

Evidence of a Healthy Church: Continual Spiritual Growth (1Thess.4:1-2)

Introduction: – *to excel still more*; to abound, overflow, be abundantly supplied, be extraordinary – this speaks of your _____!

Notice: 4:3 and 3:10; 4:7,10; Phil1:9; 2Pe3:18

1. **Why** don't all athletes do this? _____

2. **What** about knowing and loving Christ? **what* distinguishes mediocrity from powerful life?

3. **Just like** w/ an athlete, you have to _____ do certain things that everyone else does that are okay to do

4. **The vast majority** of people saying they are Christians are fine to be mediocre w/ Christ; _____

5. **Heb12:14** – this is important!

***4 Keys that will cause you to EXCEL in your Christ-life...**

1. Excel More: Never Be _____ with Mediocrity and Complacency (vs.1a)

A. Request and exhort: Gk. to encourage lovingly

B. A casual, comfortable, complacent Christian life is **not** from God but the world!

1. Was there any constant complacency about Jesus' life? Paul's? Heroes of faith?

2. **Rom12:11; Prov12:27; 24:30-34**

C. Spiritual growth is goal, comes from a longing to know God (**Ps42:1-2; 63:1-3; Matt5:6; Phil3:10**)

2. Excel More: You Must Have _____ Power (vs.1a)

***"In the Lord Jesus"** – you must be born-again, be in Christ and Christ in you! (**Rom8:37; Eph1:18-21**)

3. Excel More: You Must Have _____ Motivation (vs.1a) (**Here is biggest key!!!*)

A. Why do so many Christians rarely go to church, read and obey their Bibles, share gospel, etc.?

**they lack the right _____! *What is the issue? Obedience problem? _____*

B. Love for Christ is the right motivation for continuing to excel! **see 4:1*

***"In the Lord Jesus" *Jn14:21; 2Cor5:14-15** – love has grown cold, or never truly loved Christ

C. Duty or deep love?

1. **Why?** Because he taught from God's Word that people must be born-again to take communion

2. **Central Ohio:** church people refuse to obey God's clear word on conflict! Gossip = God-_____

**Why? 1John2-5 all speak to evidence of love for God = love for _____*

**Romans6:16-18,22 – why do so many refuse to obey God's clear Word?*

3. A true intimate love relationship? ***Rom8:29-30** – foreknew is foreloved, love relationship

**Matt7:21-23 – what's the issue here? _____*

4. Excel More: You Must Have _____ Plan (vs.1b-2)

A. God's Word is God's plan for your sanctification (**this is all of chp4,5!**)

1. What would happen if you got to eat food and drink water, as often as you read your Bible?

2. James1:22 – what's the key? _____

3. Proverbs27:7 – what's the problem? _____

B. Growing takes a conscious effort (*"instruction as how to walk"; "authority of Lord Jesus"*)

1. **Romans13:11-14** – what does Paul tell us? _____!

**Actually _____ aside the deeds of darkness, behave, and _____ on the deeds of Christ*

**Eph5:14-17 – awake, be careful, be exact in how you live your time left on earth!*

2. Will you begin to adjust your life and work God's program? **Look at vs.3-4!**