

# Average-Excellent

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[0:00] Let's go to Proverbs 17. Being average or being excellent?

Which one will you be? My plea is to you today to be a strong Christian, an excellent Christian, one who exceeds, one who stands above the average, to know a spiritual power above and beyond our own, to know a deeper fire, a deeper life that will ground you and make you firm and solid, stable, steadfast, to know a spiritual resolve that will not weaken when storms assail you.

I'm talking about joining the ranks of the excellent. And I've got a simple formula here, but I won't reveal that just yet. I've got the secret. I found the secret to being a strong Christian, and I'm going to reveal that to you.

So just be on the edge of your seats in anticipation for that. But we'll get to that. Proverbs 17 from verse 27. Proverbs 17, verse 27, it says, He that hath knowledge spareth his words, and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

So you'll know from my sermon short that I'm a man of understanding. No? But the sermon might be a bit lengthy here tonight, but the point is a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

[1:48] Now some people are just jabber, jabber, jabber, but the one who has knowledge thinks about his words and speaks truth. A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

I urge you today, don't settle for average. Aspire to go above and beyond. To be Mr. Excellent. Here's Mr. Excellent here. Be a Proverbs 17 man.

Man here today. A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. I encourage you, I exhort you brothers, brethren, to be Mr. Excellent.

Exceed expectations. Be a man of an excellent spirit. Exceed those expectations. And it's true for men, and it's true for women also. So here's your scripture, ladies.

Proverbs 31, 29. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Here's Mrs. Excellent. Proverbs 31. I'm sure there's lots of Proverbs 31 women here in our company tonight.

[2:50] We can be a Mr. Excellent, a Proverbs 17 man, and we can be a Mrs. Excellent, a Proverbs 31 woman. It's all there. I can't put it more eloquently than Proverbs 31.

Ladies, read the chapter. I can't put it more eloquently than that. It talks about a virtuous woman. That's the women that should be exalted. That's the women who should have their names in lights. That's the women that should be those that their names come to mind. The excellent women. Not the Hollywood women. Not the women of the gossip magazines. Not the women of the glossy, trashy magazines.

Not a Hollywood trash woman. Not a gutter mouth woman. Not a slacker. Not a painted woman. But a real deal woman. The woman of Proverbs 31. God is looking for men and women who will be Mr. and Mrs.

Average? Mr. and Mrs. Excellent. That's who we should aspire to be. Too many settle in the place of the satisfied. They're content with the mediocre. They've camped out to stay in the comfort zone.

[3:52] And they're snug and smug right there. It's easy to settle there. Where it's comfortable. God wants you to exceed. God wants you to be excellent. To stretch yourself. Now as a young man, I used to have some peculiar ways.

I still do. But I had things that I used to pray. God make me strong like Superman. God make me strong like a superhero. Like Batman or something. Not that I wouldn't commend those two believers here today.

I've grown up since those days. I've put away the childish things. But there's a sense we want to be extending ourselves. And I used to stretch myself sometimes in bed.

Because I think my mum and dad told me once to stretch myself. And make me a bit taller. That's why I'm a bit taller than my mum and dad. Because I've been stretching myself. God wants you to extend yourself, doesn't he?

He wants you to stretch yourself. To aspire to extend yourself. To be above and beyond. To challenge. He challenges us to grow. To aspire for excellence. And God wants this for us.

[4:55] It's his best. He wants that for you. He calls us to this path. To refresh that passion for God. To stir up your faith. To break the mould. I saw some advert years ago.

Where it had a load of people. And they were all the same. And then one just break the mould. And they just stood out from the crowd. That's the picture of how we should be. As God's people. We should aim high.

We should aim for the best. We're living in a world where excellence is being trashed. Isn't it? You hear nowadays where there's some sports competitions down in the schools.

And everybody gets a prize. Even those who didn't really try. Those who didn't really put the effort in. Everybody gets a prize nowadays. It's like excellence isn't there anymore. It's not something to, hey I'm going to strive.

