

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 5:43-48**.
- B. I believe we have the right to ask for perfection in some things. This is true because the word perfect defined means, to be bring to completion or to be mature.
- C. We want those in important jobs or positions to be mature, responsible people. We do not want to eat fruits or vegetables before they are perfect or mature, etc.
- D. 1John 4:12 says that when God abides in us, His love is perfected in us.
- E. This morning's lesson deals with how we can be perfect people. That is, how to be mature in X.

## I. PERFECTION MEANS MATURITY.

- A. In most cases, when the NT speaks of someone being perfect it means they are complete or mature; they have reached the logical end of their task.
- B. In our scripture text, we are to strive to be mature, complete in every way has God is mature, complete in every way. All of our thoughts and deeds are to grow in such a way as to reflect God's perfection, God's completeness and maturity.
- C. Look at the following examples of perfection:
  - 1. The church is to be brought to perfection (Eph. 4:13; Col. 4:12).
  - 2. Individual Xians are to be brought to perfection (Phil. 3:15; Col. 1:28).
  - 3. Those who are teachers are to be perfect in training (Heb. 5:14).
- D. Let us now examine four things needed to help us be perfect: faith, fight, freedom, and faithfulness. Maturity is something that is not optional for the Xian (Heb. 5:11-14).

## II. FIRST, FAITH.

- A. We all need more faith. Spiritual lives are made up of faith, it is the substance that holds them together (Heb. 11:1).
- B. And faith is something that will run out if we don't continually strive for it (Jn. 6:27-29; Heb. 12:1,2).
- C. The word of God is able to give us all we need to have this kind of faith. The word is "furnished completely," or "thoroughly furnished" to perfectly supply our faith (Rom. 10:17; 2Tim. 3:17).

## III. SECOND, FIGHT.

- A. Xianity is to be enjoyed and not endured; but it is also spoken of as a fight. To be perfect (ature) we must fight the good fight of faith (2Tim. 4:7; Eph. 6:10-12).
- B. Paul was set for the defense of the gospel (Phil. 1:16).

## IV. THIRD, FREEDOM.

- A. Sin stops spiritual growth. we need to be able to overcome sin in order to grow spiritually. Just as children need to overcome their physical problems to grow up into adulthood, we too must overcome the obstacles of Satan to be perfect (mature).
- B. Jesus promised us freedom from sin (Jn. 8:31-36).
- C. We must be firm and stand fast to protect our freedom and not allow sin to dominate us and make us a slave (1Cor. 16:13,14).
- D. It is very easy to lose this precious freedom. We must stand on guard against transgression and omission (Jas. 4:17).

## V. FOURTH, FAITHFULNESS.

- A. I like to define faithfulness as living and working up to one's ability. To be faithful does not mean to live a sinless life, but to strive to do God's will to the utmost.

- B. In the parable of the talents, the 1-talent man would have been blessed if he would have used that talent according to his ability (Mt. 25:14-30).
- C. Being faithful means to walk with God in the good times and the bad too. Realizing that both good and bad have a purpose (Jn. 10:10; Heb. 12:10; Jas. 1:4).

### **CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.**

- A. Let us review:
  - 1. Perfection in the NT almost always refers to the concept of being complete or mature, not sinless.
  - 2. Four suggestions to be perfect like God are:
    - a. Have faith.
    - b. Be ready to fight.
    - c. Enjoy your freedom.
    - d. Walk in faithfulness.
- B. When our lives come into closer contact with the model set for us by JC, reflecting the qualities of God we are becoming perfect, that is, mature and complete as God would have us.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.