

Leadership Class: Lesson #12 The Spirit of Excellence

Hebrews 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

I. Philippians 1:10

(ICB) that you will see the difference between good and bad and choose the good; that you will be pure and without wrong for the coming of Christ;

(AMP) So that you may surely learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value (recognizing the highest and the best, and distinguishing the moral differences,) and that you may be untainted and pure and unerring and blameless (so that with hearts sincere and certain and unsullied, you may approach) the day of Christ (not stumbling nor causing others to stumble).

My goal: For excellence to be part of our thinking. When we do something ask, “Does it represent excellence?”

Excellent defined: exceeding, exceedingly; pre-eminent, surpassing, extreme, extraordinary

ex-cel-lence *noun* The state, quality, or condition of excelling; superiority; Something in which one excels.

ex-cel, ex-celled, ex-cel-ling, ex-cels *verb, transitive:* To do or be better than; surpass; To show superiority

Synonyms: excel, surpass, exceed, transcend, outdo. These verbs mean to be or go beyond a limit or standard. To *excel* is to be preeminent (*excels at figure skating*) or to be or perform at a level higher than that of another or others (*excelled her father as a lawyer*). To *surpass* another is to be superior in performance, quality, or degree: *is surpassed by few as a debater; happiness that surpassed description*. *Exceed* can refer to being superior, as in quality (*an invention that exceeds all others in ingenuity*), to being greater than another, as in degree or quantity (*a salary exceeding 50 thousand dollars a year*), and to going beyond a proper limit (*exceed one's authority; exceed a speed limit*). *Transcend* often implies the attainment of a level so high that comparison is hardly possible: *Great art transcends mere rules of composition*. To *outdo* is to excel in doing or performing: *didn't want to be outdone in generosity*.

Excellence: Being the best we can be with God's grace

II. Excellence in Daniel's life was displayed in:

A. Pursuing

1. How did Daniel keep from defiling himself with the king's food? (Daniel 1:8)

2. Concerning being zealous for and edifying the church with spiritual gifts, Paul said “ _____ to excel” (I Corinthians 14:12)

Excellence is not a gift. It must be pursued. It must be sought after. God will give you the desires, but you must cultivate what God has put within you. Don't expect excellence to be a gift of the Spirit. If you are given to slothfulness and an attitude of masking your lack of the pursuit of excellence behind the phrase... "If God wants it done, He'll be sure it gets done", you are positioning yourself for a great lack of excellence. To excel means "to go beyond, to be superior." Excellence is not a gift; it must be achieved. Pursue excellence.

B. Favor

3. How did God reward his integrity of heart? (Daniel 1:9)

4. What happened to Daniel because of his excellent spirit? (Daniel 6:3)

5. How does one stand before kings and known people? (Proverbs 22:29)

C. Wisdom

6. What kind of wisdom was found in Daniel? (Daniel 5:14)

(Read Proverbs 2:1-7)

7. God gives wisdom. What does the Bible say we can do to enhance receiving:

- ✓ _____ (vs. 1)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 1)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 2)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 2)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 3)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 3)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 4)
- ✓ _____ (vs. 4)

D. Knowledge & Understanding (Read Daniel 1:17-20)

Proverbs 17:27 (KJS) He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. (or, a cool spirit)

8. How does one receive knowledge and understanding?

_____ (Proverb 15:14)
_____ (Proverbs 18:15)

E. Desiring and operating in Spiritual gifting

9. As a result of the excellent spirit in Daniel what gifts do you recognize that Daniel operated in? (Daniel 5:12)

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

10. What does God promise to do if you desire spiritual gifts? (1 Corinthians 12:31)

“Excellence is not a gift, but is measured by your desiring and perfecting gifts given. What you do with your gifting will determine if you attain excellence”

III. Excellence in Solomon’s life: (Read 1 Kings 10:1-10)

11. What areas of excellence did the Queen of Sheba observe in Solomon’s life and service? (1 Kings 10:4-5)

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

Examples of an excellent Spirit in a church

- Showing up on time
- Faithfulness: fulfilling your responsibilities
- Being groomed
- Knowing your songs
- Picking up garbage
- Weeds pulled
- Carpet vacuumed
- _____
- _____
- _____

IV. Principles of Excellence:

1. Make the original worth copying. Do it right the first time

- *"Many times the difference between failure and success is doing something nearly right... or doing it exactly right."*

2. Invest in quality

- *"Excellence always endures... it remains long after cost is forgotten"*
- *"The satisfaction of quality far outweighs the bitterness of a cheap deal"*

3. Do everything you do for Jesus: Colossians 3:23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

4. Commit to improvement and growth the rest of your life

"I pledge to live a life of excellence according to God’s word"

5. Release your faith through confession -- You possess what you confess

6. Identify the average areas of your life -- The areas you need to revolutionize