If You Want To Be Perfect: Part 1
The Test Of Lordship
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As we begin a new series that will take us through the rest of the year, we must be cognizant to what the Holy Spirit wants to relay to us that will close the chapter of 2026. This year has been purposed to bring attention to areas of our lives that we have overlooked, ignored, or forsaken. The repetitiveness of His love throughout these series has visited and revisited what He has spoken to each of us in private. This final chapter of 2026 will give birth to the tomorrow of next year. The intimacy of His word given through 2026 will cause us to birth the promise of what He has ordained from the beginning. And now we begin this series with an invoking question. What is perfect and do you want to be perfect?

Our flagship scripture for this series:

Matthew 5:48 NLT
48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Brother Reed started this series last week and he didn't even know it. The message of love is what brings perfection. Many of you have heard me say that God has not called us to perfection. He has called us to holiness. And I'm not going to budge from what I have been saying for a while now. But Pastor we just read where we have been called to perfection. And you are correct in your assessment. But when we understand what perfect is in scripture we will have a clearer understanding.

If we look at our modern vernacular the word perfect is defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary:

A. being entirely without fault or defect.

B. satisfying all requirements

But the Bible defines this in a way that is will blow our mind. The greek word for perfect is teleios, meaning to be complete, finish, and maturity. Now with this understanding let's take our attention over to Matthew 19.

Matthew 19:16–17 NLT
16 Someone came to Jesus with this question: "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" 17 "Why ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good.

I love this mans heart. I believe he is genuine with the intent of his question. What good deed must I do to inherit eternal life? He equated eternal life with good deeds. But Jesus's reply is often overlooked. Why ask me about what is good. Only one is good. This mirrors exactly what was stated in our flagship scripture. You are to be perfect as our Father is perfect. Let's explain this with scripture.

Romans 12:1–2 NLT
1 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. 2 Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

God's will for us is good, pleasing, and perfect. This means that what is good is God. What is pleasing is God. And what is perfect is God. Good, pleasing, and perfect are synonymous.

The Rich man was looking to be pleasing in his own efforts. He was wanting to do good in his own effort. And perfect in God's standard is only achievable through God. The rich man's concept of goodness was rooted in external compliance and human achievement. The rich man's understanding of goodness was fundamentally misaligned with God's standard, and that misalignment reveals everything about the nature of perfection.

Matthew 19:17–20 NLT
17 … But to answer your question—if you want to receive eternal life, keep the commandments." 18 "Which ones?" the man asked. And Jesus replied: " 'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. 19 Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 20 "I've obeyed all these commandments," the young man replied. "What else must I do?"

Here is where I now begin to question the mans heart because now obeying the commands are selective. His imperfections were now starting to reveal themselves. As we have stated and the word of God declares that the mouth will reveal whats in the heart. But let's look at what Jesus laid out for the rich man. Jesus listed six (6) commandments. And if we look closely they are commandments five through ten. And the rich man declared that he has obeyed all of these. In the gospels of Mark and Luke, they write that he had kept these commandments since his youth. So now he ask…what else must I do? So listen to what Jesus says next.

Matthew 19:21 NLT
21 Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect…

If you want to be perfect just as our Father in Heaven is perfect. If you want to be complete. If you want to be whole. If you want to be mature! So now the question must be resonating within our hearts… Do you want to be perfect?

Matthew 19:21–22 NLT
21 Jesus told him, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
22 But when the young man heard this, he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus said that if you want to be mature then you must part ways with your possessions. Jesus was asking him to depart with the very thing that people associated him with. His belongings defined him and Jesus said that to be mature he had to rid himself of what defined him. His wealth, status, and reputation defined him. He was known as the wealthy young ruler—that was his identity in the community. He came seeking eternal life while believing he could gain it through good deeds and moral achievements and now he walks away with sadness.

He had just stated that he had kept the commandments that Jesus listed. Let's look at them together.

Jesus didn't avoid commandments one through four. He just stated them in a way that was realistic. Commandments five through ten deals with our relationship with man. While commandments one through four deals with our relationship with God. So let's look again at what Jesus told the Rich young ruler.

Matthew 19:21 NLT
21 Jesus told him, “If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

Jesus’s target was surrender. Parting ways with his nature and taking on a new nature. When we are not willing to walk away from the things that has separated us from God then we are serving another god. So many people want to be followers without parting ways with what has defined them. If this young man was told to give up his possessions and then follow Jesus, why aren’t we preaching and living the same thing. Are people so naive to think and believe that they can hold on to their old ways and still follow Jesus? Are we a part of the statistic?

The Rich young ruler really thought that he was keeping the latter parts of the commandments but his actions showed other wise. You cannot keep the latter if the first is neglected. So his declaration of obeying commandments five through ten were null and voided because he had not made God priority in his life.

Luke 14:25–28 NLT
25 A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, 26 “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. 27 And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. 28 “But don’t begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?

Notice Jesus addressed people that were following Him, or it seemed as if they were following Him. Notice in most case throughout scripture that people followed Jesus to be healed or fed. Once they got what they wanted they stopped following Him. Sounds familiar?

But if we want to be His disciple we must abandon what we are comfortable with. Jesus said you must… does this sound like a suggestion? It is a prerequisite of being His disciple. If we deny or concede on fulfilling this requirement then we are not His disciple. Jesus said this Himself!!!!

Taking up our own cross speaks of death. So why are we not witnessing dead Christians? Why are we not seeing the cross being carried? That’s the problem we are having the “Church” today. Everyone is afraid of dying. But the only way to live is to

die. The cross is heavy and I'll be the first to admit it. But even Jesus had help carrying His cross. You don't have to bear it alone!!!!

The cross comes with a price and if the price is too high to pay then its obvious that our hearts are no different that the rich young ruler. Let's look at another thing that Jesus said:

Matthew 22:34–40 NLT
34 But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. 35 One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: 36 "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" 37 Jesus replied, " 'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

So now you can see that the ten commands deal with two areas of a persons heart. And the ten is summed up into two!

Matthew 19:23–30 NLT
23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is very hard for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. 24 I'll say it again—it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God!" 25 The disciples were astounded. "Then who in the world can be saved?" they asked. 26 Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible." 27 Then Peter said to him, "We've given up everything to follow you. What will we get?" 28 Jesus replied, "I assure you that when the world is made new and the Son of Man sits upon his glorious throne, you who have been my followers will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or property, for my sake, will receive a hundred times as much in return and will inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then.

People that are perfect in mans eyes. When we have established ourselves then we have become rich in our own eyes. And Jesus said that it would be easier for the impossible to happen than individuals that will not forsaken themselves for the sake of loving God and mankind. Those that will relinquish ownership of their lives now will be the ones that end up perfect!

Let me pray with you today!