



Your group matters.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

What schoolteacher had the biggest impact on your life and why?

1. How do Jesus' words to "...be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect" (**Matthew 5:48**) make you feel? How have you processed this command in the past?
2. Most Christ-followers have wilted under the "crushing burden" of what they see as a God-given command to attain perfection, as they disappoint again and again. Share what this did (or is doing) to your relationship with Jesus.
3. "When Jesus says... 'Be clean', the leper becomes clean... 'Be still', the wind and waves obey... 'Be gone', demons go running... 'Lazarus, come out', a dead man starts walking." (Johnson) How does this understanding change your view of "Be perfect?"
4. Read **Matthew 11:28-29** and **2 Corinthians 5:21**. What is Christ's pathway to perfection for you?
5. Why is "repenting of pride" the first step toward receiving the grace of God? What is it about pride that keeps us from trusting Jesus to actually perfect us?

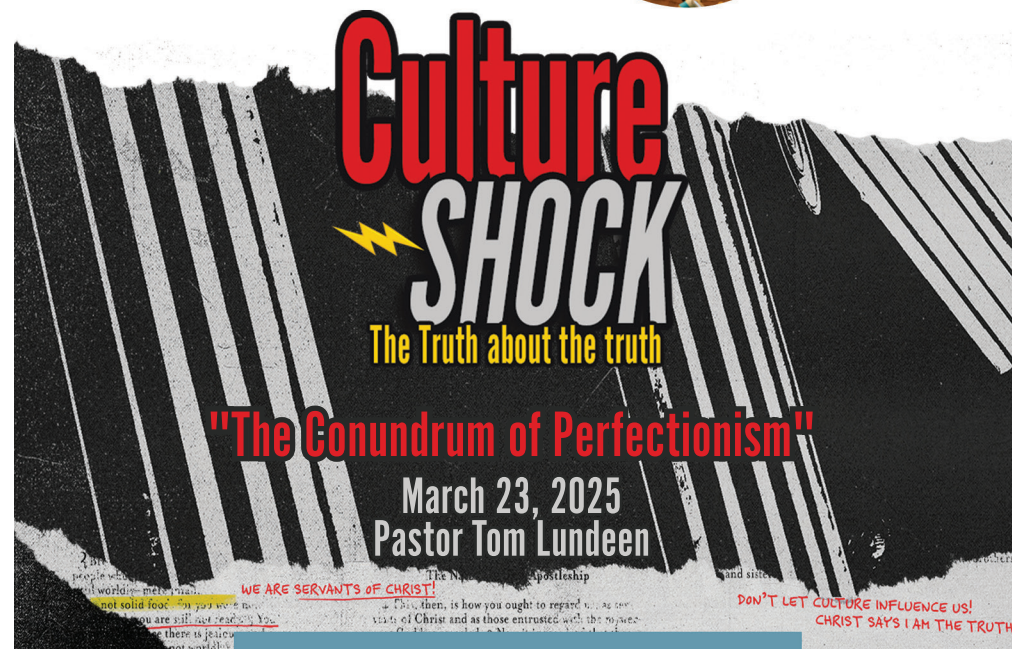
PERSONAL GUIDE

Day One: Matthew 25; Psalm 114
Day Two: Leviticus 24; Proverbs 21
Day Three: 2 Corinthians 4; 1 Kings 10
Day Four: Revelation 6; Jeremiah 48
Day Five: Ecclesiastes 10; Acts 2

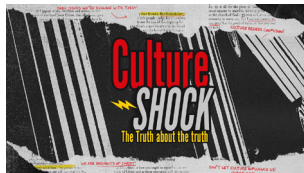
This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.



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MESSAGE NOTES

"The Conundrum of Perfectionism"

March 23, 2025
Pastor Tom Lundeen

...we're exploring a huge reality that is part of our cultural landscape, that is there are many beliefs that _____ like they could be true, but they're not true.

And these *nearly true* beliefs are _____ by all types of people, including Jesus' followers at times.

...for Jesus followers there's a whole other _____ to navigate, and that is there was one perfect person (Jesus); and He just doesn't encourage us to be perfect, He actually _____ it (note **Matthew 5:48**).

How do Jesus' words here cause you to respond?

- You feel the _____ burden of a command that no matter how hard you try, you can never achieve this standard, or...
- I may not be perfect, but I'm at least not as bad as a bunch of those _____ over there.

