

## **GOD'S STANDARD OF LOVE AND PERFECTION Obtainable or Not?**

The new school year is in full swing, and most of us have settled into a routine, at least the best routine possible! *Do our daily routines include making choices to love others in our workplaces? Are we actively seeking to mature spiritually in our hearts, minds, and behaviors? Are we taking advantage of opportunities to reflect Christ?* It's not always easy given the daily grind of educating children. Let's consider what Jesus has to say about His expectations for us.

Read [Matthew 5:46-47 \(ESV\)](#).

*Jesus set an expectation for how our behavior should differ from those who do not know Him. Describe this expectation in your own words.*

Think of someone in your workplace who is different from you in faith, nationality, or personality. Pray and ask God to reveal how He wants you to express His love toward this person. Commit to following through in obedience.

Read [Matthew 5:48 \(ESV\)](#).

*Why do you think Jesus set this seemingly unobtainable standard? Is it possible to meet this standard? Why or why not?*

Read [Matthew 19:26 \(ESV\)](#).

*How might Jesus's standard of perfection be obtained?*

In Matthew 5:48 the Amplified Bible describes perfection as *growing into spiritual maturity both in mind and character, actively integrating godly values into your daily life*. This type of perfection is unobtainable apart from Christ. Jesus is the only One who has lived a perfect life, and it is through Him that we meet God's standard ([Romans 3:22-24](#), [2 Corinthians 5:21](#)).

As believers, we are called to behave differently from the world. One unmistakable demonstration of God's character is to love those who are different from us. This type of love isn't about warm and fuzzy feelings. God's love (*agape*) seeks the well-being of others, especially those who may go unnoticed. Agape love should even be extended to our enemies. If loving others is a struggle, remind yourself that it's not about your ability to love; rather, it is God's love that is poured out into your heart through the Holy Spirit ([Romans 5:5](#)). Who in your circle of influence needs to experience God's love through you today?

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank You that we don't have to be perfect because Jesus is perfect for us. Cover us in His perfection today. Pour out Your love into our hearts so we can demonstrate Your love to others. Lavish us with Your grace, Lord, so we can continue to grow and become more like Christ. He is our perfect standard. In the precious name of Jesus, amen.*