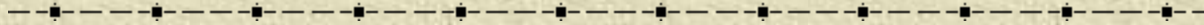
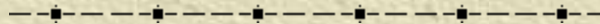


The Good is the Enemy of the Best



Santosh David Poonen



*Fulfilling God's Purpose – Session IV
(River of Life Bible School 2007)*

Is there a “life” map?

You bet there is!!

God:

- ✦ tailor-made for you
- ✦ plan of excellence
- ✦ Romans 8:29
- ✦ make you like Jesus
- ✦ Perfect Love, Perfect Joy, Perfect Peace, etc.

Satan:

- ✦ tailor-made for you
- ✦ try to trap in sin
- ✦ if that fails, distract you from excellence
- ✦ so, rob you of even a little of that Love, Joy, Peace, etc.

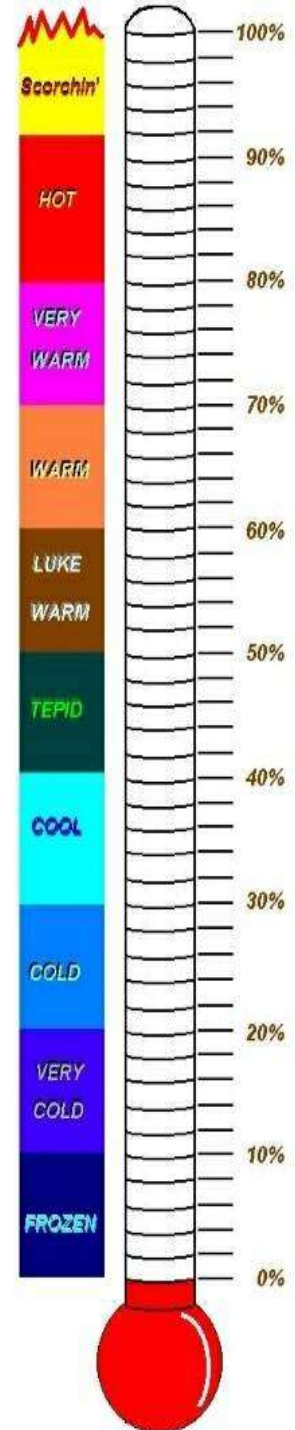
“The Best of Both Worlds”?

*The most miserable people in the world
are half-hearted “Christians”!!*

- ✦ Revelation 3:15-16
- ✦ God’s not happy with you, neither is the Devil
- ✦ the “best of both worlds” is actually the *worst*
- ✦ miserable on earth, regret in eternity

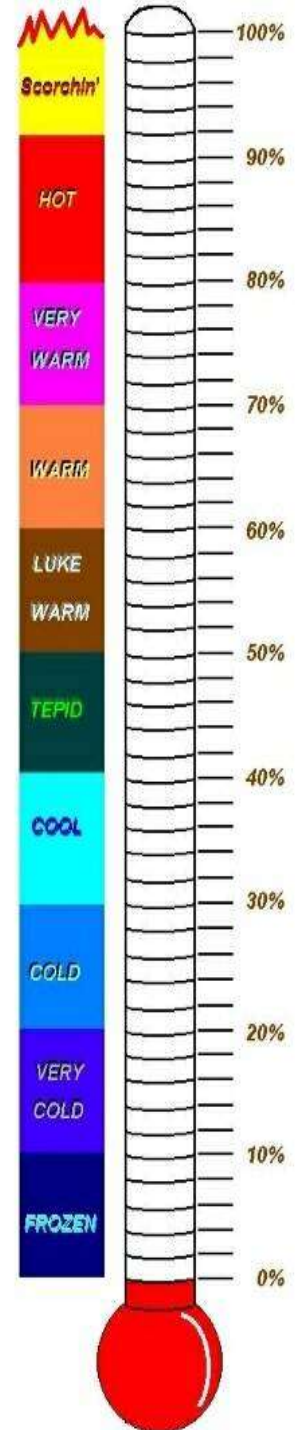
What's so bad about the "good"?

- ✦ the "good" becomes an enemy when it hinders you from attaining to the best
- ✦ II Kings 2: God tests us to see if we're hungry for more of Him
- ✦ Spectrum:
WORSE < **BAD** < **GOOD** < **BETTER** < **BEST**



Why is this so important?

- ✦ God has set a destination of excellence
- ✦ Satan has convinced most Christians that they have reached, when they are far short of their destination
- ✦ analogy
- ✦ especially critical for young people
- ✦ Philippians 4:8: so vital that Paul urges that our hearts permanently reside at the “excellence” address
- ✦ 7 areas of excellence...



