

## “The Perfect Man (Part 2)”

### Summary

This message invites us into a profound exploration of Jesus as the perfect man—spotless, complete, and without sin. Drawing from Mark 4:41 where the disciples ask 'What manner of man is this?', we're challenged to truly see Jesus as He is, not through religious filters or denominational lenses, but in His authentic perfection. The core truth here is transformative: every time we behold Jesus as He truly is, we are changed into His image. This isn't wishful thinking—it's the mechanism God designed for our transformation. The message unpacks how Jesus, as the Lamb without blemish, qualified to take away the sins of the world, and how this same perfection is now being worked into us. We're reminded that perfection isn't about our own strength or promises to 'never sin again,' but about moving from independence to dependence on Christ. When we miss the mark, we're simply seeing areas where we're operating solo, apart from Him. The beautiful paradox emerges: when we're weak and acknowledge our need, we're actually strong because His grace becomes sufficient. This isn't about religious performance—it's about abiding in the One who is already perfect and letting His nature become ours through intimate connection with Him.

### Main Points – The Perfect Man (Part 2)

Title: The Perfect Man: Becoming Like Jesus Through Dependence

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon explores the perfection of Jesus Christ as the sinless, spotless Lamb of God and examines what it means for believers to be conformed to His image. The message emphasizes that perfection is not achieved through human effort or independence, but through complete dependence on Jesus. God's ultimate goal is to transform believers into the likeness of His Son—not through condemnation, but through grace. Every situation in life presents an opportunity to see Jesus as He is, and in seeing Him, we are changed. The sermon challenges the notion that perfection is unattainable, instead presenting it as God's intention for His people, accomplished through abiding in Jesus and recognizing our weakness as the gateway to His strength.

#### Key Points:

- Jesus is the perfect man—without blemish, spot, or sin—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world
- God's end game is conforming believers to the image of Jesus, making them spotless like their spotless Groom

- Every time we see Jesus as He truly is, we are transformed and changed into His likeness
- Perfection is not about human effort but about dependence on Jesus rather than independence from Him
- Sin is not our original identity but something we partook of; we are not sin, we have sin
- When we miss the mark, we should repent of independence rather than simply promising to do better
- God is not angry or condemning toward believers; He invites us to draw near in our weakness to find grace and mercy
- Weakness is actually the place where God's strength is perfected in us
- Sanctification involves showing up and making our hearts available for God to change us
- The Christian life is about abiding in Jesus, recognizing that apart from Him we can do nothing

#### **Scripture Reference:**

- Mark 4:41 - "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"
- 1 John 3:2 - "When he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is"
- Romans 8:28-29 - All things work together to conform us to the image of the Son
- 1 Peter 1:18-19 - Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or spot
- John 1:29 - "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"
- Ephesians 5:25-27 - Christ presenting the church to Himself without spot or wrinkle
- 1 John 3:3 - Everyone who has this hope purifies himself as He is pure
- Hebrews 4:15-16 - Jesus was tempted in every way yet without sin; draw near to find grace
- 2 Corinthians 12:9 - "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"
- Hebrews 6:1 - Let us go on to perfection
- Ephesians 4:11-12 - Fivefold ministry gifts for the perfecting of the saints

# Small Group Study Guide – The Perfect Man (Part 2)

## Opening Prayer & Icebreaker (10 minutes)

**Icebreaker Question:** Share a time when you witnessed something that genuinely left you in awe—something that changed you. What was it about that moment that made such an impact?

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## Key Sermon Takeaways (Review Together)

1. **Jesus is the perfect man** - without blemish, without spot, nothing missing, nothing broken, nothing out of place
2. **We are being conformed to His image** - Romans 8:29 declares God's end game is to make us like Jesus
3. **Every time we see Jesus as He is, we are changed** - 1 John 3:2
4. **Perfection comes through dependence, not independence** - when we're weak, we're strong (2 Corinthians 12:9)
5. **Sin is independence from God** - repentance is returning to dependence on Him

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## Discussion Questions (30-40 minutes)

### Understanding Jesus as Perfect

1. **What does it mean that Jesus is "perfect" or "complete"?** How does this differ from our cultural understanding of perfection as flawlessness we achieve through effort?
2. **Read Hebrews 4:15 together.** How does knowing that Jesus was tempted in every way yet remained sinless change your view of His ability to help you in your struggles?

### Seeing Jesus Changes Us

3. **The sermon emphasized that "every time we see Jesus as He is, we are changed."** Can you identify a time when seeing a particular aspect of Jesus' character actually changed something in you? What was that like?
4. **Pastor Rob said, "Your spirit bears witness to what is true."** How can we tell the difference between seeing the "real Jesus" versus a distorted version shaped by religion, culture, or our own misconceptions?