I'm going to attain. I'm going to aspire. The world honours as excellence what is sick and vile today. We see that. I've seen some things where a particular company was called BAPcare.

[5:57] BAPcare. Which is the secular leaning, the ecumenical leaning Baptist church. Has got a community arm called BAPcare.

And they had this great big splash in their magazine called BAPcare. Which is more of their secular arm of doing things in the community. And they were celebrating something to do with winning some LGBTIQ kind of prize.

And how someone, and they were championing this cause. And they had this photo of this man receiving an award. This is the BAPcare. Supposedly Baptist kind of community care kind of organisation.

Honouring as excellent what is vile and reprehensible, sick and abominable. This is what they're saying is excellent. That's not the excellence I'm talking about here today.

You know nowadays they give Grammy awards. And they applaud that which is sick and that is sinful. That is what gets the applause. That's what gets the praise. But we serve a different God.

[6:58] A different God. He is high and holy. And his name is holy. And I challenge you. Leave off what is doubtful and harmful. Don't drink.

Leave off drink. It's a curse. It's a curse. You know I've seen some good sermons about booze. And there's one that I've preached some time back.

That boozers are losers. You will lose so much if you drink. Don't drink. Don't copy the ideals of this world. Don't drink the Kool-Aid as it were that you get offered by some.

Don't be fooled. Don't follow the crowd. That's what the average will do. Don't pander to the flesh. Don't settle for what is doubtful. Don't stay where it is shallow. Go out into the deep.

That's what Ezekiel did, doesn't he? God said step into the waters. He said go deeper. Go deeper. Go deeper. Go deeper. We need to go deeper with God. To let go of the shore.

[7:57] To be like Ezekiel. To go with God and let God take you deeper. Deeper still. A man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

Leave the mediocre behind. God's grace is amazing. Don't dwell in complacency. Don't sojourn near the city of destruction. Lot made that mistake. When it came to looking for a new piece of real estate, Lot made that mistake.

He was very average. When he went looking for a new piece of real estate, it says that he saw the plain. And it looked like it was nice and green and it was lush.

And location, location, location. And Lot chose the plain of Sodom. He chose the cities of the plain. And Abraham dwelled in the land of Canaan. And Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain. And pitched his tent towards Sodom. Location, location, location.

[9:01] Where was it? Right next to Sodom. And the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly. It wasn't really the choicest neighbourhood to bring up a family.

It wasn't the choicest neighbourhood for a Christian man to dwell. Because as much as the land looked lush and green, he was living by the wicked sinners of Sodom.

We can't afford to be camping there. We can't afford to get comfortable with Sodom. Don't get adjusted to it. Don't get adjusted to Sodom. Don't become inclusive and accepting of it. It is abomination. Don't believe the lies that the world is telling you about Sodom. The modern day Sodom. Don't let that familiarity of it reduce the shock and repulsion that you should have. That it should invoke within you. You know, we can get our conscience dullened. We can get our minds conditioned. We can be influenced by the world and that which is sick and repulsive to God such that we get familiar with it.

[10:10] It's time to strike camp. To move out of that place. God had to drag him out a lot in the end. Flee for your life. For your life, for the sake of your family, flee.

And be faithful. Develop a spirit of stewardship. The average will not commit. They float. They flip and flop. Don't be average. Be excellent. God calls us to decrease that he may increase.

As in John the Baptist. Have a heart to be sacrificial. To go with the gospel. Let this be that which motivates you. To be that man of understanding.

The man of an excellent spirit. And we develop excellence as we travel the pathway of the cross. We learn to crucify the flesh.

There's some things that we need to slay. Now we talked this morning. We talked about Samuel rebuking Saul.

[11:12] Because Saul hung on to some things. From the pagans. The Amalekites. And he saved King Agag.

Samuel. It says. Cut Agag to pieces. Before the Lord. There's some things that have got to be cut to pieces. Before the Lord.

