

**Intro:**

I rummaged the world wide web and found these sermon titles for Fathers Day: “A Few Good Men,” “Becoming A Pro Dad,” “Being a godly Father in an ungodly World,” “Choosing to Lead,” “Daddy Duty,” “Duct Tape Lessons For Dads,” “How To Be a Manly Man,” “How to Be A Successful Father,” “Is There A Man in Your House?” **The one title I like best is:** “How To Become More Like God the Father” because it’s comes very close to our text this morning. Most of these titles, however, focus on the man; whereas we have a Father who is not a man and who deserves all the honor we can give to a father and so much more—that is our Heavenly Father.

**J.I. Packer says this:** “The invocation of God in the Lord’s Prayer draws us into just such an awareness. ‘Our Father’ speaks of the quality and depth of God’s love to Christ’s people—all the sustained care and concern that a perfect father could show.”<sup>1</sup> Well, how has our Heavenly Father showed “perfectness?” For one, in the way that He loves us perfectly. “The Bible describes God as a perfect Father, who in love has adopted us in Christ, and then who always loves his children in exactly the way they need to be loved. In that process, his love perfects them. John puts it this way: ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: (1 Jn 3:1).’”<sup>2</sup> So, on this Father’s Day—we look to our Heavenly Father and greet Him “May You Have a Happy Father’s Day!” in the way we respond to His truth this morning.

Let me give you the context of **Matthew 5:43—48** so that we won’t feel lost in our navigation of God’s truth for us today—being that it is Fathers’ Day. The title of the message today is “The Perfect Father Wants Us To Be Like Him.”

**Context: Who is speaking here?** Jesus. **Who are the audience?** Multitudes vs. disciples. **What is the content?** Sermon on the mount, the Beatitudes, Believers as salt and light, Christ’s relation to the law, and Divorce. **What is the gist?** “The relationship of a child of God will be manifested in the world by his shining and burning as a light for Christ, by

---

<sup>1</sup> J. I. Packer, *Growing in Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 167.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Lawrence, *Biblical Theology in the Life of the Church: A Guide for Ministry, 9Marks* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 151.

his quiet and savory influence in society, and by his conformity to the Word of God in all things.”<sup>3</sup>

**Proposition:** “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” **What does it mean to “Be perfect?”** How do we do that? How do we know that we are becoming that? How do we know that we are getting closer and closer to that mandate?

To answer these questions, we’re gonna go through a brief Biblical survey of what being perfect means and then I’ll unpack for you **4 Powerful Patterns** to know that we are being or becoming perfect.

“Perfect” comes from Greek τελειος. The definition of the word “perfect” lies in how the New Testament writers intended it to mean. “The use in Matthew carries the sense of ‘whole’ or ‘undivided.’ Thus the rich young ruler is not yet ‘undivided’ in his obedience to God (19:20). God is undivided in his conduct toward us, and so must we be in our conduct toward him and others (5:48).”<sup>4</sup> God’s love is undivided in that, it encompass even enemies.

There is also this idea of “fully-grown” and “maturity” and “completeness” (1 Cor 14:20; Eph 4:13; Heb 5:14; 6:1; Col. 1:28). So we have demonstrated that *perfect* means to be “whole” or “undivided” or “fully-grown” or “mature” or “complete.”

**4 Powerful Patterns** to know that we are being or becoming perfect:

**1. Loving my enemies.** Why? Because God loves His enemies.

*Illustrate:* Michael Widman, perhaps the greatest traitor to the American Cause next to Benedict Arnold, was court-martialed and was sentenced to be hanged. Pastor Peter Miller walked many miles to Valley Forge all night long to plead for the life of Michael Widman. **All** thought the commander in chief would succumb to Miller's entreaties, and exercise

---

<sup>3</sup> Keith Brooks, Summarized Bible: Complete Summary of the New Testament (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2009), 8.

