

The Park Church: Corporate Bible Study

NAILING IT – CHAPTER 7

CRUCIFYING PERFECTION:

FROM UNATTAINABLE STANDARDS TO GRACE-FILLED WHOLENESS

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Looking Back, Moving Forward

▶ **NAILING IT**

- *WHY SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP DEMANDS SUFFERING & SURRENDER*

▶ **The Progression – Chapters 3-9**

- Chapter 6 –Crucifying Performance: From Transactional Performance to Transformational Presence

▶ **The Effects of Presence Based Leadership**

- Personal Presence – requires leaders who are present to God and to themselves before they attempt to be present to others.
- Prophetic Presence – The prophetic power of presence enables leaders to see both what is and what is to come with an invitation to lean into that vision together.
- Passed Presence – When leaders practice personal presence for themselves and operate in prophetic presence with their teams, the result is a “passed presence” that begins to permeate the entire organization.

Looking Back, Moving Forward

▶ **NAILING IT**

- “Every day that we lead, we have an opportunity to better serve traumatized teams and constituents by choosing presence over performance...As we crucify the amorphous standards for performance, we can experience the resurrection of life, affirmation, and purpose that comes only from our presence in God.”
- *Dr. Nicole Massie Martin*

Picture of Perfection



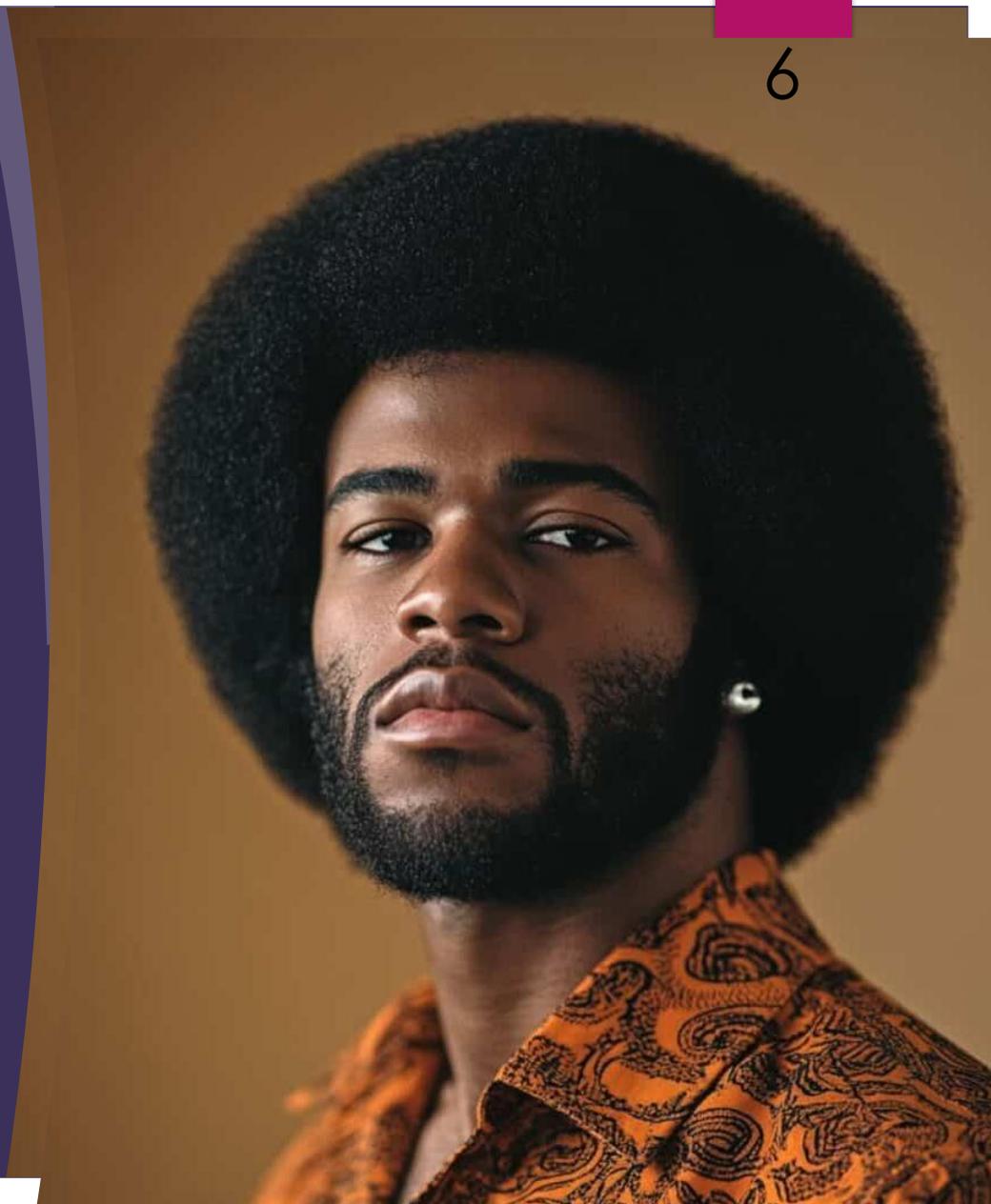
Picture of Perfection

5



Picture of Perfection

6



Picture of Perfection



THE SEDUCTION OF PERFECTION

▶ FIRST TASTE OF PERFECTION

- Perfect score in a video game
 - Perfect grade on a school assignment
 - You remembered and performed excellently in a production and got a standing ovation
- Once you taste perfection, you long for it over and over again.
- It becomes an obsession.
 - The perfect game
 - The perfect relationship
 - The perfect job
 - The perfect husband / wife
 - The perfect children
 - And the list goes on and on and on.

