

# A Perfect Heart

by Keith Malcomson

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*This sermon emphasizes the pursuit of a perfect heart before God, focusing on the need for sincerity, integrity, and maturity in one's walk with God. It delves into the Old Testament examples of individuals with perfect hearts like David, Noah, and Job, highlighting the importance of walking in truth and holiness. The sermon also explores the New Testament teachings on perfection, urging believers to press towards the high calling of God in Christ Jesus and to seek after maturity and completeness in the will of God.*

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 16:9, Genesis 6:9, Genesis 17:1, Job 1:1, 1 Chronicles 12:38, 1 Kings 15:3, Matthew 5:48, 2 Corinthians 7:1, James 1:4, 1 Peter 5:10, Philipians 3:12, Hebrews 6:1, James 3:2, 1 John 2:5, 1 John 4:12

**Topics:** "Pursuit of a Perfect Heart", "Maturity in Christ"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I want you to turn to 2 Chronicles 16.9, we're continuing with our series, A Heart After God. I'm going to finish this series next Sunday unless the Lord leads or expands further, but I'm going to finish with a very important message next week. This is the second to last message, or the last aspect of this heart that God seeks for in individuals.

He is seeking our world for certain men, certain women, with a certain kind of heart. And over these past weeks and months, we've been dealing with this, a humble heart, a broken heart, dealing with all these aspects, a heart to know God. We have thoroughly dealt with aspects concerning one kind of heart.

This is part 11, and my message is a perfect heart. 2 Chronicles 16.9, for the eyes of the Lord run to and through throughout the whole earth. Why? To show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him.

Herein thou hast done foolishly, therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars. Let's pray together. Father, we know right now, right across the world in every nation, every city, every church, to every individual, there is a searching of the Spirit of God.

You are looking for individuals whose heart is perfect before you. And if you can find an individual whose heart is perfect, whose heart is sincere, whose heart has integrity, whose heart has no agenda, no guile, no motivation that is wrong before you, a heart that is pure without blemish, a heart that is sincere in seeking after you, a heart that actually walks before you, a heart that fears you, a heart that seeks after your glory alone, nor God, a heart that is obedient before you. If you can find such a heart, then you will show yourself strong and mighty and powerful.

You're literally looking at individuals with a perfect heart, that you can demonstrate your power in this generation. Father, we plead the blood of Jesus, the merits of Calvary, the finished work of the cross, work in us and sanctify us. Nor God, I pray right now in this meeting, in this church, will you sanctify us, will you work mightily to bring forth a pure heart, to bring forth a right heart.

Oh God, I pray right now, demolish every excuse, nor God, demolish every complacency that we might pursue after a perfect heart before you. I pray for the power of God, nor God, demolish excuses, demolish casualness, nor God, demolish apathy, nor God, stir up a heart that longs, oh God, that groans, oh God, that cares more about how you look upon us than men around us, nor God, and even our own thoughts. Lord God, bless us and bless your word.

In Jesus' mighty name, amen, amen. My message, part 11, a perfect heart. It says here in 2 Chronicles chapter 16 and verse 9, for the eyes of the Lord run to and through throughout the whole earth.

This statement about the eyes of the Lord speaks specifically about the person of the Holy Spirit. Where you read the eyes of the Lord, it's talking about the eyes of the Lord are symbolic concerning the work of the Holy Spirit on the earth. We know that God is in heaven, he reigns over the universe, but we know that there is a moving, searching in the entire earth, every single town and village.

There isn't a village where the Holy Spirit isn't looking, searching, either for a child or an old man or some insignificant woman. Do not think that a preacher and those in ministry or those teaching the church have a special place with God that the average believer does not have. That is not true.

God is not looking for a great preacher. In fact, I would go as far as to say the pulpit is filled with preachers who do not have this heart. God is looking for a certain kind of heart.

And you know what? He'll bypass ministries, he'll bypass numbers, he'll bypass gifted teachers to find a person with such a heart. And so it says the eyes of the Lord are running to and through throughout the whole earth. God is looking for a certain kind of heart.

In fact, he is searching widely and diligently and thoroughly and constantly. He is looking for a certain kind of heart. Can I ask you, do you have such a heart? I'm not asking, are you born again? I'm not saying, are you washed in the blood? I'm not asking that.

I'm asking for far more of that. You may be born again, saved by God's grace, and yet you have not allowed God to do a full work in your heart. And yet we have here that God is searching.

What is he searching for? He wants to, look what it says in this first line, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him. So God is searching everywhere. God is searching this church.

God is searching Limerick City, and he is looking for this heart. One person with such a heart, a perfect heart. And if he can find such a heart, do you know what he says? If I find such an individual, it could be a mother looking after her children.

It could be a granny sitting at home. It could be someone that is confined to their home. It could be a child that doesn't even have an education.

And yet if he finds such a heart, do you know what he promises? If I can find a perfect heart, I will show myself strong. Listen carefully. The term here for God showing himself or revealing himself strong in the behalf of such a person.

Do you know what it means in the Hebrew? It means to seize that person. If he can find someone with a perfect heart, he will seize that person. He is searching for that man.

He is searching for that woman. If he finds them, he will lay a hold of them. He will grab them.