## The Independence Problem

5. **The sermon defined sin primarily as "independence from God" rather than just bad behavior.** How does this perspective change the way you think about your struggles and shortcomings?
6. **Discuss this statement: "I'm not repenting for what I did wrong as much as I'm repenting for being independent."** What's the practical difference between these two approaches to repentance?

## Perfection Through Dependence

7. **Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.** Paul discovered that God's strength is perfected in weakness. How does this contradict our natural approach to becoming "better Christians"?
8. **Pastor Rob shared: "When I'm weak, I'm aware of my need for Jesus. And He meets people right there."** Why do we often try to hide our weakness instead of bringing it to God? What would it look like to "celebrate" our weakness as Paul did?

## Practical Application

9. **The sermon used the metaphor of being "washed with the water of His words."** What practical steps can you take this week to expose yourself to Jesus as He truly is (through Scripture, worship, prayer, etc.)?
10. **Identify one area of your life where you've been living "independently" from God.** What would it look like to invite Jesus into that area this week? How can this group support you?

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## Key Scriptures for Further Study

- **1 John 3:2** - We shall be like Him when we see Him as He is
- **Romans 8:28-29** - All things work together to conform us to Jesus' image
- **Ephesians 5:25-27** - Jesus washing the church to present her without spot or wrinkle
- **Hebrews 4:15-16** - Drawing near to receive grace and mercy in time of need
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** - God's strength perfected in our weakness

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## Personal Reflection Exercise (10 minutes)

Take a few minutes of silence for personal reflection. Consider these questions:

1. What area of my life am I trying to "fix" through my own strength rather than through dependence on Jesus?
2. When I fall short or miss the mark, do I run toward God or away from Him?
3. What would change in my daily life if I truly believed that God is not angry with me but is actively working to perfect me?

**Journal or share one insight from your reflection time.**

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## Practical Applications for This Week

Choose 1-2 actions to commit to:

- **Daily Practice:** Each morning this week, pray: "God, I can't do this alone, but I'm not alone. Help me live dependently on You today."
- **Scripture Meditation:** Choose one of the key scriptures above and meditate on it each day, asking God to show you Jesus as He truly is.
- **Honest Assessment:** When you "miss the mark" this week, practice Pastor Rob's approach—don't promise you'll never do it again, but acknowledge where you've been independent and ask God to help you live dependently.
- **Encouragement:** Identify someone in your life who seems weary or struggling. Share with them how God's grace is sufficient and His strength is made perfect in weakness.
- **Bible Reading:** Participate in the church's Bible reading event this week as mentioned in the sermon.

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## Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

### Prayer Focus:

- Thank God that He is the perfect man who understands our weaknesses
- Ask for grace to see Jesus as He truly is this week
- Pray for dependence rather than independence
- Ask God to continue the good work He's begun in each person

**Pray for one another's specific needs and commitments.**

## Discussion Questions – The Perfect Man (Part 2)

How does understanding Jesus as 'the perfect man' change your perspective on the process of sanctification and becoming more like Him?

When you fall short or miss the mark, do you tend to focus on the specific sin or on your independence from God? How might shifting this focus change your approach to repentance?

The sermon suggests that every difficult situation contains an opportunity to see Jesus as He is. Can you identify a current challenge where God might be revealing a facet of His character to you?

What does it mean practically to 'abide in Christ' rather than living independently, and what areas of your life reveal where you're still operating solo?

How does the truth that 'God is not mad at you' because Jesus paid for your sins in full affect your willingness to draw near to God in times of weakness?

The apostle Paul said 'when I am weak, then I am strong.' How can embracing your weaknesses actually position you to experience more of God's power and grace?

If perfection means 'nothing missing, nothing broken, nothing out of place' rather than sinless performance, how does this reframe your understanding of spiritual maturity?

The sermon distinguishes between justification (what Jesus did for us) and sanctification (our cooperation with God's transforming work). How are you actively 'showing up' for God to change your heart?

What would change in your daily life if you truly believed that all things are working together to conform you into the image of Jesus Christ?

The little child told Bishop Zink 'Jesus wouldn't act like that.' Are there areas where your pursuit of excellence or perfection has become more about performance than about reflecting Jesus' character?

