

Friday, April 17, 2020

Turn off the outside “noise” for a couple of minutes and consider this message from God’s Word.  
I am praying that it calms your spirit and encourages your heart.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9 (TNIV)

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters,  
whatever is **true**, whatever is **noble**, whatever is **right**,  
whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is **admirable** —  
if anything is **excellent** or **praiseworthy** —  
***think about such things.***

<sup>9</sup> Whatever you have learned  
or received  
or heard from me,  
or seen in me—  
***put it into practice.***

And **THE GOD OF PEACE** will be with you.

— PART 9 —

*I found that when a passage of Scripture has been very familiar to me for a long time — such as this passage! — if I will simply **slow down** . . . take my time . . . and read thoughtfully and reflectively, it can become alive to me in new and fresh ways.*

We get to **CHOOSE** what we allow our minds to **FOCUS** on. And Paul encourages us to **concentrate our attention** on some very specific things. Like...

*“whatever is **TRUE** . . . **think about these things**” —  
“whatever is **NOBLE** . . . **think about these things**” —  
“whatever is **RIGHT** . . . **think about these things**” —  
“whatever is **PURE** . . . **think about these things**” —  
“whatever is **LOVELY** . . . **think about these things**” —  
“whatever is **ADMIRABLE** . . . **think about these things**” —*

*“if anything is **EXCELLENT**” . . . **think about these things**” —*

John Maxwell has some practical advice about striving to be excellent. What are the ways we could strive for excellence during this crisis — as a parent, a spouse, an employer, an employee, a co-worker, a neighbor, a friend...? Let’s listen in:

**EXCELLENCE: A SURE ROUTE TO INFLUENCE**  
By The John Maxwell Company | November 19, 2012

***“Do you see a man who excels in his work?  
He will stand before kings;  
he will not stand before unknown men.”***

~ KING SOLOMON (PROVERBS 22:29)

Excellence is the gap between average and exceptional. It's the ability to exceed expectations and consistently deliver superior quality. In developing habits of excellence, leaders gain influence and stand out from the crowd. By cultivating a culture of excellence, a business attracts customers and wins their loyalty.

## EXCELLENCE MEANS —

### 1) CONSISTENCY

I agree with Aristotle: **“Excellence is not an act, it’s a habit. You are what you repeatedly do.”** To gain a reputation for excellence necessitates delivering results whenever you’re called upon. Hit-and-miss performers are neither trusted nor respected. On the other hand, those who repeatedly demonstrate competence gain credibility, and their credibility paves the way to influence.

### 2) IMPROVEMENT

Legendary basketball coach Pat Riley defines excellence as **“the gradual result of always striving to be better.”** People with a spirit of excellent continuously improve; they make sure to be better tomorrow than they are today. Excellent leaders are voracious learners. Since they’re constantly growing, they always have fresh insights to impart to their teammates and new skills to contribute to their organization.

### 3) CREATIVITY

Creativity attracts others to you and to your ideas. ***We enjoy interacting with people who open up our imaginations through the originality of their work.*** Creativity also gives rise to excellence by facilitating problem-solving. Sometimes creative persons break new ground; at other times they simply find innovative ways to apply existing concepts. Either way, they add value by enabling their organization to move beyond the obstacles that had previously held it back.

### 4) GOING THE EXTRA MILE

“To excel” literally means **to go beyond average.** Responsible people can be counted upon to **do what is expected** of them, but excellent people routinely **do more than asked.** Persons of excellence deliver results in such a way that leaves their customers pleasantly surprised.

<https://www.johnmaxwell.com/blog/excellence-a-sure-route-to-influence/>

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May we be drawn today to focus on “whatever is excellent” — and strive to live lives of CONSISTENCY, IMPROVEMENT, CREATIVITY and GOING THE EXTRA MILE...

Pastor Doug

P.S. Praise God for his goodness and grace in allowing us to share **online** our first “distance learning” **EASTER CELEBRATION!** I hope you were able to be with us! But I sure miss being together in person, don’t you? I miss all your beautiful faces!

I praise God today as I think about the **excellence** being shown by the people and staff of **BETHANY** and also the teachers and staff of **WEST COVINA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.** You are working with great integrity, diligence and commitment as we seek to reach out to our community and serve the students God has entrusted to us! You are a bright light shining in the darkness of a crisis. I am deeply proud of you!

We would love to hear from you! How are you doing right now? And we would love to pray for you! Email us at [info@bethanyonline.net](mailto:info@bethanyonline.net)

P.P.S. Keep checking our “ENCOURAGEMENT FOR TODAY” webpage — we will try to post fresh encouragement **every day** during this crisis!

P.P.P.S. And watch our **LIVE-STREAM Worship Service** this coming Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for more encouragement.