



The Curse of
PERFECTION

2 Timothy 4 pages 996-997

developing missionaries who share the
love of Christ with our community & beyond

Beyond These Walls

Today we pray for First Baptist Church of Parrish as they seek to reach those in their community who still do not know the Lord.

Choir & Orchestra Open House

Do you love to sing or play an instrument? Come see what we're all about at the Choir and Orchestra Open House on Wednesday, January 17 at 6 pm. For more information, contact Pastor Scott at 941-722-7795.

Brazil Mission Trip

Join Pastor Todd for an informational meeting on Sunday, January 14 at noon under the balcony in the Worship Center to discuss a student ministry sponsored mission trip to Brazil in late June.

AWANA Volunteers

AWANA Volunteers, please join us for a meeting TODAY at Noon in the Fellowship Hall.

Seasonal Parking

We'd like to encourage those who are physically able to park in areas a little further from the church to allow our first time visitors the opportunity to park near the church. Public parking is available in the areas highlighted in yellow.



PalmettoBUILD

PalmettoBUILD needs volunteers for this year's county fair. The PalmettoStation food booth begins a few days before the fair, and the 24-hours-per-day Bible-reading marathon is from 6 pm, Tuesday, January 16 through midnight on Saturday, January 20. For more information contact Kerry at 941-722-7795.

Upcoming Bible Studies

Authentic Manhood-A Man and His Design (Vol 1)

Tuesdays at 6 am beginning Jan 9

Wonder Struck (Ladies)

Wednesdays at 6 pm beginning Jan 17

Thursdays at 9:30 am beginning Jan 18

1 Peter-A Living Hope in Christ

(Young Moms)

Wednesdays at 6 pm beginning Jan 17

Life Lesson from the Gospel of John (all)

Wednesdays at 6 pm beginning Jan 17

Pray Like This (Men)

Sundays at 6 pm beginning Jan 21

The Book of Ephesians (Men)

Thursdays at 6 am beginning Feb 1

Malachi (Ladies)

Wednesdays at 6 pm beginning Mar 14

Thursdays at 9:30 am beginning Mar 15

Check the website for more info, to pay for materials and to sign up for classes:

fbcpalmetto.com/calendar/classes

Next Steps Luncheon

Do you want to know more about FBC's core values, beliefs and mission? Are you ready to take the next step to membership? Join us on Sunday, January 28 at Noon and we will answer your questions about the heart of FBC Palmetto. Lunch is provided and childcare is available with advanced registration. Call the church office at 941-722-7795 to sign up.

Discussion Questions

- What standards do you use to determine success in your: job, home, parenting, relationships, etc.?
- What made you set up these standards?
- How do you respond when you think you've failed?
- Where can you see the idea of perfection stealing joy and happiness?
- Why is perfection even a goal?
- What are projects that don't get done because they can't meet some preconceived standard?

Bible Reading Plans

The 2018 Bible Reading Plan is a new one-year reading plan.

The last week of the 2016-2017 Plan is on the right side of this page.

Both are available on the website at: fbcpalmetto.com/contact/resources

2018 Bible Reading Plan

One Year Bible Reading Plan:

WEEK 2

- Day 6
[Mark 5](#)
[Ps 7](#)
- Day 7
[Mark 6:1-44](#)
[Ps 8](#)
- Day 8
[Mark 6:45-7:23](#)
[Ps 9](#)
- Day 9
[Mark 7:24-8:21](#)
[Ps 10](#)
- Day 10
[Genesis 3:1-4:16](#)
[Ps 11](#)

2016-2017 Bible Reading Plan

OT, NT & Poetry: Week 104

- Monday
 - [Zechariah 6-7](#)
 - [Revelation 19](#)
 - [Proverbs 29:12-27](#)
- Tuesday
 - [Zechariah 8-10](#)
 - [Revelation 20](#)
 - [Proverbs 30:1-14](#)
- Wednesday
 - [Zechariah 11-13](#)
 - [Revelation 21:1-8](#)
 - [Proverbs 30:15-33](#)
- Thursday
 - [Zechariah 14](#)
 - [Revelation 21:9-27](#)
 - [Proverbs 31:1-15](#)
- Friday
 - [Malachi 1-4](#)
 - [Revelation 22](#)
 - [Proverbs 31:16-31](#)

