

# OVERCOMING Perfectionistic Attitudes in Christian Life



Please grab/dl a handout & get 2 index cards

**AMY TUNG** 

## DISCUSS

- Introduce yourself (Name, Class, Ministry)
- Choose one:
  - Why you signed up for this class?
  - Story that captures a picture of your perfectionism

#### **Outline**



Understanding the Problem



Tools to help change our mindset



Hands-On Exercise for personal application

### IS PERFECTIONISM ALL THAT BAD?

Appears GOOD & COMMENDABLE

BUT...

- Can harm relationships
- Drive us far from the gospel

## IS PERFECTIONISM ALL THAT BAD?

#### **Some Manifestations**

- "I can't relax until everything is done perfectly."
- "I must always be productive."
- "I should have done better."
- "I could have done more."
- "I'm so stupid for making that mistake."
- "I can't trust others to meet my standards."
- "I can't believe they made that mistake."

## IS PERFECTIONISM ALL THAT BAD?

- **P** Pressure & stress
- **E** Excessive Anxiety
- **R** Relationship Strain
- F Fear of Failure
- **E** Emotional Toll
- C Control Freak Tendencies
- **T** Time & Energy Drain
- I Inflexible Standards
- O Overemphasis on Results
- N Negative Health effects

## Research links perfectionism with...



#### Shafran and Mansell (2001)

...increased conflict, reduced relationship satisfaction.



#### Stoeber and Otto (2006)

...lower levels of life satisfaction and wellbeing.



#### Mackinnon et al. (2012)

...interpersonal problems, difficulty in forming and maintaining close relationships.





#### Hill et al. (2015)

...self-criticism, burnout, impaired well-being in individuals



#### Limburg et al. (2017)

...anxiety, depression, and stress



## **LUKE 10:38-42**



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# Perfectionism

harms relationships through anger & resentment

## **LUKE 10:38-42**

### **LUKE 10:38-42**

## Perfectionism skews your judgment

## **LUKE 10:38-42**

### **LUKE 10:41-42**

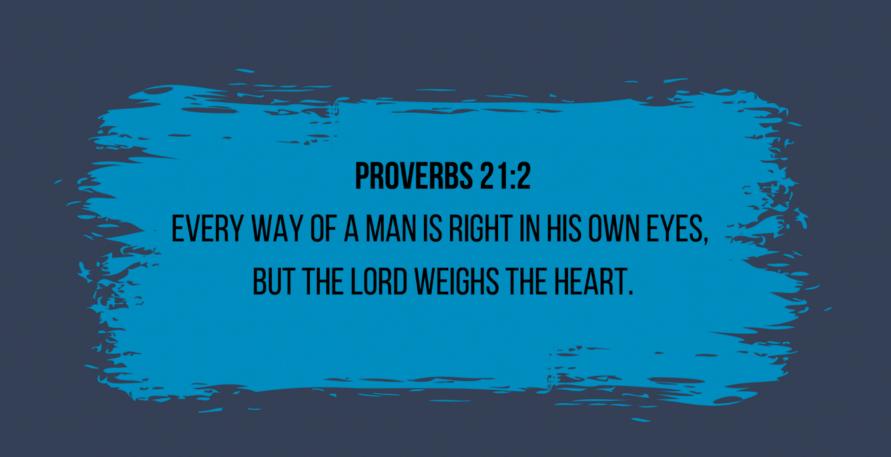
41 But the Lord answered her,
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and troubled about many things,
42 but one thing is necessary.
Mary has chosen the good
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## Jesus' Response

- This is self-imposed
- I don't need you to do this
- The problem is not the hard work; it's the resentment





**Embrace** 

G.R.A.C.E.

to

overcome

perfectionism

G God's Grace

Rooted & Rejoicing in the Right Things

Accept Your Imperfections W/ Humility

C Christ-Centered Focus

**E** Engage with God

Embrace the grace of God, recognizing that worth and salvation are gifts from Him, not earned by perfection.

## EXERCISE: READ & DISCUSS

Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God Rom 5:8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us

**2 Cor 12:9** But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

> Based on passages, what can we infer about God's perspective on trying to be perfect?

Sin & Relationship > GRACE

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Competency & Adequacy > <del>CRACE</del>

Sin & Relationship > GRACE

Competency & Adequacy > GRACE

## Ephesians 2:8-9:

For by grace you have been saved through faith...not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Sin & Relationship > GRACE

Competency & Adequacy > GRACE

#### 2 Corinthians 3:5

Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God

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## R- ROOTED & REJOICING IN THE RIGHT THINGS

Find joy not in our accomplishments, but in the grand truths of the gospel and our identity as a beloved child of God.