THE SEDUCTION OF PERFECTION

- ▶ **”Like most trappings of the soul, this craving for perfection can come to us in many forms and at many stages, provoked from the outside or developed from within. “**

Types of Perfection

- ▶ **“Like most trappings of the soul, this craving for perfection can come to us in many forms and at many stages, provoked from the outside or developed from within.”**
- ▶ **Perfectionism Types**
 - ▶ **Other-Oriented Perfection** – where the person see themselves as flawless but others – children, coworkers, partners – are severely deficient and in need of help.
 - ▶ **Self-Oriented Perfection** – perfection that surfaces from within as a response to trauma or an effort to try to control things when everything else feels out of control.
 - ▶ **Socially Prescribed Perfection** – the pressure to reach society’s unattainable version of perfection.
- ▶ **“Perfection is defined by every community, often in very different ways, and even those who reach these often-unreasonable standards do so at great costs. They may be perfect in athletics, but it costs them friendships. To be perfect in wealth and career success often costs the health of the family and the well-being of the soul. Regardless of how we are lured into the grip of the unattainable, the obsession of this pursuit may prove to be too exorbitant for the soul.”**

Perfect Casualties

- **“When a leader becomes consumed with the idea of what is perfect, it can cause a ripple effect of harm to themselves, their loved ones, and especially to staff and employees.”**
- **”One person’s relentless pursuit of perfection can set unreasonable standards for others, creating a near hostile work environment for the team. Everything must always be exact, not just according to the employee’s standard but according to leadership.”**
- **“What the leader believes to be perfect may not even be known to anyone until what is submitted is rejected, often with great disdain or even violent repulsion.**

Perfect Casualties

- **“Perfectionism keeps leaders and teams in constant cycles of paralysis or frenzy, always plagued by the need to grasp an ideal that is consistently beyond reach.”**
- **”Both the leader and those who follow suffer the effects of poor mental health as the angst of decision-making often leads to anxiety and depression.”**

In Proximity With Perfection

- ▶ **“Perfectionism is a jealous, empty consumption. It leaves no room for anything other than a mirage conjured in our minds that will never truly be attained. It drives us to seek after it, to live for it, and to love it more than anything else. We pant for perfection, like dehydrated survivors in the desert, thirsting for its refreshing waters only to find ourselves lapping at the rough sands of reality. It pushes us to want it above everyone else and to sacrifice anything and anyone to receive it.”**
- ▶ **“Because of the strength of its pull, the only way to correct perfectionism is to crucify it. We must nail it to the cross that which seeks to engulf us.”**
- ▶ **”In Christ, we find the only true and loving image of perfection, and we can never reach what our hearts desire without him.”**

In Proximity With Perfection

- ▶ **Matthew 5 gives us a picture of what perfection in the Kingdom looks like to Jesus.**
 - ▶ “being blessed and suffering in faith” (vv. 3-12)
 - ▶ “being salt and light in a bland and dark world” (vv. 13-16)
 - ▶ “fulfilling righteousness of the law” (vv. 17-20)
 - ▶ “refraining from anger and holding nothing against anyone” (vv. 21-26)
 - ▶ “thinking no lustful thoughts” (vv. 27-30)
 - ▶ “making no oaths and keeping your word” (vv. 33-37)
 - ▶ “loving your enemies” (vv. 43-47)
 - ▶ “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (vv. 48)

In Proximity With Perfection

- ▶ **A perfectionist encounter with the Perfect One – Jesus**
- ▶ **Matthew 19:16-21**
 - ▶ The young perfectionist, wanting to be justified in all he had already done, was completely caught off guard by this last requirement.
 - ▶ The man went away sad because he had great wealth.
- ▶ **Dr. Martin gives the following insights to the text:**
 - ▶ Perhaps his deepest sorrow came from the fact that he followed all the rules, met all the requirements of society, climbed all the requisite ladders, and amassed the wealth that others longed for only to be asked to give it away.

In Proximity With Perfection

- ▶ Perhaps his wealth represented his achievements
- ▶ Maybe it reminded him that he was the one who did it right
- ▶ “The invitation to crucify perfection is an invitation to be in total and complete union with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
- ▶ “Living to be in perfect union with Christ means taking up your cross and following him wherever he leads, even if his leading does not always take you to the top.”
- ▶ “Crucifixion is always a precursor to resurrection.”
- ▶ “When the perfection of our pursuits is crucified, the perfection of our union with him, leading to excellence in the faith, can be resurrected.”

Practicing Perfect Union

- ▶ **“The act of crucifying other-oriented, self-oriented, and social perfection requires daily devotion.**
- ▶ **We can become excellent in our careers, flawless in our educational pursuits, immaculate in our money management, but none of that matters if we are not moving toward perfect union with God.”**

Practicing Perfect Union

- ▶ **1. What are you most afraid of? Name what you are afraid might happen when you crucify your sense of perfection and allow God to deal with it head-on. (1 Peter 5:7)**
- ▶ **2. What does it look like to confess your imperfections? In the confession of sin and imperfection, we make room for deep dependence on God's forgiveness and grace. (1 John 1:9)**
- ▶ **Who can you invite on this journey? In order to pivot from who we were to who we want to be, we will need companionship to support us and to flag for us the moments when we regress. Think of people who genuinely care for your well-being and invite them to help you focus less on earthly perfection and more on perfect dependence on God. (Proverbs 12:26)**

Practicing Perfect Union

- ▶ **4. How can you take the first step? Whatever your step may be, commit to taking it one day at a time with an abundance of grace. (Colossians 3:23)**
- ▶ **“Perfection is not about results but about redemption. No matter how perfect you think you’ve been or how defective, God can use every part of your life for His glory.”**