The word means to bind himself to that person. It means that God will hold them fast. He won't let you go.

It means he is going to show himself strong unto you. That he is a great God, a strong God, a courageous God, a mighty God, a God who prevails. If he can find a perfect heart, he'll prevail over every area of your life.

And more than that, he'll prevail over every area around you. But we need to understand the Bible talks about a perfect heart. Time and time and time again.

If you are of those that make excuses and say, no one is perfect. Or, well, I just want to be born again. It doesn't matter if my heart is perfect or if my heart is sincere.

Then again, you don't know your Bible. You have a very childish, immature view of what the Bible says. Listen to what the Bible teaches.

And you find this from cover to cover. The Bible teaches about a perfect heart. What it looks like.

What it is. And that every one of you from the oldest to the youngest should be seeking for a perfect heart. We read in Genesis chapter 6 and verse 9 that there are the generation of Noah.

Noah was a just man and perfect. We read that Noah, who built the ark, whose family escaped the judgment and wrath of God and a worldwide flood. The Bible says that Noah was a just man and perfect.

He was a perfect man. Don't minimize the term perfect. Old Testament, before there was a covenant of grace, God had individuals who were perfect.

God called him perfect in his generation. Noah was perfect. And listen, Noah walked with God.

And yet after the flood, we read of an incident of him getting drunk. Not many times, not perpetually. Once in his lifetime.

Once and once only. And it was a blemish. And yet apart from that, it shows he wasn't sinlessly perfect, but he was perfect in his generation.

And he walked with God. Walking with God is the mark of the perfect heart. Or what about Genesis chapter 17 and verse 1? We read about Abraham, who was 99 years old.

And when he was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to Abraham and said unto him, I am the almighty God. Walk before me and be thou perfect. God was saying to Abraham after years of trials, years of walking with God, years of being justified by faith.

He comes to a point and God says, walk with me and be perfect. I want you to be perfect. I command you to be perfect.

Do you realize God doesn't tolerate imperfection? He doesn't excuse it. And he doesn't understand it. There's gotta be a search after perfection.

Now what about Job chapter 1 and verse 1? It says there was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. And that man, this is what God said about Job. That man was perfect and upright and one that feared God and eschewed evil.

Here's another man in his entire generation. He's marked out by God. God says this man is a perfect man.

Job's enemies did not think he was perfect. His friends and comforters did not think he was perfect. The devil did not think he was perfect.

Neither did Job himself think he was perfect. And yet God speaking about this man calls him a perfect man. He tells the devil that this man was a perfect man in the entire generation.

And so we see that Job as a perfect man, look at his life. He walks with God. He is upright.

He fears God. He eschews or he runs from evil. He deters around evil.

If you don't fear God, if you don't shun sin, if you don't walk upright, you do not have a perfect heart. I'm talking about a certain kind of heart. And however you define that, you better make sure you have a biblical understanding.

I've got three points this morning concerning a perfect heart. Again, this is more than being born again. Thank God if you're washed in the blood.

That's his grace and his love and his mercy. But I want to stretch you, challenge you, encourage you, exhort you to don't stay there. But like those I've already mentioned, there was a walk with God that led them to a perfect heart.

Number one, a perfect heart defined. Let me define what the word perfect means from the Bible. What do I mean by a perfect heart? What does the Bible teach about a perfect heart? The word perfect used in the Old Testament and the New Testament carries the same meaning.

What does it actually mean? Because individuals, we're told all through the Old Testament about certain men having a heart that was perfect. What does it mean? It means to be complete or lacking nothing. A perfect heart is not a sinless heart.

Because when you begin looking at it, you'll find David was called perfect. Noah was called perfect. Job was called perfect.

Abraham was called perfect. And many others were called perfect. And yet we find each of these individuals, there were failures along the way.

There were issues of sin to be dealt with. There were problems. And yet we're told they had a perfect heart.

And so you need to understand what does it mean to have a perfect heart? I'm not saying a person is sinlessly perfect. But yet I'm not bringing the word down to go, oh, well, we're all sinners. Do you know how many people I've met in the church? And they have a very low view of walking with God.

They say, should I walk with God? No, you're careless. You're disobedient. You don't fear God.

You're not watching over your attitude. Your heart is not perfect. No wonder God does not lay a hold of you and show himself mighty and strong and powerful.

You say you're saved, but there's much more. There is a God searching the nations for a perfect heart. What is a perfect heart? The Hebrew and Greek word means to be complete, lacking nothing.

It means to attain or to reach onto a final destination. The word perfect means a goal that has been set by scripture. It is the objective.

There is a limit or a boundary or the word used for horizon. In other words, to have a perfect heart, you see what is mature. You see what it is to grow.

You see what it is to reach a horizon of what a heart is. There is a goal, a destination, something that you're longing for. Are you satisfied in your walk? Are you actually going to sit here for the next 10 years and not have moved on? Do you honestly think that God is satisfied with that? Are you satisfied with the Christianity that's slowly declining as you become apathetic? And you'd say, oh, I know I'm going to heaven.

I know I'm born again. Are you really satisfied with that? You see, a perfect heart has a goal, a destination. It is longing for something.