Area #1

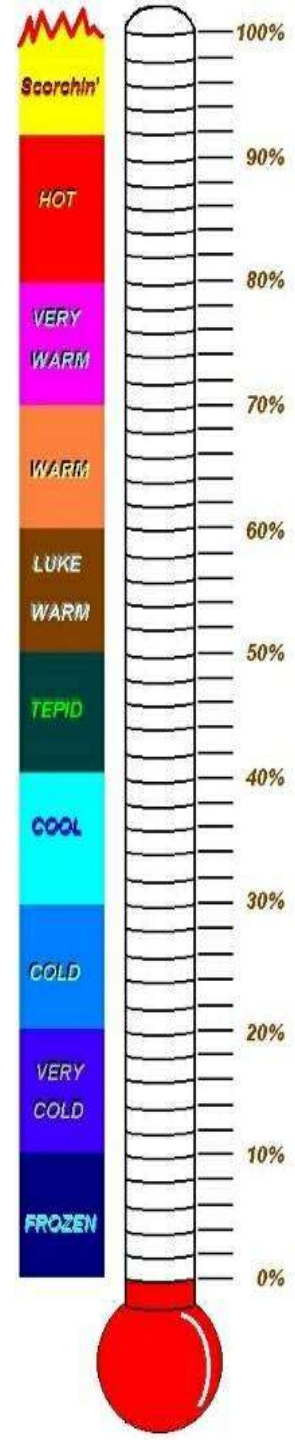
Good: Having an initial repentance

Best: Having continual repentance

Matthew 3:11-12

Symbols:

- ✦ Baptism in water
- ✦ Baptism in the Holy Spirit (fire)
- ✦ initial repentance present even in the Old Covenant (John the Baptist)
- ✦ Jesus opened the “mightier” New Covenant way of continual repentance



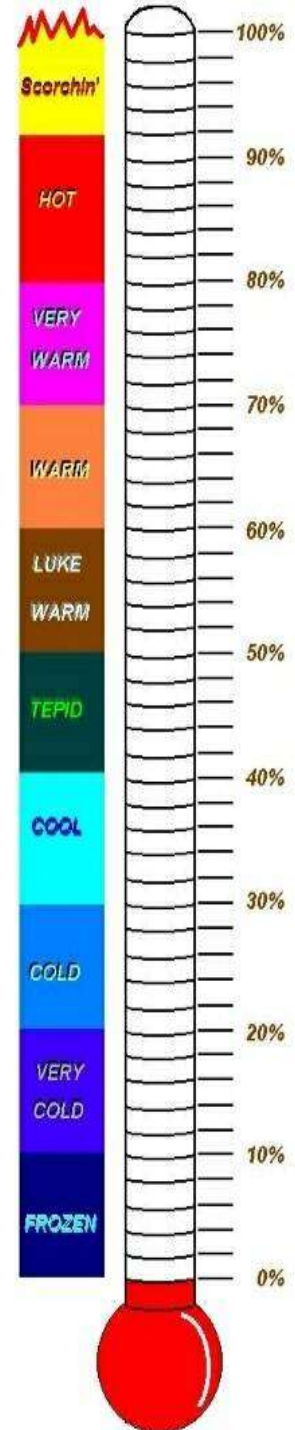
Area #2

Good: Having forgiveness for past sin

Best: Experiencing victory over present sinfulness

Symbols:

- ✦ Liberation from Egypt (penalty of sin)
- ✦ Entering the Promised Land (fullness of Christ)
- ✦ forgiveness of sins available even in the Old Covenant through mercy (Psalm 79:9, 103:3)
- ✦ call of the New Covenant is to overcome through grace (I John 5:4, Romans 6:14, Revelations 2:7,17)
- ✦ many Christians are experiencing liberation from the penalty of sin, only to die in the “wilderness”

