

Proficiency through Practice

Howell Ferguson

Rita Emmett, the author of *The Procrastinator's Handbook*, wrote, "*The person who never makes a mistake probably isn't doing anything.*" There is so much truth to that statement. Maybe you know someone who is afraid to venture out with some new idea, try some new thing, or begin some new occupation because of the "*unknown.*" Or, perhaps he's afraid because he knows he won't do everything perfectly right away.

Our problem is we see examples of proficiency all around us and we immediately feel we just don't measure up to their level of skill and experience. Let me give a personal example. Almost two months ago I went trout fishing in south central Missouri with four men from the North Jackson congregation. These men were all pros. For example, I would have to say one of our elders, Gary Martin, is the most accomplished fly-fisherman I have ever seen. Watching him work that fly-rod is like watching a video ordered out of a *Field & Stream* magazine. You can't imagine how intimidating I felt thrashing around in the water while the only sound coming from Gary was the "*whip*" sound of his fly-rod and the following splashing sound of a trout trying to shake-off Gary's hook.

Nevertheless, I did manage to catch some trout. Everyday we see such examples of accomplished practitioners and feel that we somehow must measure up right away or we think we'll always be failures. But it's much more productive if we'll simply learn to recognize and accept the fact that a person must practice over and over again in order to master anything worthwhile. No one starts out with accomplished excellence; we all begin as novices. Only through practicing our craft over and over do we reach a point of proficiency. And we never reach a point of perfection.

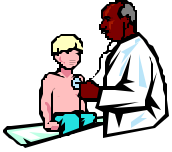
The apostle Paul wrote on this subject: "*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 3:12-14).

There are obviously many applications of this principle, but I can think of no better application than the Christian life. We all begin our Christian walk as "*newborn babes*" (1 Pet. 2:2). Sadly, many people never leave that level of spiritual immaturity (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1, 2; Heb. 5:12-14) because they settle in their salvation no sooner than the settling of the waters of the baptism.

The general rule for strength is "*burn fat, build muscle.*" As Christians, we all need to burn the baby fat of complacency and mediocrity, and build the muscle of spiritual strength by exercising ourselves more in godly service. Start today by finding some act of goodness you can do for someone. Begin today to make Bible reading and prayer a part of your daily routine—but let it never become routine. Choose to work toward proficiency rather than perfection!

Continue to remember in prayer:

Sick Margaret Kratz, Miriam Majors, Betty Jenkins, Jim Dorsett, E.V. Wimmer, Martha Keith, WJ Wood, Jonnie Charles, Mary Rose Michael, Milton Webster, Al Furrow, Lyn Anderson, Marguerite Charles, Jo Musgrove



- Velda Gearhart had knee replacement surgery last week.
- Jack Cook will be having surgery on his hand next week.
- Ron White has been having some medical problems recently.
- Wayne Waller from the Rural Retreat congregation has been ill recently.
- Jack McGrady, friend of Miles Quesenberry, has terminal cancer.



Happy Birthday this week to:
Martha Keith—10/16

Happy Anniversary this week to :
Charles & Hazel Maness—10/15
Glenn & Sandra Neighbors—10/18



Military

Upcoming Events:



Team 1 (Durham) will have a brief meeting in the Fellowship Room after services TONIGHT to discuss their "Feed the Preacher" plans.

Team 2 (Garby) will be having a Chili Supper at Charlie & Hazel Maness' on Oct. 24 at 5 pm. Sign up sheet on the board!

Gospel Meeting and Feed the Preacher meals will be taking place later this month so keep your evenings free to enjoy fellowshiping with others!!



Teens

October Dates

Teen Bible Study—10/18
Gospel Meeting—10/25-28

Big Thanks to all who opened their homes for the Progressive Dinner last night!

WOW

The next WOW meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, at 10:30. Make plans to be here if possible!

On October 18 everyone is invited to join the WOW group at Harbor Inn. Sign up sheet is located on the board.

Upcoming **Gospel Meetings** and **Ladies Days**: (check the board for specific details)

- Lake Drive – Glenn Colley – 10/11-15 – 7:30pm
- Fort Chiswell – various speakers – 10/11-14 – 7:30pm
- Lexington – Betty Bender – 10/17 – 9am-2pm
- Cold Harbor Lectures – various speakers – 11/5-8 – 9am
- Rocky Mount – Cindy Guy – 11/7

For Your Information

Weekly Reminders

GOSPEL MEETING

Our Fall Gospel Meeting will be later this month with BJ Clarke. There are addressed postcards and mailing labels available in the foyer to send him a note of encouragement. Also available are flyers to pass out to your friends and neighbors and the latest copy of H2H.

WEDDING SHOWER

There will be a Wedding Shower for Becky Cooke today at 4:00. She is registered at Macy's, Target, and on-line at Crate 'n Barrel.

DISCOVERY CLUB MEETING

Discovery Club Meeting today at 4:00 in the large classroom. Theme for October is Digging Up Facts About Our Amazing Planet – God's design of high peaks and underground treasures (Field Trip to Mill Mountain or Dixie Caverns TBD).

AREA WIDE PREACHERS MEETING

The Area Wide Preacher's meeting is scheduled for October 13 at the Radford Congregation. Guest Speaker: Glenn Colley.