The word perfect means you've come to a place of maturity. In fact, in the Bible, this term maturity is speaking about adulthood compared to childhood. A child could be in the right place for being a child.

Praise God. But it's not mature. You would not give your children the keys to your car or the key to your house.

You would not give them responsibility. You could not trust them or lean upon them. Yet you're their child.

You want to raise up children to maturity. You have a destination. And you know what? It could take them 10 years or five years or several years.

I hope the church is such a place where you know there's a place of maturity. You're not at a place of maturity when you get saved. You've got to grow and mature and learn and understand and walk with God.

This word perfect means to be entire, complete, lacking nothing, missing nothing, not ignorant of what it means to walk with God, not deliberately ignorant by knowing it and yet not even seeking after it. Are you

happy to know so much and yet not pursue after it? You've got a knowledge of the Bible. You say, I know all the information.

I can give you the answer. Do you walk in it? Are you satisfied where you are? Because God is searching. Where are those with the perfect, mature, complete heart who I can begin to reveal myself to? You know, you could be a child and have a mature heart, a perfect heart.

I believe as a child less than 10 years old, I had a perfect heart that drew the attention of God. The eyes of the Lord were searching all over. And I believe the Lord came to me as a child.

There was a perfect heart. I did not have fullness of maturity physically or mentally, but I did in my heart. I was mature.

I desired fellowship. I walked with God. I feared God.

I shunned evil. You know, God dealt with me eight years old in a way that often mature Christians, I don't see it in the church. As a backslider that was meeting up with a girl on a high street to sin, I had more the fear of God than most people sitting in a church in our day and generation.

There's something wrong. Do you realize sitting here could be a very dangerous environment because you're not going out drunk, you're not blaspheming the name of Jesus, and you become casual. Do you know what a perfect heart is? You are pursuing a place of maturity.

This word perfectly means with your whole heart. It means that you have an undivided heart. It's not a heart that is separated, seeking lots of different things, fitting your Christianity in, but you've got work and you've got family and you've got your interests and you've got YouTube and you've got Facebook and you've got lots of other things and you've got a thousand interests.

Oh yes, and I love God. That's not a perfect heart. A perfect heart is a united heart.

A whole heart of heart set upon a particular goal, an ambition where your heart is joined together saying, this is my goal. This is my ambition. Everything else is submitted to this.

It is a heart that's undistracted, uncompromising, unpolluted, without blemish. To have a perfect heart means a sincere heart. It means you have integrity.

I met people who were very serious about God, but they didn't have sincerity. They didn't have integrity. They didn't have transparency.

You know what a perfect heart is? Your heart is wide open. It is sincere. It is clear.

There is no hidden agenda. You're not there manipulating. You're not there saying, how do I get things to work for my benefit? You don't have a perfect heart.

It is a sincere heart that is free from worldly ambition, free from sinister intention, free from hidden motives and agenda. No guile, no guile within the heart. The heart is perfect and the heart is clear.

Those called perfect in scripture are not revealed as sinlessly perfect, but rather their hearts are sincere with genuine integrity. Do you see why God is searching for this? Do you know there's vast millions across our world that are born again, justified by faith, washed in the blood of the Lamb, saved because of the

finished work of Calvary? They have experienced what God has done for them. But where are those with a perfect heart who have no agenda? Their hearts are pure, without blemish, clean, seeking God.

And so a perfect heart defined by the Bible, there are people who we read of, and we're going to look at here, who have a perfect heart, an undivided heart. They have grown up and are mature. They could be an eight-year-old kid or an 80-year-old woman, and yet they have maturity with God.

They're not making excuses. Listen to me, they're not pulling the Word of God down to their lousy expectation and definition of the Word. How dare any Christian try to reinterpret the gospel to say, oh, yes, I define it like this.

Hey, we're all imperfect. You better be very careful. You know the entire Word of God calls you to maturity, to go onward, upward, to actually look higher, to not be satisfied, to be very dissatisfied, not dissatisfied with Christ, not dissatisfied with being born again, not dissatisfied with communion with Him, but dissatisfied saying, I don't want to stay here.

I know there's more. There's got to be more than this, more of experiencing God than ever I have, more of having a pure heart, a clean heart, an open heart, a heart that is absolutely open wide to God. Don't you long for it this morning? A perfect heart, to have such a heart, not a sinless heart.

I'm not asking, have you failed God? I'm not asking that. I'm not asking, are you sinlessly perfect? I'm asking here this morning, do you have a heart that is either declining, becoming casual, or a heart that is seeking after God? So first of all, we see a perfect heart defined by Scripture. Second of all, the search for a perfect heart in the Old Testament.

Do you know the entire Old Testament is a training manual, 4,000 years of God teaching you. When you go into the Old Testament and you read about kings and the nation of Israel, do you know God allowed that to happen over thousands of years? And we have the stories of the rise and the fall of kings to be a teaching manual for you. When you go into the Old Testament, and I said this often, if I had the opportunity to write a book on leadership in the church, do you know where I'd write it from? I'd go into 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and I would actually produce a book on what a real leader in the church is from just those six books.

Those six books, if you understand them, you'll understand leadership in the church. You'll understand abusive ministry. You'll understand so many things happening worldwide.

