

Sermon on the Mount Series – Week Eight

The Goal of Christian Discipleship

Comprehensive Christian Maturity – Matthew 5:48; [21-47]

Introduction: True disciples pursue a well-rounded maturity driven by a vision of God and the hope for God's help.

1. THE GOAL – Jesus commands comprehensive spiritual maturity. Mt. 5:48

- A. Jesus' strategy in Matthew 5:21-48.
 - 1. Jesus talked about our righteousness in 5:20 then sums up righteousness in 5:48.
 - 2. Between he gives 6 examples of maturity in some of the hardest areas of life in 21-47.
- B. Jesus' shocking command – Be perfect!
 - 1. We cringe when we hear this, because we don't have a corresponding word in English.
 - 2. Teleios means, "that which has reached its end." Hence, "full, mature, complete."
 - 3. Human illustrations: football, baseball, gymnastics.
 - 4. Divine illustration: Jesus connects our completeness with God's completeness.
 - 5. God always acts in accord with his nature. By analogy, we should do the same.
 - 6. We get an example in the parallel passage in Luke 6:36.
- C. What "Matthew 5:48 perfection" Jesus *does not* mean.
 - 1. It is not sinless perfection.
 - 2. It is not legalism.
 - 3. It is not obsessive-compulsive craziness.
- D. What "Matthew 5:48 perfection" *does* mean. And why does he state it this way??

2. MOTIVATION #1 – We are motivated by the exalted position of God the Father, coupled with the notion of being counter-cultural. Matthew 5:48

- A. Jesus uses the term Heavenly Father. The *heavenly* adjective should remind us of God's throne.
- B. Those who've experience a vision of God have new motivation: Isaiah, Ezekiel, disciples & John.
 - 1. Old Testament examples – Isaiah and Ezekiel.
 - 2. New Testament examples – Disciples on the Mt. of Transfiguration & John in Rev. 1.
- C. But if God is our vision, then we're also going to hunger to be counter-cultural. 5:46-47
 - 1. Jesus just told us how the Gentiles act in 5:46-47; he begins v. 48 w/ an emphatic, "you".
 - 2. Authentic maturity, guided by vision of God, is going to long for attractive different-*ness*.

3. MOTIVATION #2 – We are motivated by the implicit promise of Scripture. Matthew 5:48; [5:47]; Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7; 1 Pet. 1:15-16

- A. The form of this command also conveys an implicit promise.
 - 1. The form is the future, "you shall be."
 - 2. This is the normal way to express a command, but *with* the nuance of a promise.
- B. We see the same command/promise form in Lev. 11:44 and 1 Peter 1:16
- C. When God asks you to be complete, he expects you to do it in *his* supernatural power. Matt. 5:3