## Scriptures - The Perfect Man (Part 2)

### Explicitly Mentioned Scripture References:

1. **Mark 4:41** - "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"
2. **1 John 3:2** - "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared"
3. **Romans 8:28-29** - "All things work together for good... predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son"
4. **Psalms 2** - "He that sits in the heavens shall laugh"
5. **1 Peter 1:18-19** - "Ransomed... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot"
6. **Exodus 12:5** - "Your lamb shall be without blemish"
7. **John 1:29** - "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"
8. **John 19:5-6** - "Behold the man... I find no fault in him"
9. **Ephesians 5:25-27** - "Christ loved the church... present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle"
10. **1 John 3:3** - "Everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure"
11. **1 Peter 1:13-16** - "Be holy even as he is holy" (referenced but not quoted)
12. **Romans 5:12** - "Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin"
13. **Ezekiel 28:14-16** - Lucifer's fall and original sin
14. **Isaiah** - Reference to Lucifer (likely Isaiah 14:12-15, though not specifically cited)
15. **Hebrews 4:15-16** - "We do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses... Let us draw near to the throne of grace"
16. **2 Corinthians 12:9-10** - "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness"
17. **Hebrews 6:1** - "Let us go on to perfection"

18. **Ephesians 4:11-12** - "He gave some apostles, some prophets... for the perfecting of the saints"
19. **Hebrews 11** - "Time does not permit" (general reference)
20. **Zechariah 4:6-7** - "Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit... grace, grace"
21. **Psalm 51** - David's repentance (referenced in the context of David and Nathan)
22. **2 Samuel 12** - Story of Nathan confronting David (alluded to but not directly cited)

## Devotional – The Perfect Man (Part 2)

### Day 1: The Lamb Without Blemish

**Reading:** 1 Peter 1:18-21; Exodus 12:1-7

**Devotional:** Jesus stands as the spotless Lamb of God, without blemish or defect. Unlike the temporary sacrifices of the Old Testament, His perfection qualified Him to take away—not just cover—the sins of the world. This isn't merely theological truth; it's transformational reality. When we truly behold Jesus as the perfect sacrifice, something shifts within us. We're not called to manufacture our own perfection, but to gaze upon His. Today, take time to consider: What does it mean that you were ransomed not with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ? Let this truth sink deep—you are valued beyond measure by a perfect Savior who gave everything for you.

### Day 2: Perfection Through Dependence

**Reading:** 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; John 15:1-8

**Devotional:** Paul discovered a liberating paradox: when I am weak, then I am strong. Perfection isn't about our independent achievement; it's about complete dependence on Jesus. Every moment you recognize your weakness is actually an invitation to experience His strength. Jesus isn't looking for people who have it all together—He's looking for people willing to abide in Him. Today, identify one area where you've been trying to operate independently. What would it look like to surrender that area and depend fully on Christ? Remember, the goal isn't self-improvement; it's Christ-formation. His grace is sufficient for you. Stop striving in your own strength and start abiding in His presence. Weakness acknowledged becomes the doorway to divine power.

### Day 3: The Hope That Purifies

**Reading:** 1 John 3:1-3; Romans 8:28-30

**Devotional:** God's ultimate plan is breathtaking: to conform you into the image of His Son. Everything in your life—every trial, every joy, every circumstance—is working toward this end. When you truly grasp this hope, it changes how you respond to your shortcomings. You don't beat yourself up; you recognize areas of independence and return to dependence. The one who has this hope "purifies himself as He is pure"—not through willpower, but by continually beholding Jesus and allowing His Spirit to transform you. Today, instead of focusing on what's wrong with you, focus on who Jesus is. Ask Him to

show you one aspect of His character. As you see Him clearly, you'll find yourself changing without striving. This is the power of beholding.

## Day 4: Drawing Near in Weakness

**Reading:** Hebrews 4:14-16; Psalm 51:1-12

**Devotional:** Condemnation drives us away from God; grace draws us near. Jesus faced every temptation you face, yet remained sinless. This qualifies Him not to condemn you, but to help you. When you miss the mark, you have a choice: hide in shame or run to the throne of grace. David understood this. When confronted with his sin, he didn't make excuses—he took responsibility and ran to God. Today, if you're aware of falling short, resist the urge to distance yourself from God. That's the old way. Instead, draw near. Confess not just the sin, but your independence from Him. Find mercy and grace to help in your time of need. The throne room isn't a courtroom; it's a place of restoration. Come boldly.

## Day 5: The Bride Without Spot

**Reading:** Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:6-9

**Devotional:** Jesus is washing you with the water of His Word to present you to Himself without spot or wrinkle. This isn't about earning His love—it's about receiving His transforming grace. You're not just a forgiven sinner; you're becoming His spotless bride. Every time you expose yourself to His Word, you're being washed, changed, transformed. This is why showing up matters—not to check a religious box, but to be changed. God sees you not as you are, but as you're becoming. He's committed to finishing what He started. Today, ask yourself: Am I cooperating with God's washing, or resisting it? Surrender any area where you've been holding back. Trust His process. The same God who made Jesus the firstborn without blemish is making you like Him. This is the good news.