There's some things we've got to slay. Pride. Or looking at me. The man in the mirror. Pride. Carnality. Self-will.

Sloth. Some things to slay. There's some things we need to leave behind. Like Lot left Sodom. Eventually. Don't be average.

Don't settle for Sodom. Many are facing giants. Giants today. There's giants here this morning. Evening. There's giants here. In people's lives. The giants.

[12:08] Just as we think. I love the story. You know. John Bunyan's story of the pilgrim. Those giants. The enemies that opposed him. The enemies against the people of God.

Giants. Giants of loss. Of wounding. Of bruising. Hurting. People carrying those things. They carry. They carry.

They're tied to the giant. They're carrying him around with him. They're tied to him with a rope. We need to slay the giant. Slay the dragon. Those things that we're hanging on to.

That we should leave behind. And let go of. And take up something. Take up the cross. The cross. We're called to the crucified life. To take the pathway of the cross.

And brothers and sisters. It's hard sometimes to think of the cross. Isn't it? And this is not just some nice little gold thing. Hung around your neck. On a necklace. I'm not into that.

[13:04] This is not some crucifix hanging on a wall. That people bow down to. It's not scriptural to have a cross. Of such. We're talking about the cross that Jesus calls us to.

He says if any man will come after me. Let him deny himself. Number one. That's the beginning isn't it? Deny himself. And take up his cross daily.

And follow me. For whosoever will save his life. Shall lose it. But whosoever will lose his life. For my sake. The same. Shall save it. For what is a man advantaged?

If he gain the whole world. And lose himself. Will be cast away. For whosoever shall be ashamed of me. And of my words.

Shall the son of man be ashamed. When he shall come in his own glory. And in his father's. Of the holy angels. If any man.

[14:03] Will come after me. Let him. Deny himself. We're called to be cross bearers. It takes a cross. A cross. What is a cross?

It is a torture implement. It is hard and heavy. And harsh and rough. And when you carry a cross. You're on the way to your execution. It's your death. It's the killing of you. It's the slaying of self. It's going to mean losing. Losing your life.

That you may find it. And this is the perfect work. The perfect work. As James talks about. My brethren. Count it all joy. This morning I talked about some.

All things. And here's another kind of. Wow. How did you get your head around that one? All joy. Count it. Count it. All joy.

[14:58] All joy. All joy. When you fall into. Diverse. Temptations. Many trials and. Testings. Knowing this. That the. Trying of your faith.

Worketh. Patience. It's going to make you stronger. But let patience have her perfect work. That you may be perfect. And entire. Wanting nothing. Here's how to be perfect. As God does his perfect work.

Trials are productive. It's productive for you. And it's telling us we can be. Perfect. In other words. Complete. Is the sense of it. We can get to a place where we lack. Nothing. Where we lack.

Nothing. God will do his perfect work. But his perfect work. Includes. Trials. So as a Christian. Don't think it's strange. It's normal.

When you have trials. When you get. People hurting you. I've had that happen to me. And. You've got to just. Let it be. Water off a duck's back. Don't you? I was talking this morning about.

[15:56] You know. I had some experience. You know. Being a telemarketer. I was a telemarketer. For a while. And. You develop a thick skin. That it's even. You get an even thicker skin. When you're a pastor. When you're a preacher.

When you're. When you're an out and out Christian. You've got the. Target sights on you. You know. When. You face trials. God is doing.

A perfect work. Wow. Praise God for that. I want. I want that. I want more of that. I've got to watch what I say. Because sometimes I end up getting it. Now. I saw a.

There was a. A stirring video. I saw. Someone's testimony. Where they said. And a man prayed. And he came to a point in his life. Where he said. Lord. I yield to you.

Everything. My life. My family. My wife. My job. And. And. Then. Bang. It was. He lost it all.

[16:51] He lost his house. His job. His wife. His family. Then. God. Did a work. And. And he. He was blessed. At the end of it. Like Joe.

