

LIFE on the RUN

Say YES to
PERFECTNESS

Day 1

When we say that someone is “perfect” for a specific job we aren’t referring to that person’s job performance record of “perfection”, but rather the natural character and personality of the person relative to the task at hand. We surmise that his/her skills, inner values, and personality line up with what’s necessary to do the job, but also to bring both the person and job to a whole new level. Have you ever experienced that type of *lining up* with something? Have you ever witnessed it in someone else? We might believe that this kind of harmony in action is only for a select few, but Jesus calls all of us to this kind of a life.

READ Matthew 5:48. *Perfect...* bringing our hearts and actions in sync with one another and having them lined up with God... becoming a good person from whom good things naturally flow.

Have you ever cut an apple in half to find orange slices where the apple should be? Most of us expect an apple within that apple peel. Jesus expects the same... from the apple... and from us. He wants our outward declarations and actions to match our inward beliefs and desires. Who we say we are should be backed up by our actions. What we do comes directly from what we’ve stored in our hearts. Are you trying to be an apple, but storing oranges in your heart? **PRAY** for self-awareness of who you claim to be and what you’re storing up inside.

Day 2

Can people count on you? When you make a commitment, do you follow through? Or do you find yourself backing out or coming up with excuses to get out of it? Can people trust that you’ll do what you say? Or is it understood that you’ll do it “if you can,” but often other things get in the way?

READ Matthew 5:33-37. When you make commitments to things you value in your heart, you’re more likely to follow through because it’s important to you. However, if you make commitments without following through, something is out of sync. Take time today to examine what you value by examining the things to which you’ve committed, and also what you’ve made sure to follow through. **THINK** about some of the commitments you’ve made and held to. **THINK** about some commitments you’ve made within the last year (or even weeks ago) which you didn’t follow through. **WRITE** all of them down.

Day 3

At Jacob’s Well we value a journey that results in knowing and becoming like Jesus. Our mission is to be a church which leads people “*wherever they are on their journey, to take steps together to know and become like Jesus.*”

We believe these FIVE commitments enable us to accomplish that goal:

WORSHIP, BELONG, GROW, SERVE, SHARE. What unspoken values keep us from being committed to these patterns of behavior?

Can we ever hope to become like Christ without living these commitments?

What do you value in life? **MAKE** a list of things you value. Your family, spouse, God, church, friendship, work, etc. **CONSIDER** writing a personal and/or family mission statement. To get you started, **THINK** about what you desire most for your children’s lives. What do you wish for yourself?

Day 4

LOOK back over the list of values you wrote yesterday. **READ** your personal or family mission statement. Does it capture your desire? These are your *spoken* values. These are the ones we talk about and perhaps “write” on the walls of our homes. All of us maintain *unspoken* values, too. We don’t talk about these, but our lives reveal them by our actions. These *unspoken* values drive our behaviors and often supersede our *spoken* values. For example, with my *spoken* value of friendship I’m committed to “having your back” (*protecting/supporting you*). But when I choose to say nothing when receiving credit for something *you* did, my deep desire for praise supersedes my commitment to friendship. My *unspoken* value to be praised undermines my *spoken* value. When we don’t honor our word and commitment, it could be that we hit against an *unspoken* value. **SPEND** some time praying and meditating on the list of possible *unspoken* values:

control-security-comfort-pleasure-wealth-stuff-winning-being loved and accepted-prestige-image-progress-unrighteous things...

PRAY that God begins to open your eyes and heart to recognize what your *unspoken* values are and how they affect your *spoken* values.

Day 5

READ Galatians 5:22-23. This passage is often called the *Fruit of the Spirit*. This is the fruit (*the result*) of a life that’s in step with the Spirit -- A life which allows God to work within, while lining it up with the things that truly matter... according to God. **TAKE** a look at your life. Do you see any fruit of the Spirit?

A person driven by his/her *unspoken* values makes commitments which create dissonance in his/her mind and heart. It’s a conflicted life filled with busyness, chaos, disappointments, fear, anger, worry, compulsiveness, anxiety, resentment, insecurity and conflict.

Our **VALUES** drive our **COMMITMENTS**, and our **COMMITMENTS** determine our **BEHAVIORS**. What do your behaviors say about your values? **GO** back to the root this week. **TAKE** time to really **EXAMINE** your values -- both *spoken* and *unspoken*.