TEACHERS WORKSHOP

Primary Bible Teachers Workshop will be held on Saturday, Oct. 17 9 AM– 3PM. **Also** the ladies will need help on Friday morning, 10/16, at 9AM to unload all of the material for the workshop. See Danny.

WEST SIDE GOLF TOURNAMENT

The annual Men's Golf Tournament will be taking place on October 24. Sign up on the board if you are interested and see Jeff with any questions.

FLU SEASON

Please remember to make use of the several bottles of Hand Sanitizer and boxes of tissues that are located around the building to lessen the spread of viruses!!

MARRIAGE RETREAT

The Great Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat is scheduled for February 17-20, 2010 at the Pigeon Forge Holiday Inn Conference Center. Guest Speakers include Phillip Hines of Hartselle, AL and David Shannon of Mt. Juliet, TN. Details are on the board and make your reservations soon!!!

Prayer list:

Marguerite Charles
Lyn Anderson
Martha Keith
Miriam Majors
Betty Jenkins
WJ Wood
Margaret Kratz
Jonnie Charles
Jim Dorsett
E.V. Wimmer
Sandra Wood
Rebekah Richey
Charlie Puckett
Marie Campbell
Mary Rose Michael
Jo Musgrove
Velda Gearhart
Al Furrow
Jack Cook
Ron White, Wayne Waller
Jack McGrady

Activities:

Wedding shower—10/11
Discovery club—10/11
Team 1 meeting—10/11
Area wide Preachers Meeting—10/13
WOW Group Meeting 10/13
Teachers Workshop—10/17
Harbor Inn/Wow Lunch—10/18
TBS—10/18

This week's ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

Emphasis: Evangelism

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Announcements	Fred Altizer
Song Leader (AM)	Eric Earnhart
Opening Prayer (AM)	
10/4	Charlie Gwaltney
10/11	John Black
10/18	Don Petit
10/25	Wayne Dixon
Preside at Communion	Danny Guard
Serve Table	Jeff Reed Sam Valentine AC Janney Marc Laplante
Closing Prayer	
10/4	Collin Gregory
10/11	Mark Brooks
10/18	Charlie Maness
10/25	Greg Edwards
Song Leader (PM)	Jason Oldham
Opening Prayer (PM)	
10/4	Jim Harrington
10/11	Josh Whitlow
10/18	Cameron Brown
10/25	Jeff Durham
Scripture Reader	Bradford Durham
Closing Prayer (PM)	
10/4	Paul Mays
10/11	Eric Earnhart
10/18	Glen Hartman
10/25	Adam House
Serve Table (PM)	Nathan Pelfrey Garrett Durham
Song Leader (Wed)	Bob Garby
Prayer (Wed)	
10/7	Mitch Jearls
10/14	Bob Martin
10/21	Jim Bush
10/28	Gene Benefield
Open/Close Bldg Greeters	Squeaky Valentine Pettit/Peverall
Nursery Attend	Sandy Garby Jennifer Laplante
Ushers	Herb Baker Curtis Oakes
Handouts	Mark Brooks Jeff Guilliams

Prepare communion

Rebecca Durham Karen Munsey

Cards & Pencils

Austin Whitlow Noah Laplante

Last weeks attendance 10/4&7/09

Bible Class— 144 Worship Service—161
 Sunday Eve.— 115 Wednesday Eve.—136
 Contribution—\$7451

Two weeks from today our fall gospel meeting will begin. Our brother B.J. Clarke will be with us to proclaim Christ's unsearchable riches. B.J. is one of the most outstanding gospel preachers of our day. He is a humble servant of God, always willing to do what he can. His humility of mind, however, does not translate into weakness in the pulpit. He is a dynamic proclaimer of truth, and you will be blessed by hearing him preach.

Have you made plans to be here for each service of this meeting effort? What could possibly be more important to a member at West Side during this week? We often use the excuse in our day that "it sure is a busy time of year." Certainly it is busy. But what time of year isn't anymore? If we are going to use the excuse that "we are just so busy," we better be prepared for the consequences of our decisions. Jesus instructed us to seek the kingdom of God first in our lives (Mt. 6:33). How shall we face Him on the day of judgment with the flimsy excuse of "life was just so busy for us?" If we are too busy to see to it that our spiritual needs are met, we are simply too busy.

Have you begun inviting people to attend the meeting? Flyers and extra copies of *House to House, Heart to Heart* are available for this very purpose. Family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, classmates- all are rich fields for prospects. It is up to us to see to it that they have an invitation to attend and hear these great messages. More will say "no" than will say "yes;" but, there are some who will attend if given the chance. Will you do your part in extending the invitation to them?

Have you encouraged others at West Side to make sure they will be here? Some among us have not been attending regular worship services as they should. Are we guilty of missing them and then not saying anything encouraging to them about their unfaithfulness? Our meeting serves as a great opportunity to encourage those who have been negligent in their duties. Let's all do our part in encouraging the weak, especially during this concentrated effort.

If each of us does his part by making sure he is going to be here for each service himself, inviting others to attend and encouraging the weak, what a great meeting this will be. Can we count on you?

-Eddy