

Excelling Still More

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: I Thessalonians 4:1-2.

B. The Thessalonians were doing well but they could have been doing better.

C. None of us has arrived. (Philippians 3, I Thessalonians 3:10, 4:10, I Corinthians 12:12, II Corinthians 8:7, Philippians 1:9, II Peter 3:18)

II. Only when exhortation is coupled with spiritual desire can one excel spiritually. The key to Jonathan Edwards's spiritual excellence were his strong religious affections.

III. Excelling should be a priority.

A. The priority of the Christian life is spiritual growth, which is compelled and driven by a desire to know God. (Psalm 42, I John 2)

B. A person must have Christ in him to grow spiritually.

IV. The power to excel is being in the Lord Jesus.

A. A person can have the power to excel and still not excel, however. (I Corinthians 1:6)

B. Their spiritual worship was polluted by improper worship. (I Corinthians 10-14)

C. They were indulging in sin.

D. They allowed themselves to be influenced by false teachers. (II Corinthians 2:4)

V. The principles of excelling are laid out in Scripture and taught by the Apostles. The Thessalonians knew the basics. (Acts 20)

VI. Those who start down the right word of excelling should continue to progress. (I Timothy 4:14)

VII. The command given through Paul by Jesus brings pressure to excel.

Application questions:

1. How have you failed to make excelling a priority?

2. How can a person struggling to excel find the ability and desire to do so? Explain?

3. How will you commit to make steps towards excellence this week in a practical and measurable way? Explain.