If you don't read those books and understand them and learn, you do not know what's going on in the church worldwide. They hold many, many answers. And so when we look at a perfect heart, if you as the church are to understand the perfect heart, you need to go into the Old Testament.

Look at the comparison. When you go to 1 and 2 Kings, it deals with all the kings of Judah and Israel. Israel were the 10 tribes in the north.

Judah are the two tribes in the south. It's the divided kingdom. So 1 and 2 Kings deals with the kings in both kingdoms.

But when you come to 1 and 2 Chronicles, it only deals with the kings of Judah. There is a difference. In fact, 1 and 2 Chronicles goes much deeper in detail than Kings does.

And Kings actually gives an overview of individuals from man's perspective. But when we come to Chronicles, we see these same kings from God's perspective. And when you begin to look at what it says, what these six books say about a perfect heart, you begin to understand.

And in fact, the entire Old Testament, not sinless perfection, but what a heart it is that God is searching for. Not only for Job, for Abraham, Noah, Moses, but listen, for David, the king of Israel, who was the marker of a man with a perfect heart. We read in Deuteronomy chapter 18, 13, Moses speaking to the entire nation of Israel, because you know the call to be a perfect man or woman is given to the entire nation of Israel in the Old Testament and to the church in the New Testament.

All of you in this room are called to be perfect, to have a perfect heart. Do you hate hypocrisy in the church? Have you encountered that? Where you see a man preaching and doing great charity work, but he's a hypocrite. He's laying burdens on you, but he does not believe this or live that.

Don't you want something more? Are you satisfied in the church to encounter people who are hypocrites, duplicit, who lower the standard of the gospel? Doesn't your heart say, surely there's more than this? In the Old Testament, in Deuteronomy 18, thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God. Moses told the entire nation of Israel, thou shalt be, it's a command. Thou shalt be is a vision.

Thou shalt be was for every member of Israel. But listen to what he said about King David. In 1 Chronicles chapter 12 and verse 38, all these men of war, the keep rank, came with the perfect heart to Hebron to make David king over all Israel.

And all the rest also of Israel were of one heart to make David king. This was a unique hour where Saul, King Saul was the king of the nation. Then his son become the king of the nation.

There was corruption. There was hypocrisy. There was deception.

This is ministry that had leadership. They had titles. They were chosen by God.

They had the anointing. They fought the enemies of God. But that leadership was not perfect before God.

God was actually desiring more. And here comes a young man called King David. He was a young man who God had chosen and had sought after.

What does it say when men, soldiers begin to gather to him? It says they came with a perfect heart to Hebron to make David king. Many soldiers, many tribes, many men of war. And they came with a perfect heart.

God's people having a perfect heart. Do you know this church can have a perfect heart? Do you know God's people can unify and come together with a perfect, sincere, genuine heart while all around them is a false gospel? While all around them is division and compromise and hypocrisy in leadership, there can be a movement, a spiritual movement that actually unifies with the perfect heart to make David king over Israel. It says that they were all of one heart to make David king.

Oh, that we had a spiritual movement again that had a perfect heart. Church, we're looking for it. I am sick of the games of religion in the church.

God is actually searching, going, where is there a people? Where is there a church? Where is there a leadership? And I'll unite that people with one perfect heart. It says in 1 Chronicles 29 and nine, then the

people rejoiced for that they offered willingly. I'm defining what a perfect heart is.

The people offered willingly because with perfect heart, they offered willingly to the Lord and to David the king. They also rejoiced with great joy. In this verse, it shows God's people again with a perfect heart offering willingly to the Lord.

They sacrifice to the Lord. They do it abundantly. They're not having to live in a certain way.

See, as soon as you get the condition going, I ought to be a church. I have to do this. Do you realize how lacking your heart is? God is actually looking for a people who say, I willingly do it.

I desire this. Someone doesn't need to beg me to go to church or give to God or offer up sacrifices or to pursue them with my whole heart. If I have to beg you to do the basics of the Christian life, I most certainly know that I'm dealing with children at best.

It's an act of immaturity because where you get a perfect heart, you are wholehearted. You are unique in saying, my whole heart is pursuing after the living God. I seek him with all my intensity.

It says in 1 Chronicles 28 and nine, and this David at the end of his day speaking about Solomon, his son, who's about to become king. And now Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father and serve him with a perfect heart. David is saying to his son, serve God with a perfect heart.

Solomon is a young man about to become king, about to serve in ministry. What does David say? Son, serve the real God. Solomon, have a perfect heart.

And with a willing mind for the Lord, searcheth all hearts and understandeth the imagination of the thoughts. You see, to have a perfect heart, God is searching your imagination, your thoughts, what's going on in your mind. God isn't just looking at the outward.

Oh, I've done this for God. And I'm winning souls for God. And I'm charitable for God.

God is searching the heart. This is a perfect heart. What's your motive? What's your agenda? What's your thoughts? And he goes further and saying, if thou seek him, he'll be fond of thee.

But if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever. It says in 1 Kings chapter 861, Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God to walk in his statutes and to keep his commandments as it is this day. To have a perfect heart is a command.

Since you may have justified not being perfect, you are not allowed in the word of God to settle there saying, well, no one's perfect. There might be the odd person out there. You are commanded to have a sincere heart.