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## R-ROOTED & REJOICING IN THE RIGHT THINGS

#### Luke 10:1-20

Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-Two

## R- ROOTED & REJOICING IN THE RIGHT THINGS

#### **Luke 10:20**

20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

## R- ROOTED & REJOICING IN THE RIGHT THINGS

#### Luke 10:17-20

120 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but **REJOICE THAT YOUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN."** 

## EXERCISE:

Write a prayer claiming the truths about your identity in Christ. Thank God that your worth and value are rooted in these truths as His precious child, rather than on your accomplishments or competency.

**Romans 5:8:** "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Galatians 4:6-7: "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God."

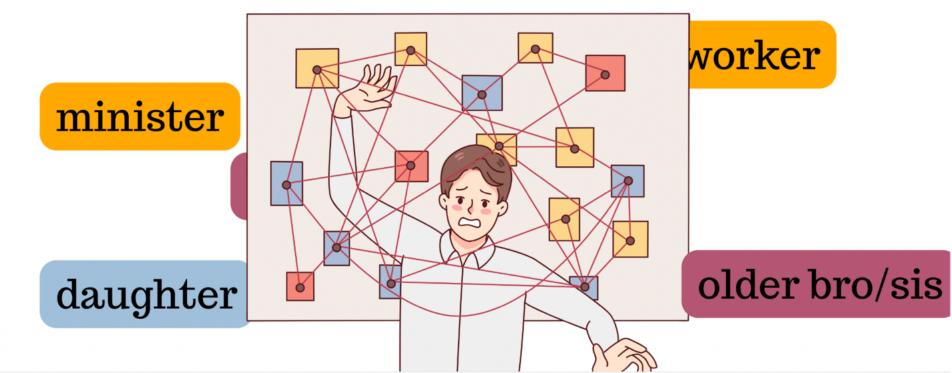
**Titus 3:5**: "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit."

1 John 3:1: "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

Embrace humility as you accept your imperfections and recognize that God's power is made perfect in your weakness.

## A - ACCEPT YOUR IMPERFECTIONS W/ HUMILITY If I were a better friend worker minister son roommate older bro/sis planner daughter

## If I were a better \_\_\_\_\_



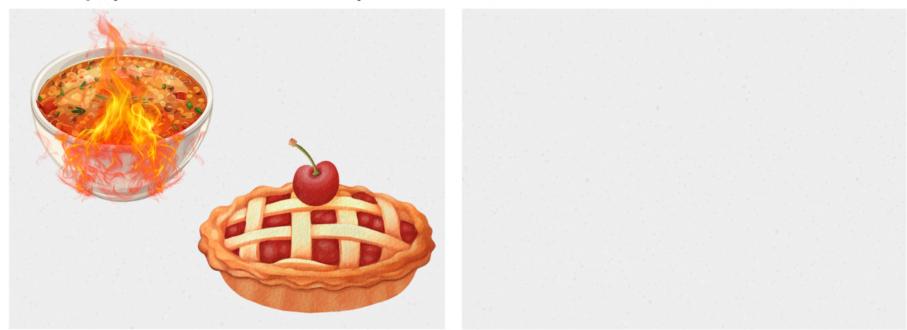
If I were a better \_\_\_\_\_\_, BUT I'M NOT!

#### **Habakkuk 3:17-19**

17 Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. 19 GOD, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places.

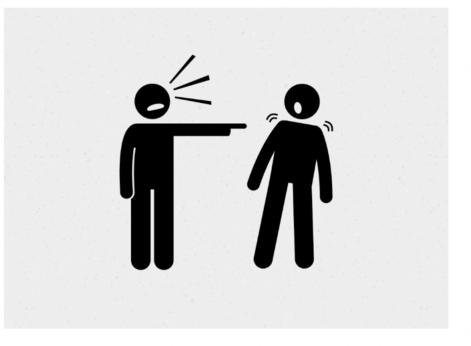
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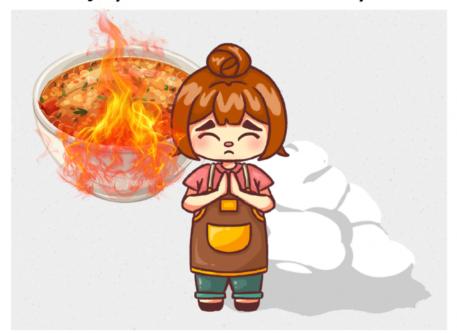