Monday - Perfection's Curse

By Kel Cunard

*"I have fought the good fight,
I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith."
2 Timothy 4:7*

If you are in the market for a new house, do I have a place for you? Nestled on 15 acres in Manvel, Texas, about a half-hour outside of Houston, lies a beautiful home that might be perfect. The home features an indoor pool, nine-car garage, and a spa. There is plenty of room for your family to spread out in its 46 bedrooms and 26 bathrooms. Although, even Mona Miller, the listing agent, is not certain on the room count. "It's probably more like 70 bedrooms. They're not completed, so it's difficult to tell."

It was built in 2001 by a physician and his wife who intended to use part of the home as a surgery rehab center, but abandoned the project before it was ever finished. The pool sits empty, the studs are exposed and the 60,175 square feet are a permanent reminder that the owners never finished what they started.

Our lives are a little like that empty mansion. They are full of rooms we never finished – the projects we didn't complete, the resolutions we quit, and the relationships we gave up on. There were various excuses – I mean reasons – for our quitting, but one prevailing force is the curse of perfection.

The curse of perfection convinces us to quit before we even start. It tells us that if we can't perform flawlessly, why even try? The curse of perfection keeps us on the sidelines and away from the finish line, and the curse of perfection has run our lives for far too long.

In his book, *Finish: Give Yourself the Gift of Done*, author and speaker Jon Acuff states: "The harder you try to be perfect, the less likely you'll accomplish your goals... The first lie that perfectionism tells you about goals: Quit if it isn't perfect." Oddly enough, as followers of Jesus, we are called to be Christ-like, but we aren't judged by our perfection. And the harder we try to be perfect, the more our works-based efforts reveal how little we understand grace. Jesus has already been perfect on our behalf. In His sinless sacrifice, we can rest as we offer Him all our imperfect efforts. Instead of focusing on perfection, we can now focus on obediently finishing well.

This is how the Apostle Paul felt at the end of his life. *Read 2 Timothy 4:6-8*. As you look at your life, are you on a trajectory that will allow you to say, as Paul did, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"?

Tuesday - Perfectionism

By Cathy Slusser

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."

Psalm 90:12

Perfectionism. Ooh boy, did I ever use to struggle with perfectionism. When I was first married, a young mom, a newly employed historian, I just wanted things to be perfect. There were many nights, I sat on our front steps crying because I felt like things were such a mess. That I was a mess. (Of course, it didn't help that I had only eaten donuts and ice cream all day in an effort to make myself feel good. Sugar can be such a downer.) When I finally realized I could not control my husband, or my kids, or my career, or life, I actually felt better.

I am a living example of Anne Lamott's advice: "How to break through perfectionism: Make a LOT of mistakes, fall on your butt more often." Lamott, a writer, knows of which she speaks; she also struggled with perfectionism. Her book, *Bird by Bird*, greatly influenced me as a writer. She notes that writing a novel is simply stringing one word together at a time and that you have to get something on paper before you can edit to make it better. She added "Almost all good writing begins with terrible first efforts. You need to start somewhere." Lamott's advice extends beyond writing. I try to remember this quote when I am struggling with fear of doing something new and failing, "What if you wake up some day, and you're 65 or 75, and you never got your novel or memoir written; or you didn't go swimming in warm pools or oceans because your thighs were jiggly or you had a nice big comfortable tummy; or you were just so strung out on perfectionism and people-pleasing that you forgot to have a big juicy creative life, of imagination and radical silliness and staring off into space like when you were a kid? It's going to break your heart. Don't let this happen."

