

Perfection Versus Excellence¹

Perfection	Excellence
Source of identity is circumstances, experiences	Source of identity is what God says
Sense of hopelessness	Sense of hopefulness
Helpless	Strong
Shameful	Precious and honored
Fear of failure	Freedom from performance
Lack of confidence	Confidence in Christ
Value through what one does	Value through who one is
Gets depressed and gives up when things become difficult or disappointing	Keeps going even when experiencing disappointment
Devastated by failure	Learns from failure
"I should...I ought"	Dependent on God
"I have to do it on my own"	Cries out to the Lord
Reaches for impossible goals	Enjoys meeting high standards that are within reach
Remembers mistakes and dwells on them	Corrects mistakes and then learns from them
Can only live with being "number one"	Happy with being "number two" if best effort has been put forth
"I must do it perfectly"	"I'll do my best"
"I'm a failure at _____." (which leads to discouragement and more flesh effort)	"I failed to _____" (which leads to deeper dependence, challenge)
Hates criticism	Welcomes criticism
Has to obey perfectly to keep high self-esteem	Can fail to obey and still have a good self-image
Requires detailed instructions	Able to make decisions independently
Down-plays and neglects talents and abilities	Uses talents and abilities to serve God

¹ Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 189.

Homework Assignment²

1. Read through the “Perfection Vs. Excellence” Chart and put a check by anything you relate to on the “Perfection” side of the chart.
2. For each thing that you relate to, read, study, and meditate on the Scripture that goes along with the accompanying perspective on the “Excellence” side, choosing from the list below.

Source of identity is from what God says is true vs. in circumstances, experiences:

In Christ you have become “a new person altogether—the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new” 2 Corinthians 5:17, Phillips

“What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people.” Galatians 6:15, NLT

“You have stripped off your old evil nature and all its wicked deeds. In its place you have clothed yourselves with a brand-new nature that is continually being renewed as you learn more and more about Christ, who created this new nature within you.” Colossians 3:9-10, NLT

Sense of hopefulness vs. hopelessness:

“This doesn’t mean, of course, that we have only a hope of future joys—we can be full of joy here and now even in our trials and troubles” Romans 5:3, Phillips

“He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think” Ephesians 3:20, NKJV

“You have been a stronghold to the poor, a stronghold to the needy in his distress” Isaiah 25:4, ESV

Strong vs. helpless:

“I have strength for all things in Christ who empowers me—I am ready for anything and equal to anything through Him Who infuses inner strength into me; I am self-sufficient in Christ’s sufficiency” Philippians 4:13, AMP

“The Christ you have to deal with is not a weak person outside you, but a tremendous power inside you. He was ‘weak’ enough to be crucified, yes, but he lives now by the power of God” 2 Corinthians 13:3-4, Phillips

We have inside us “the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms” Ephesians 1:19-20, NLT

Precious and honored vs. shameful:

“Since you are precious in My sight, since you are honored and I love you” Isaiah 43:4

“For you made us only a little lower than God, and you crowned us with glory and honor. You put us in charge of everything you made, giving us authority over all things” Psalm 8:5-6, NLT

“Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away...O my dove...let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” Song of Solomon 2:10-14, NKJV

Freedom from performance vs. fear of failure:

² Colleen Stortvedt, *On the Road to Freedom* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morill Publishing, 2010), 190-193.

