

Family Values, p. 6

September 19, 2026

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Excellence

September 20, 2026

Perfectionism is doing whatever it takes to acheive a certain standard.

“Perfectionism is a secret campaign to claim power and authority in my own life, apart from you, O God - so let me surrender to your rule and your reign instead. The stress and tension I feel are indicators that I’m not just trying to do my best, I’m trying to be faultless; I’m trying to be my own little god.”

—Prayer for Perfectionists by Ruth Chou Simons

Excellence is offering our best in all that we do for the glory of God.

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

—Jesus, Luke 18:10-14

Excellence is **offering our best...**

- Start with Love

Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices in the truth.

—Paul, 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:6

- Be diligent with what God has given you
- Rely on the Body of Christ

Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

—Paul, 1 Corinthians 12:15-20

Excellence is offering our best **in all that we do...**

- Whether it's public or private

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.”

—Jesus, Luke 16:10

- Whether it's fun or mundane

So take this unremarkable act of necessary service, O Christ, and in your economy let it be multiplied into that greater outworking of worship and of faith, a true investment in the incremental advance of your kingdom across generations. Open my eyes that I might see this act for what it is from the fixed vantage point of eternity, O Lord - how the changing of a diaper might sit upstream of the changing of a heart; how the changing of a heart might sit upstream of the changing of the world. Amen.

—A Liturgy for Changing Diapers, Every Moment Holy

Excellence is offering our best in all that we do **for the glory of God.**

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters

—Paul, Colossians 3:23

Invitation for Pursuing Excellence:

- Give God glory in doing something difficult, draining, or mundane.
- Give God glory in doing something great.

Resource Mentioned in the Sermon: Every Moment Holy

To learn more about the prayer books produced by Every Moment Holy, go to <https://www.everymomentholy.com>

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What is something you're surprisingly picky about or have unusually high standards for?
- Perfectionism asks, "What can I achieve?" while excellence asks, "How can I honor God with what I'm doing?" How does shifting the focus from ourselves to God change the way we approach success, failure, and other people's opinions of us?
- Where do you tend to see perfectionism show up in your own life,

and what do you think might be underneath it—control, fear of failure, approval, comparison, something else?

- What are some ways we can confuse excellence with simply trying harder? Is there an area where you might need to recognize someone else's gifts and invite them to contribute instead of trying to do everything yourself?
- Excellence applies to "all that we do"—including the things nobody sees and the things we don't enjoy. What is one mundane, difficult, or unseen responsibility in your life where your attitude could change if you began viewing it as something you are doing for the Lord?
- Have you ever experienced someone else's excellence in a way that made a meaningful difference in your life? What did they do, and what made it more than simply being "good" at something?
- Which is harder for you: giving your best when nobody is watching, giving your best when you don't enjoy the task, or giving your best when someone else might get the credit? Why?
- Put the two challenges from the sermon into practice: What is one thing you are not looking forward to this week, and what would it look like to intentionally give God glory through it? What is one thing you are good at or excited about, and how could you use that strength to point attention toward God rather than yourself?