him.

Romans 5:19 (NKJV) – For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

It's not our obedience that makes us righteous; It was Christ's obedience.

Read Romans 10:2-3 and Romans 4:22-24.

Righteousness must be imputed, but righteousness must also be instituted. It is through our believing that our righteousness is imputed, and it is through our behaving that our righteousness is instituted.

What are some behaviors that indicate righteousness?

Read 1 John 2:29, 1 John 3:7-10, and Romans 1:28-32.

In Romans, Paul is saying if you are still practicing sin, you don't know God. If we willfully sin after salvation, we insult the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:26-29).

How do mistakes differ from willful sin? Discuss.

Grace is not God lowering His standard to us, but Grace is God raising us to His standard.

Read Ephesians 1:19:21 and Ephesians 2:5-6.

Grace is not freedom to sin; Grace is freedom from sin.

1 Corinthians 1:30 (NLT) – “God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin.”

Practice makes perfect, and what we practice brings perfection in that area. We're either practicing righteousness, or we are being unrighteous because unrighteousness comes naturally to us. If we want to get good at something, then we have to practice! Practice makes perfect.

Discuss some practical ways in which you can practice righteousness this week.