Moses struggled with perfection, too. He failed a lot. He made decisions based on human knowledge instead of God's miraculous power. His story illustrates what happens when we take matters into our own hands. Yet, Psalm 90 is attributed to Moses and shows that he finally realized following God rescues us from perfectionism. If we keep our eyes on Him and stay on the path He sets before us, we will not fail. That is good news for a perfectionist.

Read Psalm 90. List the examples of God's power in these verses. Reread verse 14. What is the only thing that can satisfy us? Reread verse 17. Why are God's favor and trusting Him to "establish" our work connected? Who is establishing your goals for 2018?

Wednesday - Perfectly Human

By George Volpe

*"You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
Matthew 5:48*

Jesus said we should be "perfect," even as God is perfect. At the outset that seems impossible (read on). But we also might have expectations of our own making that are clearly unreasonable. In the latter case we find ourselves chasing unattainable goals. When faced with those odds, most people stop trying.

There is a difference between being mature in our living as a Christian, so that we are following the example of Christ, and inventing expectations that are unreasonable. We cannot win every contest, have every right answer, or expect that we will have perfect thoughts or intentions every time. Who is without sin? Despite our best efforts, we will always find ourselves to be "human," meaning that we are fallible, earthly, and mistake-prone.

We are not likely able to climb the highest mountain, or win Publisher's Clearing House, or catch the largest fish in the lake. We will not be perfect spouses, perfect parents, perfect children, perfect friends, or perfect employees. We may receive all the accolades in the world for who we are or what we've done, but God knows we are not the model of perfection for the world to follow. Paul wrote: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7) But Paul also regarded himself as the chief of sinners. How do we reconcile these opposing themes?

When Christ found the Apostle Paul, a new birth occurred. The man on his own path to destruction found the true path to life. And that "good fight" meant living a life with new purpose that would require patience and endurance in a world that screams "live your own way, and do it now!" The world has conditioned us so that nothing short of an amazing performance is worth noticing. And the problem is that we have applied this thinking to so much of what we do that we are embarrassed when we are not perfect in everything! And who wants to try when you know you can't do it? So, we just quit and look for something easier.

When we say, "there's always room for improvement" that gives us a little push for all kinds of development. But if we take this statement too far we might interpret the term "personal development" as the pursuit of perfection, beating ourselves up and leaving a lot of collateral damage in our wake. We can use far more patience and endurance. Thriving in the complexities of life is less about how perfect we can be and more about pressing on and patiently enduring the adventure God has for us, even in everyday challenges. *Read [2 Peter 1:1-9](#).*

Thursday - Go Boldly Forward

By Nick Molick

“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, to the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”

2 Timothy 4:5

The end of the year brings the inevitable cornucopia of year end lists, reviewing the events of the year and listing those who have passed away. We would be well served if we did the same type of review in our own lives. What were the big events? What would we want to have done differently? Where were we paralyzed by the striving for perfection rather than completion? All of us can point to events and times of the past year when we got it right, but all too often those are not the things we remember. Often, we will focus on where we fell short, where we didn't get it exactly right, where we missed an opportunity. This negative focus can keep us from being grateful to God for where we did succeed and thankful for the opportunity in this new year to strive to do better. It also helps us to be alright with being less than perfect, knowing that completion is more important than perfection.

In 2 Timothy 4:5-8, Paul implored his ministry partner, Timothy, to keep his head and endure hardships all while doing the work of his ministry. Paul recognized that Timothy was going to run into trouble and things were not always going to go as planned. Dare I say, life for Timothy was not always going to be perfect. The point that Paul drives home is to keep going, finish the race no matter what the circumstances and keep the faith. Keep the faith because that is what we are called to do, to take the Gospel to the corners of the world and make disciples no matter what life throws at us. Paul gives Timothy his own life as an example. Paul reminds Timothy that he is nearing the end, being poured out like a drink offering and he has fought the good fight.

