

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Series: SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Title: Striving for Perfection
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WARM-UP

Are you a rule follower or do you like to 'bend' the rules? As a child, what family rule did you like to break? What was the result of your breaking the rule? What COVID rules did you struggle with the most? Who has the most speeding tickets in your group? Why do you find it difficult to follow the speed limit?

DISCUSSION

Matthew 5:17 - 48 clearly connects Jesus to Moses. Jesus is the prophet like Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18). This text establishes a clear connection between the Old Testament and the New. Jesus states that he has come to fulfill the law not to abolish it. He opens up a new understanding of the law broadening its application. The law demonstrates our inability to be holy, to be like Jesus. Jesus' final statement in verse 48 is therefore all the more shocking. He calls us to be perfect, mature, conforming to his image. Jesus is inviting us into a relationship with himself, connecting our heart to the heart of God so that out of love we strive to follow him daily.

1. Why do you think Jesus had to clarify his position on the Law?
2. What do you think Jesus had in mind when he stated, "until everything is accomplished." (v18)
3. How can our righteousness surpass that of the Pharisees? What had the Pharisees gotten wrong in their understanding of the Law?
4. How does Jesus' law expand/develop Moses' law? Use the six examples in verses 21-41 to discuss.
5. What point is Jesus making in his exaggerated language in vs, 29 & 30? What is his point?
6. How do the themes in verses 21-47 illustrate what Jesus meant in verses 19 & 20.
7. Verse 48 is the key verse of this section of the Sermon on the Mount? How does this sum up Jesus' teaching in this section of scripture? What do you think Jesus was calling his disciples/us to through this Challenge to be perfect/mature/complete?

Application

Which illustration in particular is the Spirit still working on in your life?
What do these illustrations teach us about our journey of discipleship?