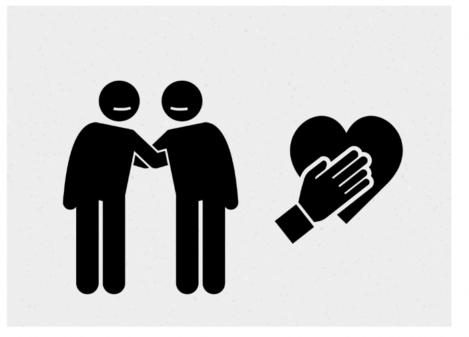




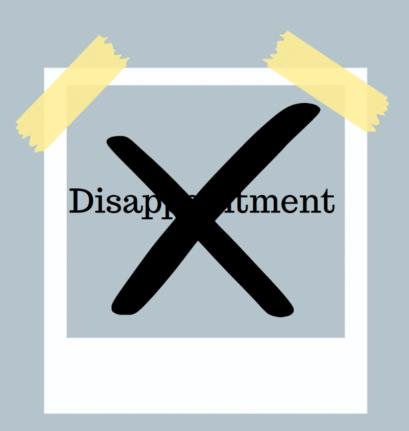








## A - ACCEPT YOUR IMPERFECTIONS W/ HUMILITY Disappointment



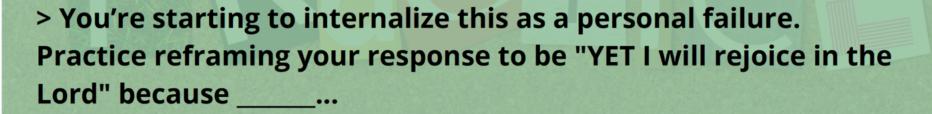


Opportunity to take joy in the God of my salvation!

### PRACTICE:

### Scenario:

- Moving into the dorms Senior Year
- At end of the year: complaints, might not come to Bible Study





### nothing is a waste IF WE'RE DOING IT UNTO THE LORD

### C - CHRIST-CENTERED FOCUS

Focus on pleasing Christ rather than meeting human or self-imposed standards

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### 2 Corinthians 5:9

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### Perfectionism sourced in...

- self-imposed notions
- fears

### PRACTICE:



### PRACTICE:

### **Discuss:**

- > What are some of the self-imposed notions?
- > What would be a Christ-centered focus?
- > How does a Christ-centered focus change your perspective on the situation?











Make room to hear from God, seeking His guidance and wisdom in all aspects of your life.

### **1 Samuel 3:9**

"Speak, LORD, for your servant hears."



### efficacious and awesome



- disdain people
- get proud
- pressure to keep it up for next time
- think it's about your performance



- get down on yourself
- angry
- resentful people don't appreciate your efforts



### efficacious and awesome





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### Only one thing is needed!

? QUESTION:

In our "much serving", what gets pushed out?

1 CORINTHIANS 13

If I don't have love, I am nothing.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:2



## Hands-On Exercise for personal application



### Back of card | LEFT Side:

### What truth needs to take root? [try to capture it in a memorable phrase]

- I'm a beloved daughter of God
- My righteousness doesn't come
   from \_\_\_\_ but BEING a child of God
- Jesus loves me this i know, for the Bible tells me so

### Back of card | RIGHT Side:

1 verse you can cling to

& recite as you feel these emotions creeping in



- 1 takeway
- Verse and/or mantra that you will go back to

### **overcoming** perfectionistic attitudes in Christian Life



by embracing

### God's Grace

Embrace the grace of God, recognizing that worth and salvation are gifts from Him, not earned by perfection.

Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace you have been saved through faith...not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

### Rooted & Rejoicing in the Right Things

Find joy not in your accomplishments, but in the grand truths of the gospel and your identity as a beloved child of God.

Luke 10:20 "Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

### Accept Your Imperfections W/ Humility

Embrace humility as you accept your imperfections and recognize that God's power is made perfect in your weakness.

2 Corinthians 12:9 "But he said to me. 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

### **Christ-Centered Focus**

Focus on pleasing Christ rather than meeting human or self-imposed standards

Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."

### **Engage with God**

Make room to hear from God, seeking 1 Samuel 3:9 'Speak, LORD, for your His guidance and wisdom in all aspects of your life.

servant hears."