

An Assembly Striving for **Excellence**

Sunday Bible Hour - 11 November 2012

scope

- 1. *Perfectionism Versus Biblical Excellence*
- 2. *How Do I Pursue Biblical Excellence?*

definition

Biblical Excellence

"A Christian striving to be the best that he or she can in every area of his or her life with the resources given to him or her for the glory of God"

self-search

	Yes	No	Question
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you often avoid trying new things because you do not want others to see that you are not good at those things?
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you usually think you should have done things better?
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you put things off because it will take too much time to do them perfectly?
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you repeatedly re-live mistakes you have made in public?
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you dislike the idea that you may be just "average" in some area of your life?
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you often feel guilty because you do not accomplish the things that you see others doing?
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you feel that you have no purpose in life unless you can make a spectacular performance or contribution in some way?
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you often find faults in other people or in their work?
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do you put off tasks because you do not know exactly how to do them perfectly?

	Yes	No	Question
10			Do you find it hard to believe compliments because you don't meet your own standards?
11			Do you miss out on the joy of living today because you are so busy worrying about whether you will be able to do all the things you are committed to in the future?
12			Do you feel that you won't really be able to get God's special affection until you "shape up" and meet higher standards for prayer, Bible reading, devotions, and witnessing?
13			Do you feel that keeping your appearance and home immaculate is important to keeping the approval of others?

definition

Perfectionism

A form of rigidity or inflexibility that is marked by three major characteristics:

- A. The intense desire to jump in and do things yourself because others just can't do it right;*
- B. The insistent attitude that you wouldn't even start on something if you can't do it well;*
- C. The profound need for closure, indicated by agitation or discomfort should something be left "hanging".*

A perfectionist may display the following characteristics:

- An "all or nothing" attitude
- Success amnesia
- Fear of losing control
- Inability to take criticism
- Tendency to set high standards
- Meticulous
- Frequent procrastination
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Alienation
- Irrational Fear of failure
- Fear of making mistakes
- Measure one's own worth by performance
- Evaluates every body
- Being over critical of others
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Social phobia
- Over emphasizing things
- Self-critical/blaming
- Dislikes being judged by others
- Unwilling to volunteer things
- Overly emotional
- Unable to meet ones expectations
- Unable to deal with criticism
- Persistent negative thoughts

How does a perfectionist develop?

- I. We formulate the ideal standard
 - A. Advertising (*James 2:1 -7; 1 Peter 3:3,4; 1 Tim 6: 6 -11; Jeremiah 9:23,24; Luke 16:15; 2 Corinthians 6:3*)
 - B. Implications of parents, teachers etc on our youth
 - C. Others comments
 - D. Comparison with others (*2 Corinthians 10:12*)
 - E. Our own deduction (*Proverbs 3:5,6*)
- II. We set out to meet this ideal standard to prove to ourselves, others and God that we have worth

What's the difference between a perfectionist and a pursuer of Biblical excellence?

Perfectionist	Pursuer of Biblical Excellence
Sets impossible goals of perfection; must come out as winner	Sets a goal to faithfully give their best effort; leaves the results to God (<i>James 4:13-15</i>)
Motivated to do well by fear of failure	Motivated to do his best by gratitude to God (<i>Romans 12:1</i>)
Meditates on failure or mistakes and discounts successes.	Learns from his mistakes, forgets them, and concentrates on the future (<i>Proverbs 9:8-9</i>)
Takes criticism personally and defends self	Realizes he can improve from criticism and learns from it (<i>Proverbs 9:8-9</i>)
Thinks his value as a persons depends on his performance	Realizes that his value was ascribed to him by God and that they would never ear or lose it (<i>Ephesians 1:6-7</i>)
Views life as a miserable rat race, dreads the future	Looks forward to future challenges, trusting God to help him do well (<i>Proverbs 31:25</i>)
Gets depressed when they fail	Sees past his failure to how God can use it in his life to make him more Christ-like and chooses to "hope in God" (<i>Psalms 42:5,11; Hebrews 12:11; James 1:2-3</i>)
Compares with others, leading to either pride or discouragement	Compares with the standard God has for him as revealed in the Bible (<i>II Corinthians 10:12-13</i>)

How can I be free from perfectionism?

- I. Recognize if we are perfectionistic
- II. Acknowledge the reason why
 - A. Am I a failure? Therefore I am not worth
 - B. That others would disapprove of me
 - C. That God would disapprove of me
 - D. The desire to be in control
- III. Develop an accurate picture of God's love and acceptance of you (*Ephesians 1:6; Matthew 11:28 - 30*)
- IV. Build a relationship with him (*Psalms 23:1 - 6*)
- V. Learn God's way of seeing human acceptance and love (*Proverbs 29:25; Romans 8:31*)

How do I pursue Biblical excellence?

- I. Have the Proper Motives for Excellence
 - A. The _____ of God (*1 Corinthians 10:31*)
 - B. The Principle of _____ the Time, Using our _____ (*Ecclesiastes 9:10; John 9:4*)
 - C. The _____ (*2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12*)
 - D. _____ (*1 Corinthians 3:12 - 15*)
- II. Principles for Pursuing Excellence
 - A. Pursuing excellence is not a quest for superiority, but a quest to be our best
 - B. Pursuing excellence is not limited by the nature of the task, but includes everything we do
 - C. Pursuing excellence is a matter of choosing the best (*Philippians 1:9 - 11*)
 - D. Pursuing excellence is an all-inclusive pursuit (*Ecclesiastes 9:10; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Samuel 10:7*)
 - E. Pursuing excellence is a whole-hearted endeavor (*Ecclesiastes 9:10; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Matthew 23:37-38*)

The pursuit of excellence from a biblical world view is always connected with the issue of God's **values and priorities**. This means the pursuit of excellence must include the elimination of some things even though they may be good and legitimate. **We need to always ask, "are they the best and will they get in the way or hinder the main objectives of a Christian's life based on Biblical principles and values?"** If so, they need to be eliminated. We see this truth in Paul's statement in,

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

Corinthians 10:23

Just because they are legitimate does not mean they should be chosen or pursued.