

Imperfect Discipleship

(Ephesians 4:15)

- Introduction:
1. I generally do not put much stock in bumper sticker theology, but some of them do have a ring of truth.
 - a. "Christian's Aren't Perfect – Just Forgiven."
 - b. "Be patient, God isn't through with me."
 - c. "Caution, Christian under construction."
 2. The message? We're all imperfect disciples.
 3. The word disciple means learner and implies a level of maturity less than that possessed by the master or the one from whom we're learning.
 4. Imperfection can however leave us discouraged, but there is hope.

I Imperfect Performance

- A. (Mark 9:14-18).
- B. Not only were the disciples having to deal with their own failure, but the scribes and capitalized on it as well.
- C. Step back and look at what has happened.
 1. They had many successes.
 2. They had one failure.
- D. But notice, Jesus came to their rescue.
- E. We often struggle with our own imperfect performance and with those who won't let us forget them.
- F. However, rather than receiving a stinging rebuke, they received instruction that they may grow.

II Imperfect Faith

- A. (Mark 9:19-27).
- B. The father of the boy freely admitted his imperfect faith.
- C. Faith and doubt are not mutually exclusive.
 1. This belief can cause a honest man with doubts from embracing faith.
 2. This belief can also cause a believer with doubts to lose their faith.
- D. An ounce of doubt need not destroy a ton of faith.
- E. Stand with God in times of doubt, seek Him, and remain in a relationship with Him.

III Imperfect Knowledge

- A. (Mark 9:28-32).
- B. "Disciple" means learner and implies an imperfect knowledge.
- C. It is alright to "not know" some things if you are actively seeking "to know."
- D. We are to grow in knowledge (2 Peter 2:18; 2:2).

- Conclusion:
1. All of us are imperfect — the good news is that Jesus made provision for our imperfections.
 2. It's not all about where you are on the ladder of spiritual maturity, but what direction are you heading.