“For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him”
Psalm 103:11, ESV

“Already you are clean” John 13:10, 15:3, ESV

“God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus... wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption” 1 Corinthians 1:30, NLT

Confidence in Christ vs. lack of confidence

“In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” Isaiah 30:15, NKJV

“If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us” 1 John 4:15-16, NIV

“His presence within us is God’s guarantee that he really will give us all that he promised; and the Spirit’s seal upon us means that God has already purchased us and that he guarantees to bring us to himself. This is just one more reason for us to praise our glorious God” Ephesians 1:14, TLB

Value by who one is vs. by what one does

“You are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.” 1 Corinthians 6:16, NKJV

“Whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out his special favor on me.” 1 Corinthians 15:10

“What counts is whether we really have been changed into new and different people.” Galatians 6:15, NLT

Keeps on going even when experiencing disappointment vs. getting depressed, giving up

“As you live this new life, we pray that you will be strengthened from God’s boundless resources, so that you will find yourselves able to pass through any experience and endure it with courage.” Colossians 1:11, Phillips

“God is at work within you, giving you the will and the power to achieve his purpose” Philippians 2:13, Phillips

“strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience” Colossians 1:11, NASB

Learns from failure vs. being devastated by it

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness...when I am weak, then I am strong” 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, NKJV

“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” Psalm 73:26, NIV

“Though I fall, I will rise again. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord himself will be my light” Micah 7:8, NLT

Dependent on God vs. living by “should” and “ought”

“We put no confidence in human effort. Instead, we boast about what Christ Jesus has done for us.” Philippians 3:3, NLT

“I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go”
Isaiah 48:17, NIV

“For the life-giving principles of the Spirit have freed you in Christ Jesus from the control of the principles of sin and death” Romans 8:2, Berkeley

Cries out to the Lord vs. believing must do it on own

“He Himself works in you and accomplishes that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ”
Hebrews 13:21, AMP

“Because of what Christ has done we have become gifts to God that he delights in” Ephesians 1:11, TLB
“Come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it” Hebrews 4:16, NLT

Enjoys meeting high standards that are within reach vs. reaching for impossible goals

“God has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be” Romans 5:2, TLB

“Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God’s right hand in the place of honor and power” Colossians 3:1, NLT

“This is the secret: Christ lives in you, and this is your assurance that you will share in his glory”
Colossians 1:27, NLT

Corrects mistakes and learns from them vs. dwelling on them

“So then there is no condemnation at all for those who are in union with Christ Jesus” Romans 8:1,
Williams

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” Ephesians 1:7, NKJV

“O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask your aid” Psalm
86:5, NLT

Doesn’t have to be “number one”; doing one’s best is enough; “I’ll do my best” vs. “I must do it perfectly

“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,”
Colossians 3:23

“We are justified (acquitted, declared righteous, and given a right standing with God) through faith”
Romans 5:1, AMP

“It is the man who shares my life and whose life I share who proves fruitful” John 15:5, Phillips

“I failed to...” vs. “I’m a failure ...”

“Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there” Galatians 5:24, NLT

“I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.” Isaiah 44:22, NIV

“Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes” Ephesians 1:4, NLT

Welcomes criticism vs. hating it

“Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you” Isaiah 43:1, NLT

“O Lord, you are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask your aid” Psalm 86:5, NLT

“Let the people turn from their wicked deeds. Let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Isaiah 55:7, NLT

Can fail to obey and still have a good self-image vs. having to obey perfectly

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels” Isaiah 61:10, ESV

“We are justified (acquitted, declared righteous, and given a right standing with God) through faith” Romans 5:1, AMP

“If we confess our sins, He is to be depended on, since He is just, to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from every wrong” 1 John 1:9, Williams

Able to make decisions independently vs. requiring detailed instructions

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.” Psalm 32:8

“Look how the Eternal marks me out for favor! The Eternal listens when I call to Him” Psalm 4:3, Moffatt

“God alone made it possible for you to be in Christ Jesus... wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption” 1 Corinthians 1:30, NLT

Uses talents and abilities to serve God vs. downplaying and neglecting them

We have been given the Holy Spirit “that we might realize and comprehend and appreciate the gifts of divine favor and blessing so freely and lavishly bestowed on us by God” 1 Corinthians 2:12, AMP

“God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work” 2 Corinthians 9:8, RSV

“He Himself works in you and accomplishes that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ” Hebrews 13:21, AMP