

Exeter Church of Christ



February 16, 2020

320 East Firebaugh / 592-2909



"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves, and, under a just God, cannot long retain it."

— Abraham Lincoln

February 16, 2020



A BIG THANK YOU to the Pfeifers and their crew who put on a delightful dinner last night -- from hors d'oeuvres to dessert. The fellowship hall was beautifully decorated to suit the occasion and match the meal. Thanks y'all!

ANOTHER THANK YOU: "I want to thank everyone for all the well wishes and cards I received on Sunday, February 9th. I loved reading all the nice things you had to say. Exeter will always be my home church and I will miss you all very much. I will come back and visit when I can. You are all a very special group of loving Christian friends. Thanks again."



— In Christian love, Marcia Searle

ADDED NOTE: Marcia entered Porterville's Sierra View Hospital Friday and expects to be there through the weekend. She has discussed with her mother, Eulene, various options for her care after she is released from the hospital. We will update you when we have additional information. - Ron Hull

THE MEMORIAL SERVICE for Peggy Shackelford will be Saturday, March 7, at 11:00 am in our church facility. There will be a time of sharing food and memories in our fellowship hall afterward.



THE AREA-WIDE singing will be Friday, February 28 at the Blackstone Church of Christ in Tulare. This will be the first singing after a two month winter break. The singing is scheduled to begin at 7:00 pm and refreshments will be served afterward.

Lay Aside the Weight of Perfection

The adage "the perfect is the enemy of the good" has been around a long time. Recently, productivity experts have put a twist on it to emphasize the consequence: "the perfect is the enemy of the done."

We all know the truth in these sayings. All of us at times neglect to do what we can do for fear of not doing it perfectly. Our cultural term for this is "perfectionism."

What Fuels Perfectionism?

What we call perfectionism is not the same as the pursuit of excellence, though sometimes the lines can blur. When we pursue excellence, we're determined to do something as well as possible within a given set of talent, resource, and time limits. But perfectionism is a pride- or fear-based compulsion that either fuels our obsessive fixation on doing something perfectly or paralyzes us from acting at all — both of which often result in the harmful neglect of other necessary or good things.



What's behind our perfectionistic tendencies? We're complex beings, so it's rarely just one thing. In unusual cases, its primary cause is a clinical disorder or spiritual bondage. But as a rule, perfectionism nearly always has its roots in our desire for acceptance and fear of rejection. It can be the garden-variety, pride-fueled, general fear of what people will think of us, or it can be a crippling, conditioned fear of failing instilled into us by an abusive past or present authority figure. And if we're honest, sometimes it's a convenient excuse not to do something hard. In other words, it's not really perfectionism, but indulgence wearing a disguise.

Perfectionism is a common-to-man temptation we all face in our fight against sin. And the wonderful news is that God wants us to live in freedom from its tyrannical rule over us.

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"You Must Be Perfect"

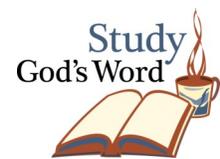
But to understand and believe this, we must first understand something Jesus said that sounds contradictory: "You must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). This sure sounds like a demand for perfection on the face of it. And it is, and therefore it isn't.

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A VIDEO today in our adult Bible study will look at major themes in Hebrews. It's done by N. T. Wright and Michael Bird, New Testament scholars.



TODAY'S Word: "Perfect"



OUR WEDNESDAY night Bible study (7:00) will get into Hebrews, chapter six. (We will have a fish fry for the meal for the first Wednesday night in March. Don't forget to sign up for other months in 2020.)

SWEET!



Mackenzie Shaw sold over \$1000 of Girl Scout cookies. Congrats, and you go girl!

Church of Christ

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Sunday

Bible class 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Wednesday

Bible class 7:00 PM

(continued from inside)

Jesus, in his Sermon on the Mount, made this statement as the impossible culmination of the (fallen) humanly impossible standards of what it means to not sin in anger, lust, divorce, swearing oaths, and retaliation, as well as what it means to love our enemies.

But just before he launches into this “perfection” section of his sermon, Jesus gives us a clue to what he means: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matthew 5:17). Jesus came to perfectly *fulfill* on our behalf God’s demand on us for perfection.

That’s why the New Testament authors write things like, “by a single offering [Jesus] has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10:14). There is the key to what Jesus meant, and the key to our liberation from the tyranny of perfectionism. Because Jesus perfectly lived, died, and rose again for us, he has already purchased our perfection. And God the Father, though not unaware of the remaining sin that contaminates everything we do, sees us as perfectly righteous in Christ.

In God’s eyes, we have been perfected by virtue of being joined to Jesus by faith, which frees us from needing to earn his or anyone else’s approval through perfectionism. We are free to engage *imperfectly* in our sanctifying fight against sin!



- Jon Bloom