

Chasing Carrots Part 2

PERFECTIONISM

- Continuing today **Chasing Carrots- The Continual Pursuit of More**

Philippians 4:11-13 (NLT)

*I have learned how to be content with whatever I have.... I have learned the secret of living in every situation,¹³ **For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.***

- NOTICE: Connection of contentment and empowerment. Paul calls it the “secret to living.”
- When we choose contentment, we can have strength in all things. But we lack strength because we don’t choose contentment.

CONTENT: *sufficient, being at rest where God has you despite what happens around you.*

- Living from the inside-out instead of the outside-in. It’s not natural or automatic, it must be learned. The Holy Spirit is a good teacher.

Chasing Carrots leads to compromise but contentment in Jesus always leads to power.

Chasing the Carrot of Perfectionism

PERFECT: *Being entirely without fault or defect* (Merriam-Webster)

- How many take on pressure to be perfect? (At home, at work, at school, in sports). Unrealistic expectations? I wonder how much of what we fear or feel anxious about is connected to this carrot. (Therapy moment: “I’m not perfect.” “You are not perfect.”)
- The same person who struggles with being perfect will give grace to someone who isn’t. We say, “It’s okay, no one is perfect.” But we think of ourselves differently. Instead: Feel shame, guilt, and unworthiness. (The perfect parent, teenager, Christian)
- Doesn’t Jesus even tell us...? We even can feel pressure from the Bible. (***Matthew 5:48*** *Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*)

3 TYPES OF PERFECTIONISTS

- **Self-oriented perfectionist**—You hold unrealistically high expectations of yourself and battle with feelings of guilt, often obsessing to the point of inefficiency. You’re prone to procrastinate and struggle with deep feelings of inadequacy.
- **Externally-oriented perfectionist**—You believe others expect you to be perfect. To cope with the pressure, you often use self-deprecating humor as a defense. You often feel alone, depressed and desperate because you know you will never be enough.

- **Others-oriented perfectionist**—You expect others to live up to your impossible standards. Because you tend to lack empathy, you often tear others down or use abrasive and demeaning humor toward those who don't meet your standards. (Parents, Some)

SPIRITUAL SIDE OF PERFECTIONISM

- **Perfectionism is the perfect mask for insecurity.**
 - This sounds like a psychological problem, and it is, but it's rooted in a spiritual problem.
 - We show others what we think they want to see.
 - Unrealistic expectations build pressure and lead to dishonesty (false image) or avoidance (we give up or cover up because we'll never meet up.)
 - Creates an illusion that if I live up to this then I'll be good enough.

EXAMPLES

- Adam and Eve in the Garden
 - Walking with God with no shame and pressure-free
 - Sinned and insecurity entered, and they were imperfect before a perfect God.
 - Covered themselves with leaves to “appear” acceptable.
- Moses and the veil
 - Went to the mountain and his face was shining.
 - He covered his face with a veil, not because it was too bright for others but because it was fading.
- Religious Leaders
 - Looked the part but lacked relationship with God.
 - *2 Tim 3:5 They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly.*

JESUS PERFECTLY COVERS

Romans 3:20

²⁰ *For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are...*

- On your own, you cannot be perfect enough for God!
- Why do we have the law? (*The law simply shows us how sinful we are... Rom 3:20*) We need Help. We need Grace. We need Mercy!
- LAW: 10 Commandments + 603 more (Pharisees) (One and done, guilty is our verdict)

Romans 3:23

For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.

- This isn’t about feeling bad about us. It’s about being truthful. This is reality. We lack the capacity to be made right without God.
- Until you see yourself as a sinner, you won’t see your need for the Savior.

Romans 3:22

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

- Not Christ + ANYTHING. Only CHRIST. (Not good works, not performing well, not stopping all bad)
- Not perfection but Grace!

Galatians 2:17, 19-21(Message)

Have some of you noticed that we are not yet perfect? (No great surprise, right?) “I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn’t work. So, I quit being a “law man” so that I could be God’s man. Christ’s life showed me how, and enabled me to do it. I identified myself completely with him. Indeed, I have been crucified with Christ. My ego is no longer central. It is no longer important that I appear righteous before you or have your good opinion, and I am no longer driven to impress God. Christ lives in me. The life you see me living is not “mine,” but it is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not going to go back on that.

²¹ Is it not clear to you that to go back to that old rule-keeping, peer-pleasing religion would be an abandonment of everything personal and free in my relationship with God? I refuse to do that, to repudiate God’s grace. If a living relationship with God could come by rule-keeping, then Christ died unnecessarily.

2 Types of Covering (Show Perfectionism vs. Grace slide)

<u>Perfectionism</u>	<u>Grace</u>
What I do	What Jesus has done
About me	About Jesus
If I obey God will love me	Because God loves, I can obey
Win God’s approval	Living from God’s approval

His sacrifice covers my sin. His security covers my insecurity. His sufficiency covers my insufficiency, His adequacy covers my inadequacy.

- Jesus takes the pressure off!

We can choose to live FOR perfection or FROM Grace.

- This changes how we think about God and ourselves but also how we relate to people. Being covered by grace empowers us.

JESUS PERFECTLY EMPOWERS

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor ² and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

☐ Choose perfect love over perfect performance.

“PERFECT” (Greek) *Telios*- Doesn’t mean to be without sin! He’s talking about the power of God’s love to COMPLETE us.

- The same root word for *tetelestai* “It is finished” or *complete*.
- Perfectionism is rooted in a fear that I’m not enough, but John tells us that “perfect love cast out all fear.”
- His perfect love delivers the revelation that my performance/ perfection isn’t what completes me, but Jesus’ does.

☐ Choose people over perfection.

- Jesus challenges them to love in a greater way than they ever have. To love the way, they have been loved by God.
- So “Be perfect” Jesus is telling us to fulfill our perfect purpose! Love God and love others! (Not pressure, responsibility)

☐ Choose equipping over perfecting.

2 Timothy 3:17 (KJV)

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

- Chasing perfection will wear you out and leave you with nothing to show for it.
- Biblical Perfection is the “divine equipping” of God in us through the Holy Spirit and Word.