



For your encouragement

How to have a perfect life

One of the common storylines in our world, I do not necessarily mean a movie type storyline but the unsaid assumptions which provide the scripts for us to follow in everyday life, is that we can craft a perfect life. We see this informing our thinking and pushing us towards different activities and hopes in many ways, such as:

- The books, tv shows and YouTube clips showing how to renovate different facets of house and home, let alone our bodies and minds, or
- The fascination with 'reality TV' drama – seeing celebrities push themselves to see if they could be a soldier, or ordinary folk try their hand at becoming a pop-star – is a manifestation of our sense that 'if it wasn't for {fill in the gap} I could be strong/fast/ talented too,
- The way that credit companies happily allow us to extend our debt so that we can buy a better house, or join that particular club, or change over the wardrobe, or purchase the new equipment (when the old stuff still works) or create that life-changing moment.

This is such a part of our experience that we will often miss how deeply a sense of being able to have it all effects what we choose to do, and how we feel about life. It is like the water in which the goldfish swims – indistinguishable and natural to the fish, but quite clearly visible to anyone outside of the fishbowl.

As we continue to live through these COVID days I suspect that one source of disappointment and frustration is the mismatch between our (unsaid and often unacknowledged) expectation of a perfect life and the constraints we must live under. The Rolling Stones song '(I can't get no) Satisfaction' is not a bad anthem for these days. But the same verse from Hebrews 12, which I talked about last week, in which Jesus is called the 'pioneer and perfecter' of our faith gives us some different cues on where it is we find completion and satisfaction.

In this verse to be perfect or to perfect something, or as in this case to be the perfecter, carries a helpful shade of meaning which we have lost in our modern sense of perfection. In this verse Jesus is the telos of our faith, or the one who completes our faith.

The first thing to notice is that faith as it is used here is not an essentially private thing which is more to do with what is ticked off in the mind as a set of beliefs. Beliefs do, of course, come into it, but here faith is more like what we would call 'lifestyle'. It is an all-encompassing

way of describing our emotional attachment to Jesus and then the way that this shapes what we do, say, and think.

The second thing to notice follows. The meaning of perfection carries with it the idea of completion. A good way of illustrating this is by asking the question, "what is the perfect glass?" We would probably have all sorts of opinions as to the optimal size, shape, and thickness of the vessel. However, if we did not consider the purpose of the glass in deciding whether it is perfect or not we would be missing the vital point! For the glass to be complete it needs to be filled with your favourite beverage. It finds fullness in its purpose by being filled. The most shapely glass is merely pretty if it is not made complete with the drink – think of a fine glass on a hot summer's day with no drink! Then think again of an ordinary looking glass topped up to the brim with cool, clear water.

Jesus provides for us this same sort of perfection, that of fulfilled purpose. But is not the unattainable, aspirational sort which is usually held out. It is much deeper and enduring than that. Here are three ways it is good for us:

1. It grows! Jesus is the perfecter because he is 'on the task' of filling us up. This recognises the ups and downs of our circumstance and allows for personal growth. This turns disappointment into the opportunity to grow rather than the sign of terminal failure.
2. It does not rely on us! We are of course involved in this growth, but because Jesus is 'on the task' we have his assistance and are not responsible to come good on a satisfactory life under our own steam. Our task is to keep in step with Jesus, not to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps.
3. Fear is tamed! As I said last week, Jesus (being a real, historical and verifiable person) provides for us a security whatever the circumstance. Being responsible to ourselves for a satisfactory life means that we can tend to become fearful and anxious when circumstances beyond our control prevent our vision. Jesus has shown the way through the most trying of events. Now that is good news.



tlatt



Ordinations

Bishop Matt is delighted to announce the following candidates have been accepted for ordination:

- Katy Lambert will be ordained a deacon
- Tim Bowles, to be ordained a priest

Both Katy and Tim are well known to the diocese, with Katy currently working in the Registry Office and Tim part of the team in the Parish of Echuca and Chaplain at Moama Anglican Grammar School.