A perfect heart. A heart of sincerity and integrity. A open heart that's sincere and open.

No hidden agenda. If you're there contriving, manipulating, working out, you know what your heart is lacking. You need to deal with that.

To have a perfect heart is a clear command to walk with God. Those who walk with God have a perfect heart towards God. In 1 Chronicles 29 and 19, And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart.

Who gives a perfect heart? It is God himself. You know, if you realize that your heart is transparent and it's open and God is searching it and you're there saying, search me, oh God, and see if there'd be any wicked way. You could be sincere and perfect in heart and yet there's issues God needs to deal with.

As I said, you're not the finished product. You're going there. You're aiming there.

There could be things that you're blind to or ignorant of and yet you're mature at the place you are at. And so scripture shows us that to have a perfect heart is to keep the commandments of God. Oh God, in this church and those listening, will you grant us a perfect heart? It's of your grace and your love and your mercy if any one of us has such a heart.

Because if God can find such a heart, he'll show himself strong. It says in 1 Kings 11 and 4, For it came to pass when Solomon was old that his wife turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was, listen to this, not perfect with the Lord his God as was the heart of David his father.

King David had a perfect heart. King David had a heart after God. With all of these kings we're gonna look at here, David was the standard.

God always said, David had a perfect heart. Did David ever sin? Did David ever fail? Was David sinlessly perfect? And yet the Bible says, he was a perfect man with a perfect heart, a sincere heart, an open heart. I wanna tell you, if you have failed God, it does not nullify having a perfect heart.

But if you're perpetually walking in a low level of obscurity, you know nothing about a perfect heart. You see, David sought to be mature. He didn't excuse anything.

And so he is always the standard. How sad that his son Solomon, who started well, who met with God, who walked with God, who had prayers prayed for him. Oh, give Solomon a heart that is perfect.

He was preached to have a perfect heart. He was taught on how to have a perfect heart. The God of the Bible was revealed to him.

And yet, see as he grew and he got to his middle years and had been walking with God now for decades, we're told that women came into his life and he joined himself to those women. And the Bible then says his heart was not perfect with the Lord, as was David. Do you see how with all these kings, God is looking for a perfect heart.

In 1 Kings chapter 15, we read about Abijam. Listen to what it says about him. And he walked in all of the sins of his father, which he had done before him.

And his heart was not perfect with the Lord, his God, as the heart of David, his father. And so it begins to show you that a heart that walks in all the sins of all the individuals of compromised Christianity is an imperfect heart. It's not searching for God.

It's not dissatisfied with where it was. Or listen, 2 Kings chapter 20, concerning Hezekiah, the king. You remember at the end of his days or near the end of his days, Hezekiah got ill.

And he was told that he's gonna die from this illness. Listen to what happens in verse three. I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.

Hezekiah, when it comes to a point where the Lord says, set your house in order, you're about to die. Your days are numbered. You've come to the point of death.

You're gonna stand on my presence very shortly. Do you know what he begins to pray? Not everyone can pray like Hezekiah. He said, you know that I've walked before you in truth.

You know that, Lord. Imagine praying to God and saying, you know the secrets of man's heart. You've searched me.

I have walked perpetually in the truth. I haven't departed. I haven't one day been walking in truth and the next day living out in error and heresy and deception.

Oh, if Hezekiah can walk there, can you not walk in the truth? Are you not able to walk perpetually day to day in the truth of God? You see, a perfect heart is a heart that walks before God, that walks in the truth. And he goes further defining this. And he says, and has done not which is good in thy sight.

God, you know that I've done what's good in your sight. You know that my heart has walked in truth. You know my heart is perfect.

Can you imagine? He wasn't telling men or prophets or Israel, I'm a perfect man. Have you ever met someone? I've met them and they tried to tell me I'm perfect. I'm perfect.

I met people who said, my wife's wrong. You're wrong. My mommy's wrong.

My children are wrong, but I'm perfect. We actually had one encounter in this church where someone told us that. And we said, are you serious? You don't have any sense.

No, you're never wrong. No. That is someone who is being honest in their own eyes, but certainly not from God's perspective.

Do you realize you can have a heart where you think you're perfect and yet you're not? You're trying to convince men. But you see, Hezekiah could say, I have a perfect heart. You know my heart's been sincere and real.

Can you say that before God this morning? You know, God, that my heart's sincere. I'm real. Not that I'm sinlessly perfect.

Not that I've never failed. But my heart is absolutely genuine. I seek after you.

Do you know in praying, the prophet of God Isaiah turns to him. And God speaks to Isaiah and says, turn again and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people. Thus saith the Lord, the God of David, thy father.

I have heard thy prayer. I have seen thy tears. Behold, I'll heal thee.

Do you know God wants to show Himself strong to the perfect heart. Then in 1 Kings 15, we have King Asa. But the high places were not removed.

Nevertheless, Asa's heart was perfect with the Lord all his days. Asa was a king of Judah. And the Bible said, the Bible, the Holy Spirit says of Asa, his heart was perfect all his days before the Lord.

To have a perfect heart is a heart perfect before God. Do you know what it means? You're very conscious of how God looks at you. You're not so much interested in what man thinks or whether men like you or hate you.