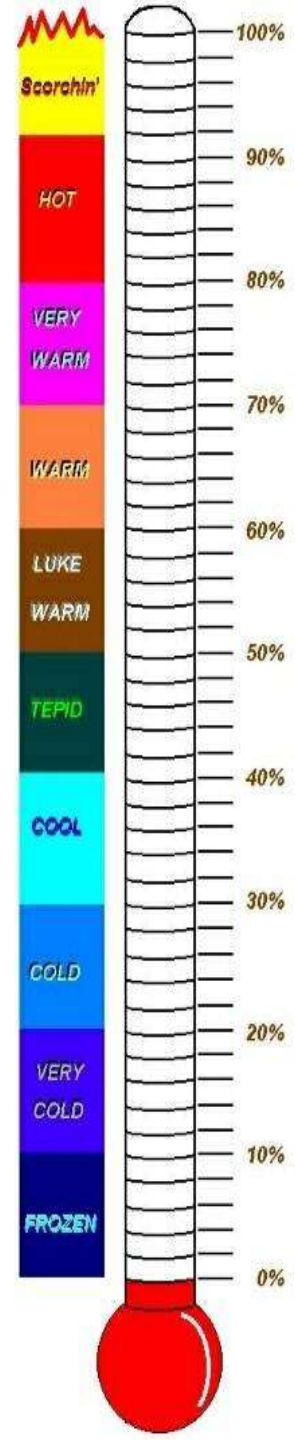


Area #3

Good: Keeping God's Law

Best: Helping others as well

- ✦ Matthew 19:16-30: the call to the young
- ✦ Matthew 25: what about your talents?
- ✦ how will your epitaph read?
- ✦ I Corinthians 15:45: the difference between “a living soul” and a “life-giving spirit”
- ✦ if they won't come to church, take church to them!

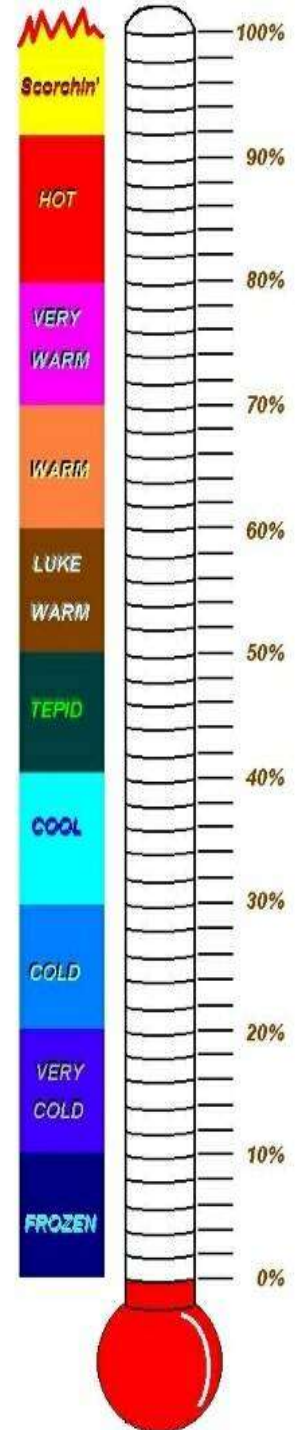


Area #4

Good: Forgiving outwardly

Best: Forgiving from the heart

- ✦ David and Shimei (II Samuel 16:5-8, 19:19-23, I Kings 2:8-10)
- ✦ God's forgiveness is conditional (Matthew 18:35)
- ✦ the proof that you've forgiven from your heart is that you bless and pray for them (Luke 6:27-28)

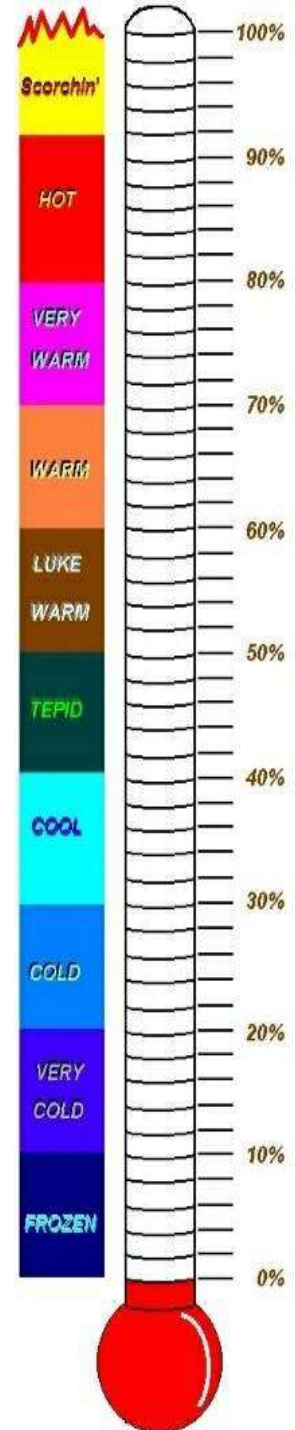


Area #5

Good: Experiencing God's blessing

Best: Receiving God's approval

- ✦ many are blessed (Matthew 5:45), but few are approved
- ✦ Israelites were blessed more than any other nation, yet God was angry with them (Hebrews 3:17-19)
- ✦ God gives His approval to those who have faith (Hebrews 11:1-2, 6)
- ✦ Jesus too received this approval (Matthew 17:5)
- ✦ Paul urges *young* Timothy to be diligent to receive approval from the Master (II Timothy 2:15)
- ✦ the mark of serving and being approved by the Master is a life of faith, free from anxiety (Matthew 6:24-34)

