



Springcreek
CHURCH

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AIMING FOR EXCELLENCE

Taking Care of Business: Your, Mine and Ours – Part 8
Pastor Keith Stewart
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1. CALLED TO EXCELLENCE

Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do it with all your might... Ecclesiastes 9.10

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10.31

“If it falls to your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo painted pictures, sweep streets like Beethoven composed music... Sweep streets so well that all the host of heaven and earth will have to pause and say: Here lived a great street sweeper who swept his job well.” – Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, and in all eagerness and in the love from us that is in you—make sure that you excel in this act of kindness too. 2 Corinthians 8.7 (NET)

And may the Lord cause you to increase and abound (excel) in love for one another and for all... 1 Thessalonians 3.12-13

So then, dear brothers and sisters, be firm. Do not be moved! Always be outstanding (perisseuo = abounding, doing over and above, excelling) in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15.58

EXCELLENCE: “To be superior in quality, greater in quantity, to transcend your job description, and to outdo yourself each time.” - American Heritage Dictionary



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"Success means being the best. Excellence means being your best. Success, to many, means being better than everyone else. Excellence means being better tomorrow than you were yesterday. Success means exceeding the achievements of other people. Excellence means matching your practice with your potential." - Brian Harbour

2. THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST GET PUT TO THE TEST

Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility - young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. Daniel 1.3-4a

The word for young men in Hebrew is the word "Yaladim" which refers specifically to young people between the age of 13 to 19.

The word "eunuch" literally means, "bed-keeper" because that was their function in society - to take care of the Royal Harem.

He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. Daniel 1.4b-5

"Daniel and his friends had to be reeducated if they were to be of any value to Nebuchadnezzar. They were to be indoctrinated or brainwashed so that they would no longer think or act like Judeans, but like Babylonians." - Donald K. Campbell, Daniel: Decoder of Dreams

Will I be strong?



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“As soon as someone accuses me or criticizes me, as soon as I am rejected, left alone, or abandoned, I find myself thinking, "Well, that proves once again that I am a nobody." ... [My dark side says,] I am no good... I deserve to be pushed aside, forgotten, rejected, and abandoned. Self-rejection is the greatest enemy of the spiritual life because it contradicts the sacred voice that calls us the 'Beloved.'" - Henri Nouwen

Will I hold to truth?

Will I be faithful?

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Daniel 1.8

In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. Daniel 1.20

3. DANIEL SURPASSED ALL EXPECTATIONS

Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governor's satraps because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. Daniel 6.3

The Aramaic word for excellence (yattiyr) defines someone who is "pre-eminent, extraordinary, surpassing and going beyond expectations."



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Spirit of excellence

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Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings, he will not serve before obscure men. Proverbs 22.29

Ethical in his business

At this, the administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. Daniel 6.4

Personal integrity

They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Daniel 6.4

Then the king gave orders, and Daniel was brought in and cast into the lions' den. The king spoke and said to Daniel, "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you." And a stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing might be changed in regard to Daniel. Then the king went off to his palace and spent the night fasting, and no entertainment was brought before him; and his sleep fled from him. Daniel 6.16-18