All you care about is, am I right before God? A lot of Christianity is built on outward observation, turning up on a Sunday morning, being there, listening sermons, saying amen. And I believe this, yet it's not from the heart. You are not living your Christianity perfectly, sincerely with transparency, overwhelmed.

God's searching my heart. God sees my heart. I'm doing this for God.

Do you know, you could have two people live out their Christianity outwardly in the same church, in the same place. And they look the same, but God looks at them differently. Because one does it with a certain, sincere, perfect heart.

And so we say that Asa had a perfect heart all of his days. But then in 2 Chronicles 15, 17, it says, but the high places were not taken away from Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was perfect all his days.

How can you be a king who doesn't remove the high places in the nation? And yet your heart is perfect. Do you know, when you look at Asa, he hated idolatry. We are told in Chronicles, he removed idolatry from the entire nation.

He tore down idolatry in his mom's house. And he removed his mom and had her cast out. Why? She set up a statue.

He hated idolatry. What does a perfect heart mean? I hate idolatry. I hate idols.

I hate selfish ambition. I hate self-glory. I hate ministry that's become man-centered.

I hate the church that's become revolving around idolatry of the heart. You know, Asa hated idolatry. And when it says, but the high places were not taken away in Israel, that's the northern kingdom with the 10 tribes.

He was the king of Judah in the south. There's no contradiction. You know, certain people who read different verses and they say, there's a contradiction.

Over here, it says he removed all of the high places. Then over here, it says, oh, he didn't remove the high places. There's a contradiction in the Bible.

No, there isn't. Because here it's talking about Judah. And over here, it's talking about Israel.

Be very careful of those who put a question mark over scripture. Do you know when you love the word of God, you see how it's beautiful and it's practical and it's balanced. You know, Asa was not a sinless man.

You remember at the end of his days, he's the one who doesn't seek the Lord and has a disease in his feet and he dies. He's the one whose heart was lacking at the end of his journey. And yet the Bible said he was a man with a perfect heart all the days of his life.

When you search his life, you see him get angry when the prophet of God comes to him with a message. In fact, see the verse we just read at the beginning, 2 Chronicles 16, 9. Do you know he gets angry when the prophet comes with this message? This message was delivered to King Asa who had a perfect heart.

And yet when he declined, when he began to follow his own thoughts and the flesh and the reason, a prophet comes to Asa and tells him, the eyes of the Lord run to and through throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.

A man who's known to have a perfect heart. As soon as he declines, God says, why don't you come back again? You're getting angry. You're relying on the enemy.

You're not seeking me for healing. You're trusting in the power of man. Don't you know that I'll show myself strong if you come back to me? In 2 Chronicles 16, 9, listen to what it also says.

Herein thou hast done foolishly. Therefore from henceforth thou shall have wars. You know, at times God says to individuals, you're going to have problems in your house, in your home, in your family, in your future, in your workplace, in ministry because of your heart.

You depart from a perfect heart. I would do so much if you only listen to me. Again, Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 19 and 9. And he charged them, the people saying, thus shall you do in the fear of the Lord faithfully with a perfect heart.

Amaziah in 2 Chronicles 25 and 2. And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Here was the king Amaziah, what he did outwardly as a king was right. Do you know you could do everything right, but it's not okay.

Amaziah did what was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart. His heart was not sincere and transparent and clear and wholehearted. Yet he was doing things that were biblically right.

What he did was right. Who he was was not right. Third and finally here, the Christian and a perfect heart.

We've just seen that throughout the kings of Israel, throughout the entire Old Testament. We see a teaching about having a perfect heart. It is defined in the Bible what it means to walk with God, to have a sincere heart, to look into maturity, to want to grow up into completeness in Christ.

And when we come to the New Testament, we see that it is taught by Christ. Paul, Peter, James and John, all of them teach about perfection. Maybe you've read the Bible and you've looked at holiness, but not perfection.

Maybe you have believed that there's no teaching about perfection. Actually, the New Testament has many things to say about perfection. In Matthew chapter 4, reading about the Sermon on the Mount, you remember where he said, They of old in the law say, don't commit adultery.

I say unto you, don't lust. In the law, it says, take vengeance against your enemies. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

Leaves everyone blind under law. But see under grace, he says, love your enemies, pray for them, bless them. As you go through the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus begins to lay out the Christian life.

And he then says, see the Pharisees, your righteousness as a born again Christian. I better exceed the Pharisees in the New Testament in the first century. Do you think you can criticize the Pharisee over his tithing? One for, no, nine, no, nine for me, one for you.

Nine for me, one for you. That's how they tithe, they're scrupulous. They were righteous.

I don't commit adultery. I don't lie. I keep the 10 commandments.

Do you lower Christianity to people? We're under grace. Hey, we're all sinners. Hey, nobody's perfect.

You've just made Christ's words a lie. You know what he said? He said, your righteousness as a born again Christian better be better than the Pharisee of the first century, who was on his way to hell, who was depending on his morality. There is no excuse for lowering Christianity.

Based on what he taught throughout chapter five of Matthew, you see that he leads to, I believe it's verse 44 in it. He says, therefore, after teaching the very last verse of Matthew five, teaching for an entire chapter about the heart, not the outward, I don't commit adultery. Some of you would never commit adultery.