But. You know. Sometimes. That's a big prayer to pray. Isn't it? Lord. I give you my everything. I give it all to you. Let God do his perfect work. And that's going to. Take the trying of your faith.

So don't shy away from it. It's actually good for you. So count it all joy. I mean. It's easy for me to say. You might say. But. Look. I've had some tests too. I speak from experience too.

That it's not. All easy being a Christian. It can be quite. A hard. Road at times. But it's how you are going to become. Mr. And Mrs.

Excellent. As you let the master potter have his way. So let's go down to the potter's house. And peer inside the door. Here's what Jeremiah did. In chapter 18.

[17:46] Jeremiah. Then I went down to the potter's house. And behold. He wrought to work on the wheels. Here's the potter's wheel. Spinning round and round. And the potter. Fashioning that clay.

And it says. And the vessel. That he made of clay. Was marred. In the hand of the potter. You know. He made some kind of. Whoops. I don't think God does that. But there's a sense of.

No. I can do that. Again. And he threw it back on the wheel. And made it again. He made another vessel. As seemed good to the potter. To make it. And the point is.

Are we clay? Are we clay? In the hands of the potter? He will make you again. It says. As a vessel. That seems good to the potter. God knows what good looks like.

It's not what we think. It's what seems good to the potter. That's what matters. Isn't it? And he is doing the work. And just sit on his wheel. And trust his will.

[18:43] His work. His perfect work. And cry out like Isaiah did. In Isaiah 40. 64 verse 8. Isaiah 64 verse 8. Isaiah said.

But now oh Lord. Thou art our father. We are the clay. And thou art potter. And we all are the work of thy hand. Brother.

Sister. Here tonight. Let God shape you. Reshape you. Remake you. Throw your back on the wheel. And start again if he must. And start. His work in you.

And restart. His work in you. You know. I know as a young man. I made a profession of faith. And I kind of. I kind of settled for average. For a while.

And then I made a recommitment. Where I refired my faith. I made a refreshing of my commitment. And it's like God threw me back on the wheel again. And he started to.

[19:38] Shape me again. What he wanted me to be. And it's all that seems good unto him. He is the best judge. Of what he wants you to be. Be as the clay. That he can fashion.

You into a vessel of his making. As seems good to the potter. As seems good to him. To make you. Let's not settle for being Mr. or Mrs. Average.

Now of some it says. They will not excel. I heard a preacher. Long while back. And it was quite a challenging message. That he used this scripture. In Genesis 49.

And of some it says. They will not excel. They resist the potter's hand. They will not realise their God given potential.

Don't make that mistake. Like Reuben did. We see that in Genesis 49. Verse 3. As Jacob says. Reuben. Thou art my firstborn. My might. And the beginning of my strength.

[20:35] And the excellency of dignity. And the excellency of power. Reuben had great potential here. The firstborn. He had Jacob's might. The beginning of his strength.

The excellency of dignity. The excellency of power. But then it goes on. Unstable as water. Thou shalt not excel. And this is what.

This preacher that I heard. And it was. A sermon. The essential message of that sermon. It's really. Stayed with me.

Because he just made that point. He emphasised this. Unstable as water. You know. Unstable as water. Don't be like that.

Don't be like that. Unstable as water. Thou shalt not excel. Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed. Then thou defilest thou it.

[21:31] He went up to my couch. So. The mistake that Reuben made. He committed incest with Bilhar. His father's concubine wife. And he blew it. Big time. He had the potential for excellency.

Excellency of dignity. Excellency of power. But no. Now God says. For Reuben. And his tribe. Thou shalt not excel. He was unstable as water. Brother.

Sister. Do not be unstable as water. Don't be unstable. Be. Solid. Solid. Be excellent.

Dare to be a Daniel. Daniel. Of Daniel it says. Chapter 6. Verse 3. Of Daniel. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes. Because an excellent spirit.

Was in him. An excellent spirit. Was in him. And the king thought to set him. Over the whole realm. Daniel had. That excellent spirit. He wasn't afraid to step over the line.