<sup>4</sup> Gerhard Kittel, Gerhard Friedrich, and Geoffrey William Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1985), 1164.

his prerogative of mercy. Deeply moved, yet mindful of his responsibilities, Washington replied: "Friend Miller, there is scarcely anything in this world that I would deny you, but such is the state of public affairs that it would be fatal to our cause not to be stringent, inexorable in such matters, and make examples of renegades to the cause of Liberty. Otherwise I should most cheerfully release your friend." "**Friend!**" exclaimed Miller, interrupting the commander in chief and throwing up his hands. "He is my worst enemy--my incessant reviler." [Michael Widman, who disagreed in a lot of doctrines with Pastor Miller, became his public persecutor. He treated him with contempt and habitually spat in the old man's face every time they met.] Miller said to Washington, "For a friend I might not importune you; but Widman being, and having been for years, my worst foe, my malignant, persecuting enemy, my religion teaches me "**Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.**" The commander in chief of the Continental Army pardons a court-martialed traitor on the strength [and love] of Peter Miller's plea for his life. **Doesn't this remind us of what Christ did for us?** (See Col 1:21–22).

2. **Blessing those who curse me.** Why? Because God blesses those who curse Him. This reminds me of David during the rebellion of his son Absalom—2 Sam 16:5—11. What a remarkable response to cursing! And yet God wants us not only to answer like David did, which is essentially to ignore Shemei, to let him be, God wants us to bless in return! Boy, this is hard! But by the grace of God and only by the strength of the Holy Spirit—that we can do this.
3. **Doing good to those who hate me.** Why? Because God does good to those who hate Him. There is a parallel passage that we see in Luke that gives us more information of what this mandate means, Luke 6:36. *Illustration:* When the city of Rome burned, the Romans believed that their emperor, Nero, had set the city on fire, probably because of his incredible lust to build. In order to build more, he had to destroy what already existed. The Romans were totally devastated. Their culture, in a sense, had gone down with the city. All the religious elements of their life had been destroyed—their great temples, shrines, and even their

**The Perfect Father** (20-minute sermon by Christian Torres)

household idols had been burned. This had great religious implications because it made them believe that their deities had been unable to deal with this conflagration and also had been victims of it. The people were homeless and helpless. Many had been killed. Their bitter resentment was severe, so Nero realized that he had to redirect the hostility. The emperor's chosen scapegoat was the Christian community. Christians were already hated because they were associated with Jews and because they were seen as being hostile to the Roman culture. Nero quickly spread the word that the Christians had set the fires. As a result, a vicious persecution against Christians began and soon spread throughout the Roman Empire.<sup>5</sup> First and 2nd Peter were written to these Christians. Peter says, (1 Pe 3:12–16).

- 4. Praying for those who persecute me.** Because God prays for them who persecutes Him. *Illustrate:* Stephen praying for his persecutors— Acts 7. Filled filled with the Holy Ghost and the Word of God, Stephen could not but speak boldly against sin, no fear of man could stop him from telling the truth and nothing but the truth. The truth of Jesus Christ was so foreign to the hearers that they instigated the crowd and accused Stephen of “blasphemy.” But verse 10 says, “they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.” [Pick up on v. 51—60.]

**Conclusion:** We are children of the Perfect Father. He is perfect (undivided, complete) in that, He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, And He is perfect, in that He sends rain on the just and on the unjust. We are to emulate our Perfect Father—“that ye may be the children of your Father.” **Argumentation:** What reward to you get if you love only those who love you? That's what the world does! They love their own. You're not distinct from them then. If you treat and greet only your brothers, you're not doing anything different from the Gentiles. Look, be perfect! Be consistent! Have integrity! Be whole! Be mature! Be fully-grown! Because God our Father is! I challenge you: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children”—Eph 5:1–2.

---

<sup>5</sup> John MacArthur, *1 & 2 Peter: Courage in Times of Trouble*, MacArthur Bible Studies (Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2000), 3.