But yet you live perpetually in a state of lusting. Your heart is imperfect and yet you say, I would never commit adultery. Never, never, ever.

I'm not sleeping around. I won't do that. And yet God is looking for a perfect heart.

What does he say? Be ye there, and this Jesus speaking, be ye therefore perfect even as your father, which is in heaven, is perfect. Who is the standard? It is God, your father. He is perfect.

He is sincere. There is no blemish in him. Christ is teaching Christians, be perfect.

Oh, we know that no one is perfect. Would you claim to be perfect? And yet Jesus is teaching, be perfect as your father in heaven is perfect. Do you know the perfect heart stretches towards the highest conceivable standard of holiness? When this is pursued after, I pursue, I am against the thoughts of the mind.

I don't say, but it's only an inward thought. I'm not affecting anyone else. You say, I want a clear heart.

God's eyes are searching my heart. I don't care about the outward. I actually want a heart that God can search and can commune with me.

Jesus also says in Luke chapter 6, 40, the disciple is not above his master, but everyone that is perfect shall be as his master, taught as his master. It says in Matthew 19 in verse two, Jesus speaking to the rich young ruler who came seeking for salvation. Remember what Jesus said? Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasure in heaven and come follow me.

Isn't this what you're after? You want to have treasure in heaven. You want to follow me. Okay, just go sell all that you have.

Just one thing. Oh, I know you keep all the commandments. You're not lying.

You're not committing adultery. Go sell everything. Then come follow me.

You know what he done? He turned around and walked off sad because he didn't want to do that one thing. You see a perfect heart looks like something. Jesus is teaching the church.

You want to follow me? You want a perfect heart? Go sell. You know, some of you, I wonder if the Holy Spirit spoke direct to you right now and only mentioned one thing in your life. I mean, one dominant thing

that your heart is set towards.

I mean, your heart is inclined towards. This is your idol like we mentioned last week. And he says only that one thing.

And he speaks to you and you go, I know God is speaking to me right now in this. Are you going to give it up or walk in it in the next 10 years? And you're wondering why God doesn't show himself mighty or powerful. That is Christ teaching on perfection.

The apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 7 and 1, he says, having there for these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. This condition of perfection is about holiness which you bring forth in your heart. There are promises God gives so that you know what perfection is.

I'm not talking about sinless perfection. I know what your falterings are. I know what mine are.

But you can have a sincere heart, an honest heart, a real heart, a genuine heart that says, Oh God, I seek you. I want to be perfect. I want to be holy.

I want to walk in the fear of God. Paul the apostle teaches to the churches, you've got many promises. Remember the promises, Lord bless me and prosper me.

What about the promises of being pure and holy? I mean promises. I'll clear your heart from every idol. That's a promise you need to lay a hold of.

2 Corinthians 13 and 9. And this also we wish even your perfection. Verse 11. Finally, brethren, farewell.

Be perfect. Be of good comfort. Be of one mind.

Live in peace. And the God of love and peace shall be with you. There's perfection.

Are you seeking after perfection? Are you satisfied with a onward boredom, declining, slacking and off? Can you remember the days when you serve God with your whole heart? That was perfection. Don't you know God convicts you and says, when you serve me with the whole heart, entirely, completely, radically saying, I'm pursuing. I want what God wants.

And you enjoyed the blessing. Yet somehow you lose that. You justify it.

You excuse it. And now you're living in a low plane of morality, but not with the whole heart. Are you really satisfied with that? Don't you know there's a power in the gospel to circumcise your heart? Paul says in Colossians 1, 28, whom we preach, preaching Christ, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom.

Why does Paul do this? That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. You know, with all of you, I want to present all of you perfect in Christ Jesus. That's what all my preaching is about.

That's why I warn you. You know why? That I can present you perfect in Christ Jesus. That's why I teach you.

If all you think I'm here is to fill your head with knowledge, I don't care how much you know. Do you hear me? This is a well-taught church, but I'm not so much interested that you can answer a biblical question on

doctrine. I care about whether you're living this and it's a reality in your heart.

It also says in Colossians 4, 12, Paul taught about Epaphras, who was a servant of Christ. And Paul says to the Colossians, who always labors fervently for you in prayers. Why? What was his goal? Some of us pray and we don't even know what we're praying for.

I can listen to someone's prayer and they pray for a lot of things. I'm going, really, what are they asking God for themselves and for this church? Epaphras knew what he was laboring fervently for. Listen, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

To be perfect is to be complete in the will of God, perfect in the will of God. You see, there's a perfect, you could be saved on your way to heaven and yet you're not perfect in the will of God. God has a plan.

God has a will. And yet you're knowledgeably neglecting that. Or what about 1 Thessalonians 3 and 10? Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see you face to face and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.

So we have perfect faith. I'm praying for you that your faith will actually be perfect. 2 Timothy 3 and 16.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. You know, Paul was looking to raise up leaders who stood perfect before God, serving him thoroughly, able to do all the will of God.