An ordination is scheduled for later in the year:

Date: Saturday, 27 November

Where: St Paul's Cathedral, Bendigo

Time: 11.00 am

Please place this date in your diary and details will be provided as the date gets closer.

The Spirit

A new issue of *The Spirit* is available on the diocesan website.

Distribution will be electronic unless parishes reply requesting hard copies to be posted to their parish.



Worship during lockdown

for details visit

www.bendigoanglican.org.au



Diocesan
Morning Prayer
live on Zoom
10.00am Sundays



Diocesan
Morning Prayer
watch on YouTube



Join a conference call
or phone a friend for
prayer



Read the service of
Morning Prayer from
the Diocese

Bishop Matt's calendar

Week	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
6 September	Diocesan Executive	Lambeth Bishop's Conversations	In Office	SLT	DAY OFF		Mildura
13 September	Internal meetings	In Office	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	Provincial Council		South East Bendigo
20 September	Internal meetings	Provincial Bishops	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	PUBLIC HOLIDAY		TBC
27 September	Internal meetings	In Office	DAY OFF	Internal meetings	In Office		Tatura



Opportunities to learn & grow

While this time spent at home can be inconvenient, it is an opportunity to do some learning and development. Both Trinity & Ridley offer online webinars and education events you may like to join.

Trinity College

[Continuing Education | Theological School | Trinity College \(unimelb.edu.au\)](#)

Ridley College

[Events Archive \(ridley.edu.au\)](#)

Opportunities to be generous & care

1. Supporting the church in Karen State:

[Myanmar: Karen Church Community Outreach](#)
• [Anglican Relief and Development Fund Australia \(ardfa.org.au\)](#)

2. Giving to an Afghanistan Humanitarian Appeal:

[GivingHope](#)

3. Partnering with Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands:

[Vanuatu · Projects · Anglican Board of Mission \(abmission.org\)](#) [Solomon Islands · Projects · Anglican Board of Mission \(abmission.org\)](#)

4. Advocating for refugees from Afghanistan to the Australian Government:

<https://www.unitedforafghanistan.com/>

Australian Academy of Liturgy

AAL Victoria Chapter Meeting

The next chapter meeting is Wednesday 8 September 4.30-6.00pm. You can register here.

The focus of the meeting will be Pastoral Ritual and Liturgy for Early Pregnancy Loss, and our speaker will be Rev'd Melanie Whalley.

Online Conference

The Conference will be Tuesday 18, Wednesday 19, and Thursday 20 January 2022, 11.00am-5.30pm.

[Registration and details are online here.](#)

Need more information: [visit their website here](#)

2022 Lectionary

Orders are now open for the 2022 Lectionary through this [online form](#).

Please complete by 17 September so a timely order can be placed.

Marriage forms

Three new marriage forms will commence on Wednesday, 1 September 2021:

- the Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM)
- the Official Certificate of Marriage (OCM) and
- Declaration of No Legal Impediment to Marriage (DNLI)

These forms have been made [available for download from the department's website](#) on 31 August 2021 for use from Wednesday, 1 September 2021.

The following guidance material on the changes to marriage forms are available online:

1. [Fact sheet on Changes to marriage forms and certificates 2021](#)
2. [Mocked-up new Notice of Intended Marriage](#)

From 1 September 2021, all authorised celebrants **must** use the new NOIM, OCM and DNLI forms.

NOIM forms signed and submitted to an authorised celebrant before 1 September 2021 will remain valid for a period of 18 months from their date of receipt by the authorised celebrant. All NOIM forms submitted to an authorised celebrant after 1 September 2021, must be in the new form.

There are no changes to the Form 15 Certificates of Marriage (that is given by the celebrant to the couple immediately following the wedding). Authorised celebrants can continue to use their existing stock of Form 15 certificates. The Form 15 certificates continue to be available for purchase from CanPrint Communications.

The Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for authorised celebrants have been updated on 31 August 2021, to reflect the new forms commencing on 1 September 2021.