When we review our past year and see both the good and the bad, we need to ask ourselves this: “In all of those varied circumstances, did I keep the faith?” If we can answer in the affirmative, we are set up for success in the coming year. If not, we can rejoice because we can focus on keeping that faith which is a gift of God in all the things life will present us in the coming year. We can review the past year and be thankful for God's sovereignty and grace and know we can go boldly into the new year not focused on perfection, but on keeping the faith “once for all delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3)

What were some times when you found it difficult to keep the faith in the past? How can Paul's encouragement strengthen you for coming year?

Friday – Finish What You Started

By Amy Pilson

*“So now finish doing it as well, so that
your readiness in desiring it may be matched
by your completing it out of what you have.”*

2 Corinthians 8:11

I don't even bother setting goals because I have always defeated myself before I even start! I just know that I am going to fail so why bother starting? – At least this is what I do in many areas of my life; I can't really say that it is in every single area as that would be an exaggeration. It's just that I have failed so many times before that I come to expect it.

This isn't anything new – we all do it. Paul encourages us to press on toward the goal. He talks about having to continue at something – like the athlete who trains. And he even talks about continuing to the finish with giving of our finances. The scripture above comes from that passage. But when God first put that scripture on my heart many years ago, it spoke to me about whatever I started – not just in giving financially. So, it has sorta become one of my favorite motivational phrases. I have even had “Finish what you started” put onto vinyl and have placed it on my laptop as a reminder.

One of the parts of the verse that really hits home is the fact that it talks about the “readiness in desiring it” – Paul got it! He knew that we start out ready to tackle it and have a strong desire to begin and with intentions to finish. But then life happens. Moses comes to mind here. In Exodus 5:22, Moses asks God, “Why did you ever send me?” Even if we are in the middle of God's will, life will happen, and we can get discouraged and want to quit. It would seem that if we were being obedient things would be easy or at least pretty good. Yet while in the garden even Christ dealt with the desire to quit if at all possible.

We are going to have those moments. Things are going to get tough and maybe ugly. It's what we do at that point that counts. We press on. We move forward in spite of how we feel. We keep going even if things aren't perfect and we have questions or doubts. We allow our efforts to finish to bridge the gap when the desire to do so may have abated a little – or a lot. We finish what we started.

Weekend - Keeping Your Head Above Water?

By Kel Cunard

"If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine."

Psalm 50:12

Since the crash of 2008, our nation has walked through some difficult financial times, but there are signs our economy is improving. Unemployment is at its lowest level in 16 years, and the New York Federal Reserve raised its estimate of the U.S. gross domestic product growth for the fourth quarter of 2017 to nearly four percent.

However, there is a troubling trend simmering beneath this apparently smooth surface. According to a recent Harris Poll, eight out ten Americans are living paycheck to paycheck. We just never seem to have enough. The bills continue to come in, April 15 is right around the corner, and payday seems to never come fast enough. We are perpetually strapped. This is not just an individual condition, it is a national crisis. For a nation founded on freedom, we have become a people enslaved to debt.

Over the next three weeks, we are going to explore an essential concept many of us have forgotten: Everything belongs to God and His way is always the best way to manage our resources. Read [Psalm 50:1-15](#) and join us this weekend as we discover how to manage well *for* God since everything is *from* God.

Prepare for Worship

As you prepare your heart for worship on Sunday morning read [Psalm 81](#) and take a moment to evaluate whether you are listening to the voice of the Lord.

Pray for the World

Of the 6.9 trillion people on Earth, 39% are Christian. Aid, development and charity work across the globe escalated through the 1980s and 1990s and continues. Praise God that, more than before, the needs of the most vulnerable and needy are being addressed. Also give thanks for:

- A) A more holistic understanding of evangelical mission within the Church. Ministry that cares for orphans and widows, uplifts the poor, brings liberty to the oppressed and sets captives free reflects the heart of God, the values of the Scriptures and the role of the Church.
- B) Doors to many places and peoples previously closed are open to aid workers, educators, technical tradesmen and virtually any other occupation. Just as significant are the opportunities to present an excellent witness for God's transforming love through practical assistance to those in need.

