

Something We All Battle

“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”
Matthew 5:48

As I was taking my daily walk and praying about the message, I heard the word, “Perfectionism” and then Matthew 5:48 danced before my eyes... When Jesus said, “Be perfect” (Matthew 5:48) He was not pressuring you to perfectionism!

According to Psychology Today, *“For the perfectionist, life is an endless report card on accomplishments or looks. It's a fast and enduring track to unhappiness, and perfectionism is often accompanied by depression and eating disorders. What makes perfectionism so toxic is that while those in its grip desire success, they are most focused on avoiding failure...”*

Perfectionism is a serious problem and it's something we all battle it at some point. There is a level of self-deception working within us that thinks it needs to put forth a better version of ourselves than the real person we know ourselves to be. Perfectionism is a delusion. If a person feels ashamed for making mistakes, it can be difficult to learn from those mistakes and use that knowledge in the future.

If there was a “Perfectionism Anonymous” for Christians, I would probably need to attend regularly! As a recovering perfectionist (who sometimes falls off the wagon), I have to work hard to not fall into the old habits of perfectionism. Perfectionism is rooted in control.

I know many people who feel they must get everything right and continue to strive for this unattainable goal. As a recovering perfectionist I can assure you God does not expect us to be perfect because He knows we cannot. I could stop right here but I am not going to.

We all have flaws and have aspects in our life that need to be improved upon. So tell me, who's in control, the perfectionist or God? Who does a better job? The causes of this emotional disease are complex and vary from person to person. Yet, bottom line behind it is that is unwilling to totally trust God.

Matthew 5:48, speaks of being perfect. However, the Greek word translates ‘perfect’ here to mean ‘complete’.

Our part in this life is called upon to find our completion in Christ. Yet, rather than finding acceptance in Christ, we hope others will approve of us for our accomplishments. Jesus' life was an example for us to live from the resources of the Kingdom of the Heaven so we can mature and grow in our relationship with God.

I have included a short questionnaire at the end of this article on perfectionism to help you see where you fall in the perfectionism areas... You can use this test in helping you overcome the perfectionism areas in your life by acknowledging you have them, paying attention to them in the

future, and surrendering them to the Lord so He can help you. Feel free to save this questionnaire and periodically take it help you overcome it.

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Perfectionism Questionnaire

For each question below answer “yes” if it’s generally true of you and “no” if it’s generally not true of you. (You may want to ask a close family or friend to confirm your answers to be sure you’re being realistic in your self-assessment.)

1. Do you often think that you should’ve done better than you did.
2. Do you tend to put things off if you don’t have the time to do them perfectly.
3. Are you defining yourself based on your performance at work, home, or in relationships?
4. Do you strive to impress others with your best qualities or accomplishments.
5. Do you think less of yourself if you repeat a mistake.
6. Do you strive to maintain control of your emotions so others can’t see.
7. Do you get upset when things don’t go as planned.
8. Are you often disappointed in the quality of other people’s work.
10. Are you concerned that people will think less of you if I fail.
12. Do you become unhappy if anything you do is considered average.
13. Does you get upset if your home and office are not clean or orderly.
14. Do you feel inferior to others who are seem more intelligent, attractive, or successful than you
15. Do you have to look your very best whenever out in public