[22:29] Daniel faced the lion's den. Daniel braved an angry king. Face to face. And many enemies. An excellent spirit was found in him.

What about you? Mr. or Mrs. Average. Or Mr. and Mrs. Excellent. An excellent spirit. An excellent spirit was found in him, the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is an excellent spirit, isn't it?

Some people talk about, oh, the Spirit, the Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit. Wow. How do you grasp that? The Holy Spirit.

God's Spirit. The Spirit of God. The Spirit of Christ. When we are shallow and superficial and average, it's the flesh that dominates, not the Spirit.

And we've got to kill that thing, don't we? I hate Andrew Craig. The old, ugly Andrew Craig. I've got to kill him all the time.

[23:32] He shows his ugly head. I've got to kick him and kill him, stab him, kick him, stomp on him, smash him, thrash him, beat him.

Crucify him, die daily. When we are shallow and superficial and average, it's the flesh that dominates, not the Spirit. The Spirit of God must have his way. Come to him empty-handed and give him your Spirit.

Let him renew your Spirit. He'll make it an excellent Spirit. It's his doing. An excellent Spirit will go beyond the average. An excellent Spirit will know the empowerment from on high.

He'll know God's empowerment. His strengthening. You won't be unstable as water. You're going to stand on the rock. Christ Jesus. You're going to be stable, steadfast, rock solid.

You're not going to be shaken there when you're on the rock. I urge you to grow, to excel. Now, I've got something to reveal here. It's the secret formula. I'll ask my able assistant here to reveal to you.

[24:34] And this will make it very clear. I'm sure you can all see this mathematical formula. This mathematical formula. But don't tell, nobody say what it is just yet.

Does anybody? No, just back a bit there. Okay. Just, can you see that? It all makes it all very plain, doesn't it? This is the answer for you here tonight.

Does anybody kind of capture, has anybody got a clue what this talks about? Anybody got any idea what this is? Well, all will be revealed. All will be revealed.

Just hold on to your, fasten your seatbelts and hold on to your seats here because I'm going to show you how to be an excellent Christian. And an excellent spirit.

I urge you to grow. And here's some ways to grow. And there's some mathematical formula here that we can, if you just memorize this, you'll be fine. This is the way.

[25:31] Okay. So, we'll see there and you'll start to cotton on to it as I turn to the scripture here. 2 Peter 1. 2 Peter 1. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ.

Okay. Now, here's the first mathematical formula, how we are to grow. How we are to grow to become an excellent Christian. Here are the secrets that we're going to reveal to you.

I know that there's someone else in our number who likes to say, I've got something special for you tonight. Something special for you tonight. And it just sort of keeps you in suspense until he reveals it.

Which he, and then he says, no, we haven't got time for that. You've got to come back next week for me to reveal what it is. But no, this is the first part of the mathematical formula, the mathematical equation.

And he starts off, Peter here, in his first letter, he says, to you that believe, elsewhere he says in his first letter, Peter says, to you that believe, he is precious.

[26:39] He is precious. And he also tells in his first letter of the precious blood of Jesus. And here in his second letter, Peter starts off talking about like precious faith.

Like precious faith. And later we're going to read about precious promises. So, you know, have a look in your concordance.

Maybe have a bit of a check of those verses that I've talked about. Precious things. In 1 Peter and 2 Peter. He is precious. The precious blood of Christ.

The precious faith. The precious faith. And the precious promises of God. And now I'm going to reveal this to you here tonight. What this is all about.

And I'm not going to write all the words out. But we're talking about like precious faith. Faith. Faith. Faith. And we see verse 2.

[27:41] Grace and peace be multiplied. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you. Through the knowledge. Of him that has called you to glory and virtue.

And we're going to talk about promises. So here's the. Here's just the first part. Of this secret formula here. Like precious faith.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you. Through the knowledge. Of God. The promises of God. Okay. So we're going to talk through this just. In a brief here.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you. Peter closes this letter with these words. He says. According as. Oh I missed that one. But. But grow in grace.