How do we avoid the negative aspects of perfectionism while at the same time _____ Jesus' command to be perfect?

1. What Did Jesus Mean About Being Perfect?

When Jesus speaks, what He says _____.

So when Jesus says, *Be Perfect*, we can have _____ He's going to do what He's done over and over again.

_____ = *Complete...Mature...Whole*

Note **Romans 3:9-12**

So how do people with spiritually _____ DNA become *perfect*?

2. Perfection Isn't a Reward to _____, but a Promise to Receive

Becoming perfect = the _____ of becoming like Jesus so we can love God and love people like Jesus did.

Note **Matthew 11:28-30**

Note **Matthew 11:29**

In all 4 Gospels, _____ chapters, _____ verses, Matthew 11:29 is the one place Jesus describes His heart = *gentle and humble*.

So the same Jesus who tells us to *be perfect* also _____ us to come to Him and find rest, that He's gentle and humble and His yoke is easy and burden is light.

The pathway to Jesus' plan to help us ultimately to become perfect begins by:

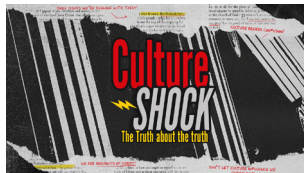
- _____ of pride - pride encourages legalism, and legalism kills genuine spirituality and it always leads to _____.
- _____ His grace (note **Matthew 11:28**) - the process of being made perfect starts with grace, is _____ by grace, and it ends with grace (note **Galatians 3:3; 1 John 3:2**). Receiving grace means admitting weakness and demands _____.
- _____ taking next steps (note **Matthew 11:29**) - Jesus wants us to take next steps, but never _____.

The Truth about the truth:

- Jesus is the only One who has ever lived a perfect life; but through Him we are on His _____ to meet His standard (note **Romans 3:22-24; 2 Corinthians 5:21**).
- What pride do you need to repent of?
- Is humility a missing _____ for you in receiving God's grace?
- What next step is Jesus asking you to partner (_____) with Him?

Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!

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...we're exploring a huge reality that is part of our cultural landscape, that is there are many beliefs that sound like they could be true, but they're not true.

And these *nearly true* beliefs are embraced by all types of people, including Jesus' followers at times.

...for Jesus followers there's a whole other dimension to navigate, and that is there was one perfect person (Jesus); and He just doesn't encourage us to be perfect, He actually commands it (note **Matthew 5:48**).

How do Jesus' words here cause you to respond?

- You feel the crushing burden of a command that no matter how hard you try, you can never achieve this standard, or...
- I may not be perfect, but I'm at least not as bad as a bunch of those idiots over there.

How do we avoid the negative aspects of perfectionism while at the same time embracing Jesus' command to be perfect?

1. What Did Jesus Mean About Being Perfect?

When Jesus speaks, what He says happens.

So when Jesus says, *Be Perfect*, we can have confidence He's going to do what He's done over and over again.

Perfect = Complete...Mature...Whole

Note **Romans 3:9-12**

So how do people with spiritually defective DNA become *perfect*?

2. Perfection Isn't a Reward to Attain, but a Promise to Receive

Becoming perfect = the process of becoming like Jesus so we can love God and love people like Jesus did.

Note **Matthew 11:28-30**

Note **Matthew 11:29**

In all 4 Gospels, 89 chapters, 3,779 verses, Matthew 11:29 is the one place Jesus describes His heart = *gentle and humble*.

So the same Jesus who tells us to *be perfect* also welcomes us to come to Him and find rest, that He's gentle and humble and His yoke is easy and burden is light.

The pathway to Jesus' plan to help us ultimately to become perfect begins by:

- A. Repenting of pride - pride encourages legalism, and legalism kills genuine spirituality and it always leads to shame.
- B. Receive His grace (note **Matthew 11:28**) - the process of being made perfect starts with grace, is fueled by grace, and it ends with grace (note **Galatians 3:3**; **1 John 3:2**). Receiving grace means admitting weakness and demands humility.
- C. Always taking next steps (note **Matthew 11:29**) - Jesus wants us to take next steps, but never alone.

The Truth about the truth:

- Jesus is the only One who has ever lived a perfect life; but through Him we are on His pathway to meet His standard (note **Romans 3:22-24**; **2 Corinthians 5:21**).
- What pride do you need to repent of?
- Is humility a missing piece for you in receiving God's grace?
- What next step is Jesus asking you to partner (yoked) with Him?

Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!

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