

NSD Notes

For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. (1 Cor. 9:19)
Volume 6, No. 12 June 20, 2010

Services	
Sunday	
Bible Study	10 am
Morning Service	11 am
Evening Service	6 pm
Wednesday	
Bible Study	7 pm
News @ NSD	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Robyn Hamilton's sister, in skilled nursing facility in New Orleans recovering from a car accident.● Janna Wells – visiting at Lake Tahoe.● Matt Wells – on travel for the Navy.● Martha Holloway - recurring back and heart ailment.● Dema's sister-in-law – liver and bone cancer.● Scott Shaw's dad, Tommy – battling liver cancer.● Jeanne Lynne – recovering from surgeries.● Ernest Peeples – deployed in May.● Logan Harper – deployed in Afghanistan.● Also keep Sally Harper and the kids in your prayer.	
Sunday Morning Class	
Letters to the churches of Asia	
Wednesday Night Class	
Character Studies: Joshua 7: Achan	

"You Shall Be Perfect"

by Gene Taylor

"Therefore you shall be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect" ([Matt. 5:48](#)). At first glance, this is a difficult passage. It seems to be calling us to do or be what seems impossible. "Nobody is perfect," is what we say.

It is true that all responsible people commit sin. [Romans 3:23](#) states that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. That is why Jesus died for all men to give them the opportunity to have their sin removed ([Heb. 2:9](#); [2 Cor. 5:14](#)). It is also why the gospel needs to be preached "to every creature" ([Mark 16:16](#)). Even after one obeys the gospel, he still commits sin and needs forgiveness ([1 John 1:7-10](#)).

If [Matthew 5:48](#) were telling us that we must live sinlessly perfect lives or that we must be as perfect as God, then we obviously have some real problems.

When we seek to determine the meaning of any Biblical text, especially one that seems difficult to understand, we must remember, when it comes to Scripture, whatever God's word says on any subject is right ([Psa. 119:128](#)). It is also possible to twist or misuse the Scriptures ([2 Pet. 3:15-16](#)).

In the study of the difficult text before us, we must answer three questions. First: Can the word "perfect" have several meanings in the Bible? Second: What is the context of this verse? Third: Are there other verses in the Bible which will help us understand this one?

The Meaning of Perfect

The word "perfect," in the Bible, can and does mean "complete" or "finished." Jesus was made "perfect" through suffering ([Heb. 2:10; 5:8-9](#)). He completed or fulfilled God's plan for Him as our Savior by suffering for us.

"Perfect" can also have the meaning of "mature" or "grown up." In [Philippians 3:15](#), the apostle Paul speaks to "as many as be perfect" (KJV). The NKJV translates this phrase "as many as are mature."

The Context of Matthew 5:48

Jesus contrasts His teaching with that of the Old Law ([Matt. 5:38-39](#)). He shows us what our attitude is to be toward those who want to make life hard for us by forcing us or hatefully treating us ([Matt. 5:40-44](#)).

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All are welcome
to worship and study!

Deacon: Matt Wells

Minister: Dan Austin

SERMON NOTES:

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He teaches us to love our "enemies" ([Matt. 5:44](#)), not an easy thing to do. We are to do this so "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven" ([Matt. 5:45a](#)). God acts with concern and love for all men. If we act like our heavenly Father, we will act with positive good will toward evil and good men alike. If we only love those who love us but do not love our enemies, we are really no better than evil men for even evil people are capable of loving those who love them ([Matt. 5:46](#)).

When Jesus said, "Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect" ([Matt. 5:48](#)), He was saying, "Let your love be complete as God's love." God loves all people, even evil ones. This is how we can be as "perfect" as God. Our love for our fellow-man needs to grow and mature - including loving our enemies. If we do not love our enemies, we are not acting as sons of God ought to act.

Other Passages To Help Us Understand

"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children" ([Eph. 5:1](#)). In this passage, the apostle Paul holds forth the Father as one we are to imitate. By again taking note of the context in which this passage is found, we can see that His example is in the realm of attitudes toward our fellow-man. The verses immediately preceding this text say: "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you" ([Eph. 4:31-32](#)).

This passage plainly teaches that our attitudes toward other people must be the same as those of our Father in heaven. If not, we have no right to claim to be His children.

"But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'" ([1 Pet. 1:15-16](#)). This text impresses upon us the necessity of conforming our lives to the qualities and standards of divinity. Holy conduct arises from holy attitudes. If we are going to conduct ourselves in a proper manner toward our fellow-man, we must have the proper attitudes including the attitude to love even our enemies.

Conclusion

We must heed the command of our Savior given in [Matthew 5:48](#) to "be perfect" just as our heavenly Father is perfect. We must be careful, though, not to apply this command to areas in which Jesus never intended for it to be applied.

He was speaking of the love that is to characterize those who are children of God. That love is to be complete, extending even to those who are your enemies, who hate you and spitefully use you. In this, as in all other things, we must strive to be as both Father and Son.