(Taken from [operation world.org](http://operationworld.org))

Phillip Hamm
Senior
Pastor

Scott Perkins
Music &
Worship

Kel Cunard
Executive &
Education

Todd Poppell
Connections
& Students

Nic Bishop
Encounter Worship
& Creative Arts

Deacons of the Week:

David Peace & Kris Rickly

This Week:

Sunday, Jan 7

12:00 pm Awana Volunteer Meeting

Tuesday, Jan 9

7:00 pm Deacons Meeting

Wednesday, Jan 10

5:00 pm Family Supper:

Hamburgers/Hot Dogs

7:00 pm GO Team Meeting

7:30 pm Carpenters for Christ Meeting

Upcoming Events:

Jan 14: Brazil Mission Trip Meeting

Jan 16: SonShiners Luncheon

Jan 17: Choir & Orchestra Open House

Jan 28: Next Steps Luncheon

Feb 6: Deacons Meeting

Feb 10: SERVE Saturday

Children's Volunteers

Week 2: January 14

Preschool Worship: Mary Case, Jake & Leann Durrance (o), Diane Greco, Makenna Kesten, Katie LaBarr, Bobby & Amy Manning, Emily Nickerson, Anna Pavon, Tom & Wendy Roland, Annabelle Rosenthal, MaryLe Sands, Sarah Skipper (e), Chrissy Sullivan, Kathy Taylor

Bed Babies: Gloria Carmen, Trish Graham, Kim Harrison, Dallas Rosenthal

Kid's Worship: Jeremy & Sheila Evans

Weekly at FBC

Sundays:

8:00 am Bible Studies

8:00 am Library Opens

8:30 am Worship Rehearsal

9:00 am Coffee Fellowship in F.H.

9:15 am Celebration Service

9:15 am Encounter Service

9:15 am Bible Studies

10:45 am Celebration Service

10:45 am Bible Studies

10:45 am Preschool Worship (3 & 4 yrs)

10:45 am Kids Worship (K-5)

6:00 pm High School Youth

Monday-Friday:

7:30 am WEE World

8:30 am Church Office

2:30 pm King's Kids

Wednesdays:

3:00 pm Puppet Rehearsal

4:00 pm Library Opens

5:00 pm Family Supper

6:00 pm Prayer Meeting

6:00 pm AWANA Clubs

6:00 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal

6:15 pm Middle School Youth

7:00 pm Orchestra Rehearsal

Thursdays:

6:30 pm Encounter Band Rehearsal


encounter
service
Sundays at
9:15 am


celebration
service
Sundays at
9:15 & 10:45 am

8 am

Remembrance (50+) - Room 131
Teacher: Elmer Hilker



Grace (40+) - Room 129
Teachers: Buck & Vera Jo Strickland

Gems (50+) - Room 131

Teacher: Ed Johnson

Fellowship (60+) - Room 133

Teacher: Don Burdick

Love (Ladies) - Conference Room A

Teacher: Donna Koens

Heart Seekers (Ladies 40+) - Room 226

Teacher: Mary Reeder



Students (Grades 6-12)

6th Grade ~ The Upper Room

7th-12th Grades ~ The Upper Room

College & Career (18-20) - Room 214

Teachers: Martin & Lydia Armstrong

Young Adults - Rooms 227-228

Teacher: Jim Price & Jack McClure

Truth & Hope - Room 131

Teacher: Nick Molick

Sojourners - Room 129

Teacher: Vernon Williams

Families of Faith - Conference Room A

Teachers: Nic & Heather Bishop

Endurance (50+) - Room 133

Teacher: David Keener

Amigos de Fe - Conference Room B

Teachers: Jacob Macias & Paul Collier

9:15 am

10:45 am



Bible Studies