

Godly Perfection

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your heavenly Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Matthew 5:48 (KJV)

This is a tremendous command. It is one of those statements of Jesus that is really hard to see as a possibility in our lives. How can we be as perfect as He wants us to be? Our problem is, we define perfection as sinlessness, which we know is in all practicality, impossible. Conversely, Matthew uses a Greek word that doesn't mean sinlessness but means maturity, a condition which identifies us as manifesting adult qualities. So, we need to look at this word from a different perspective than what we commonly do; not meaning sinlessness but completeness of character and mature.

The word perfect is **teleios** is defined as meaning to bring to a full end, or something having reached its full completed end. We properly can call it maturity. The question follows, how do we reach this completed condition He is referring to?

In verses previous to this one, Jesus is placing responsibility upon us to respond, in a godly way, to adversity or any other situation that is not to our liking or is in opposition to us. He is identifying ways of responding to circumstances and people that is different from the way we often times feel and sadly, do not appropriately respond to.

Responding in a godly way to adversity or people is a characteristic of a mature believer. It is a quality that enables people to see Jesus in our lives through the way we talk, the way we act, the way we live out our lives before them. If we want to be called the **"children"** of God, we must find out what this type of child is.

"Children", the word used by Jesus, is **huios** which describes one who is able to respond properly as God desires. What is important to consider, even though we are God's children in family relationship, we may not be in terms of our behavior when responding to adversity.

There are a couple of other words that are used to describe our relationship with the Father that identify us by calling us sons or children but in fact describe qualities that related to childishness, infancy, simply being in relationship with the Father, that do not indicate maturity. This word Jesus uses does identify qualities of maturity.

This word **huios** is one who manifests adult qualities of maturity. If we choose to practice the types of responses Jesus identifies in these verses, it is through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does choose to manifest Himself through those we call mature adult children of our Father. That identification is not automatic just because we call God our Father, but is a word that describes the quality and condition of our relationship that shapes our attitudes, choices, and conduct.

If we want to live on this mature level, we are going to have to make a **decision** to do the commandments of Jesus. To put it simply, we must be a **doer** of the Word. Remember, knowing the Word does not make you a mature Christian. In this passage of scripture, Jesus says loving, blessing, doing good, and praying for others are necessary to qualify us to be called **mature** sons of God.

Our challenge then, is to allow the Holy Spirit to cause the Word to be a living, vital, force in our lives that God has intended it to be so that it changes our attitude and behavior.