And in the knowledge. Of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory. Both now and forever. It says grow in grace. Grow in grace.

[28:45] And in the knowledge. Of Jesus Christ. Our Saviour. To him be glory. Glory both now and forever. Um. I'll go back here.

Verse 3. Of 2 Peter. 1. 2 Peter 1. According as his divine power. Have given unto us all things. That pertain unto life and godliness. Through the knowledge of him. That called us to glory and virtue. So God calls us to glory and virtue. He calls us to excellence.

And he tells us. Grace and peace. Be multiplied unto you. Through the knowledge. Of God. And his divine power.

His divine power. Faith. Grace. By grace are you saved. Through faith. Salvation. By grace are you saved.

[29:40] Through faith. Equals salvation. By grace we're saved. Through faith. Salvation.

That's where it begins. We're saved. We can stay there. And we will stay there. Because we're kept by God. But Paul tells us.

Peter rather. Tells us. Rather. Grow. In grace. He says there's something you can go beyond. You can go beyond.

You can grow. In your faith. You can grow in grace. And in the knowledge. Of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ. We're told to. Grow in grace. Peter says.

Grow in grace. He's telling us here. So okay. Mr and Mrs. Excellent. Here's what we need. The fuel for this fire. Here we read the secrets of.

[30:38] How we can grow to be an excellent Christian. So. We've seen the first part of the mathematical formula. Now let's go beyond. Above and beyond. And go excellent. Amen. We see.

Back in 2 Peter 1. To read. How it goes on. Verse 4. Of 2 Peter 1. It says. Whereby. Given unto us. Exceeding grace. Great. And precious promises.

The precious promises of God. That by these you might be partakers. Of the divine nature. Having escaped the corruption. That is in the world through lust. It tells us here.

It tells you here. That you have exceeding. Great. And precious. Promises. That's what they are.

They are exceeding. They are great. They are precious.

They are promises. Others. And by these it says. We can be partakers. Of the divine nature. You know. We can gloss over that. But just. Stop.

[31:34] And think about that. Partakers of the. Divine nature. Wow. Catch that. Partakers of the divine nature. And this is the great escape.

It tells us. We can escape. We can flee the city of destruction. We can escape the corruption. That is in the world through lust. And you. That are in the book.

You are the excellent ones. You that believe. These exceeding great. And precious promises. You will excel. You will exceed. You will escape. Escape. The others will stay ensnared.

In the. Corruption that is in the world. Through lust. There's many that stay there. Believe us. Believe us. Some of them.

That they are bogged down. They haven't escaped. The corruption. That is in the world. They're trapped. They're ensnared. They haven't escaped.

[32:31] They're captives. And think of that word. Corruption. What do you think of. When you. When you know something's corrupted.

You know. Oh. Yeah. Dead mouse. Tell me about dead mice. Corruption. It's rottenness. Isn't it? It stinks. Some people grow accustomed to that. They live in squalor. And their clothes reek of it.

But they cannot smell it anymore. They've grown used to it.

They've become satisfied with where they are. In the ranks of the average. You know. People here tonight. You know. When you visit someone. And they're not conscious of the corruption.

That is in their home. They don't smell it anymore. They've grown accustomed to it. They're used to it. They cannot smell it anymore. They've grown used to it.

[33:33] And we can be like that. Brothers. Sisters. We can get used to the corruption. That is in the world through lust. We can get used to it. We can get conditioned to it. And.

We can join the ranks of the average. You don't smell it anymore. Or. Or we can be partakers of the divine nature. Partakers of the divine nature.

Or rotten and imprisoned. God's got something much better. Hasn't he? Something better for us. Exceeding great. And precious promises. And. Brother. Sister here tonight.

I'm here to tell you. That you can. Know. Exceeding great. And precious promises. You can know victory. Personal victory. You can be a Mr. Excellent. Excellent. You can be a Mrs. Excellent.

These promises show us how. So far we've seen grace and peace be multiplied unto you. We've seen his divine power. We've seen the knowledge of God.