Saints of God, as we go through the New Testament, I can go to scripture after scripture taught about being perfect. In James 1 and verse 4, it talks about let patience have its perfect work in you, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. It says in James 3, verse 2, if you're a man who can control your tongue, then you're a perfect man.

In 1 Peter 5 and 10, it actually says that it is God's will for you to be perfect. In 1 John 2 and 5, it talks about that the love of God be perfected within you, that when God's love is at a mature, complete, sincere place, you are seen as perfect. In 1 John chapter 4 and 12, it says on his love being perfected in us.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in the world. I hear, I'm sorry, there is no, I got to the end of my ink, so it's only partially printed out, excuse my verses. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear.

When you go to the New Testament, you can see faith can be perfect, love can be perfect, works can be perfect, holiness can be perfect. All these different aspects of the Christian life is to go on to maturity, to actual perfection. Don't be satisfied.

And if you want to study this very carefully, go to Philippians chapter 3 as we close, and verse 12. Listen to what Paul says, not as though I, the apostle Paul, had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after. Here's Paul saying, I'm not perfect yet.

I have not attained yet. I am not the finished product yet, but I am following, I am pursuing. If after, if that I may apprehend or lay a hold of that which I am apprehended of Jesus Christ.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth onto those things which are before. I press towards the mark for the prize of the

high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Here's Paul saying, I'm not perfect.

I'm not the finished product. I am following, I am seeking. I'm not satisfied.

I'm complete in Christ. I'm justified in Christ. I'm saved in Christ.

I'm righteous in Christ. But you know what? God has laid a hold of me and saved me for a reason. And I am stretching, seeking, longing.

I forget the past and I'm stretching forward. I am longing after something. Paul, what are you longing after? I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Then he says, let us, the church, therefore, as many as be perfect. Paul now says, there's some of us are perfect. He is perfect.

He says, I haven't reached the destination yet. Yet there's some of us perfect. Be thus minded.

And if anything, you'd be otherwise minded. God shall reveal this unto you. Nevertheless, where to we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule.

Let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me and mark them which walk as we have us. For an example, for many walk of whom I've told you often in the church and now tell you even weeping that they are enemies of the cross.

Paul the apostle lays out the whole vision of this pursuit, this desire. What is a perfect heart? You're stretching after maturity, sincerity to final completion, to growing up into Christ. And it says in Hebrews chapter six, verse one, therefore leaving the principles or the ABCs or the foundations of the doctrine of Christ.

Let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation. Do you realize that the entire Bible speaks about a walk with God? I'm not talking about salvation here this morning. I'm not talking about getting in and being saved by the grace of God.

I'm not talking about making heaven. I'm not talking about escaping hell, but I'm talking about God's will for your life. You see, who wants to stay as a child? You mothers and fathers in here with your children.

Are you satisfied that they stay at three years old or five years old or nine years old? Would you be there saying, I'm quite happy that they haven't learned to talk properly or to function properly. I don't mind that for the next 30 years, I'll buy all their clothes, pay for all their holidays, pay all the bills. Already Ian's mind's going, oh no.

And yet we in the church, there's people who sit with the same problems, the same selfish attitude, the same ruts for 30 years. And I fear and tremble, what a low way to live, that we are children gathering saying, I'm being provided for, I'm being preached to, I'm here in a safe environment, I'm enjoying the church and I believe in all of this. And yet they're not saying, I want to go on to maturity.

The ABCs are there, repentance and faith and judgment and all the rest. But I long to press towards the final destination. And I've sought you as a church, let us rise up and pursue after God.

Let's have a perfect heart, a sincere heart, a genuine heart, a real heart. And I pray this morning, and before we reach our final message next week, oh, that God would make you desperate, that he would make you hungry in your heart, to say, oh God, I don't want to stay where I am. I don't want to make excuses.

I don't want to be stuck in a rut, but I want to set my eyes on Jesus. And I want to trust you to conform me to the image of the son. Let's stand here and pray together.

Saints of God, we need them. Let's pray for that heart. I don't care how impossible it seems.

It doesn't matter if until now, you've been excusing this. You've been justifying a low level of Christian lifestyle. Can you ask right now, will you repent and say, oh God, forgive me for trying to mold the gospel around myself.

I want this perfect goal of conformity to Christ, to be perfect as my heavenly father in heaven is perfect. Not sinless perfection, but that you're sincere and real and genuine, not duplicit, not a liar, not a deceiver, but out of a perfect heart, you say, oh God, I want to walk before you. I want to be conscious of your heart searching me.

Father, we do pray right now in the mighty name of Jesus. We know that the eyes of the Lord are going to and through in the entire earth. We know that you're a God that searches the heart.

And I pray, oh God, this morning, let there be a searching. Lord God, there's very little we can boast in, but oh God, we want a heart that's real, that's genuine, that's honest, that's pure, that's without blemish before you. And my God, we pray that you show yourself courageous, mighty, powerful, that you do miracles and wonders, that you defeat our enemies, that you give us victories over the enemy.

And my God, I pray from the youngest children, will you grant a perfect heart? Will you be gracious, oh God? Will you bless us as a church that we would have one heart and one mind, that we would be perfected in holiness and perfect in love and perfect in faith and perfect in hope and perfect in the fear of God, that we might reverence and worship you in Jesus' mighty name.

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