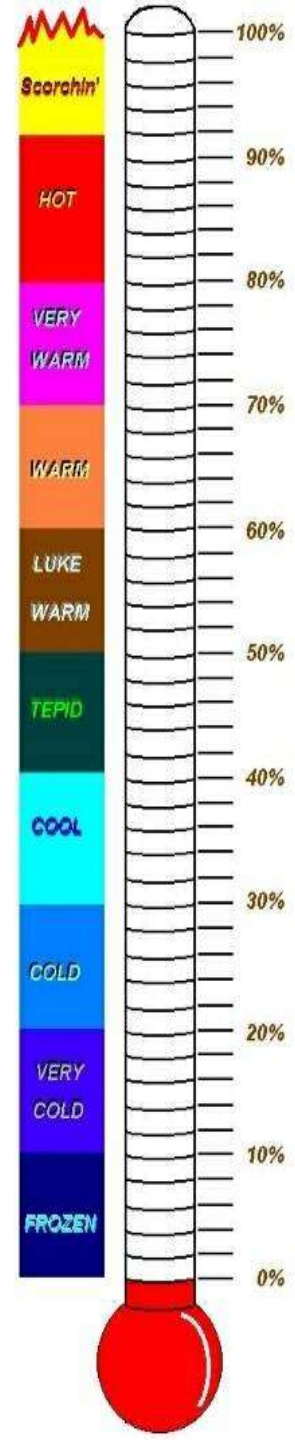


Area #6

Good: Receiving spiritual gifts

Best: Bearing spiritual fruit – especially love

- ✦ spiritual gifts are vital for the Body (I Corinthians 12:27-31a)
- ✦ excellence is to practice the gifts in love (I Corinthians 12:31b - 13)
- ✦ without spiritual gifts we won't be effective
- ✦ without spiritual fruit we will do more harm than good

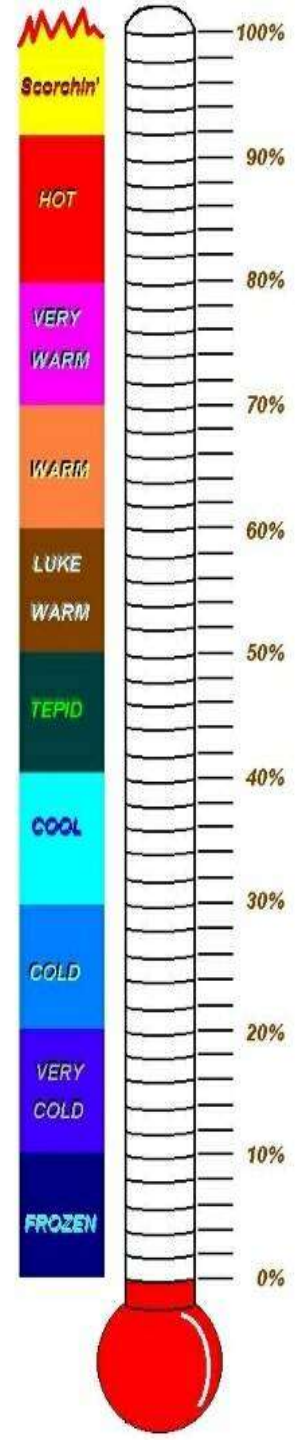


Area #7

Good: Being a “Lone Ranger”

Best: Being united in fellowship in the Body

- ✦ Ecclesiastes 4:9-12: strength in numbers
- ✦ John 17:11,12,23: at the end of Jesus’ life on earth, His earnest desire was that the disciples would be one



How do I discern the excellent?

- ✦ Romans 12:2: renewing your mind by the Word of God
- ✦ Philippians 1:9: abounding in love
- ✦ balance of truth and grace comes from examining the *whole* counsel of God (Matthew 4:7):
 - ◆ “it is written”
 - ◆ “it is also written”

So, when do I actually reach my destination?

- ✦ I Thessalonians 4:16-18: take comfort that Jesus, who Himself attained to this excellence ahead of us, will return
- ✦ I John 2:28: some will shrink away in shame
- ✦ I John 3:2-3: those who have walked this way, when they see Him, will be like Him – perfect!
- ✦ Matthew 25:21: we'll get to hear those precious words, "Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful... enter into the joy of your Master!"