

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Are You Perfect?

(Jerry Fite)

When asked this question, many will say, “Certainly not!” we all have sinned. Yet Noah is characterized as one who “was a righteous man, and perfect in his generations” (Genesis 6:9). How can this be? We know that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 6:23). The problem is not with Scripture, but with our concept of “perfection”. Many think being perfect is being sinless. In reality it points to being “mature” or “complete”.

We can see this point in Hebrews 5:12: “But solid food is for full grown (perfect) men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.” Some Christians had become dull of hearing, and not able to understand the full meaning of Jesus’ priesthood. They were like young children, not able to eat solid food, but only milk. They should have become perfect or mature by now! Therefore, we should be perfect. If we are perfect, then we will have been exercising our senses to discern good and evil.

Being perfect or complete will require that we love our enemies like our heavenly Father does. “*But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for them who persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father, who is in heaven. . . ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*” (Matthew 5:44,48). God blesses his enemies, the evil and unjust with his sunshine and rain as he does the good and the just. So, if we just bless those who treat us well, we have not reached perfection. Perfect or complete people love their enemies and do them good just as the Father in heaven does.

If we are to be perfect, we need to manifest perfect love. John writes, “*there is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love*” (1 John 4:18). As we love others as God loves, and manifest his character in our life, we do not have to fear the judgment. We can face the judgment with boldness, because perfect love casts out fear. We

will have been made perfect through love.

Holiness is a characteristic of God that the perfect manifest in their lives. The Lord’s goal is to present us “*holy and without blemish and unreprouvable before Him*” (Colossians 1:22). Paul’s approach was to “*admonish and teach every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ*” (Colossians 1:28). We are to be “*perfecting holiness*” referencing God, and manifest holiness in all facets of our lives (2 Corinthians 7:1, 2 Pet. 3:11).

Young people, when your friends are looking at movies with filthy language and are dressing immodestly and see you refuse to go along with what they look at or how they dress, they may call you “immature”. Their thought is if you grow up and become mature, you will do what they do. Be strong in the Lord! They have confused “worldly sophistication” for “maturity”. You are the mature one, living a holy life. Keep it up and continue to the end! (Philippians 3:15).