[34:28] We've seen his divine nature. We're saved. And there is a great escape. That's the multiplication process. Now we see the mathematical

formula.

The addition process. The addition process. Grace and peace be multiplied. Now add. Add to your faith. It says verse 5. And beside this.

Giving all diligence. Add to your faith. Virtue. Virtue. That's missing isn't it these days? Virtue. What's that?

Virtue. Something that's pure. It's. Blessed isn't it? Something that's virtuous.

It's something that's. It's something precious about virtue. And then it says add to your virtue knowledge. And to knowledge temperance.

[35:24] Temperance means. Hey I'm going to actually have some self control. I'm not going to go with the flow. I saw a little cartoon.

That showed a lot of people going with the flow. And it had a little kind of funny statement there. And it was Noah in the ark.

And the people going with the flow. Don't be there. Don't go where the flow is. Get in the ark. Amen. Don't go with the flow. It's temperance.

It's saying hey I'm going to actually say no. I'm going to say no to sin. Temperance. And then add to your temperance. Patience. Or perseverance. It means hey I'm going to go and keep on going. I'm going to be patient. And to patience add godliness it says. Godliness. And to godliness brotherly kindness. Oh I miss godliness there. We'll put that one in. Godliness.

[36:24] And brotherly kindness. And then add to brotherly kindness. Charity. For if these things be in you and abound it says. They shall make you that you neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It's saying you can be excellent. You can abound. You can be abounding. You can be fruitful for God. You can be a fruitful Christian. Not a sterile stagnant one. But a fruitful blossoming abounding one.

And God's plan for abounding is right here. Grace and peace be multiplied. Add to your faith. Keep growing in your faith. Keep growing in those qualities of character.

Of conduct. And it goes on that he that lacketh these things is blind. Many people are blind to this. They just stay stuck in the mud.

In the rub. In the mire. Make your calling and election sure. Not unstable as water. Make your calling and election sure.

[37:28] Be sure. Be certain. Be steadfast. For if you do these things you shall never fall. Verse 10.

Then it goes on. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus Christ. Now let's talk about sanctification here. This is sanctification.

This is growing in your walk with God. And then it says. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things. Though you know them and be established in the present truth.

Peter is saying hey this is something to remember this. Remember this stuff. God wants you to be escaped. And he wants you to be established. He wants us to escape from the world and its clutches.

And to flee to Christ. To be established. To be founded. Grounded. In this present truth. And these are truths that we can know.

[38:31] The truth of multiplication. The truth of addition. These are truths that we can know. And Peter says. I don't want you to forget this. I want you to always be in remembrance of these things.

He says remember this. He says implant this into your memory bank. He says upload this into your hard drive. Between the ears. Plant them between your ears. Into the grey cells.

And in your heart. Don't be unstable as water. You will never excel. In other words don't be a flip flopper. Be a Daniel. Be a Daniel.

A stalwart. Steadfast. Unmovable. Always abounding. Be established. In the present truth. And he goes on.

He says it again. I want to stir you up. And remind you. I want you to remember this again. I want you to remember this. He says. I want to stir you up.

[39:29] To be excellent. You know. Sometimes as a preacher. I've got to stir people up. Don't I? If I'm not stirring you up. I'm not doing my job. I've got to stir you up.

And I'm doing that. I pray in a godly way. And please stir me up too. I need some stirring. And I know some of you are really good stirrers. But you know. We need to stir up one another. Don't we? To stir us up. And to get this truth. Lodged into our mind. Into our spirit. These are truths to remember. These are scriptures to commit to memory. Don't settle for average. God wants you to be fruitful. Not unfruitful. He wants our faith to grow bigger and stronger. To step out. Of that state of being average.

Which we can get satisfied there. And we can be like Lot. He was saved. But he lingered in the plain of Sodom. He was in the wrong place.

[40:24] At the wrong time. And the corruption that is in the world. Through lust. Maybe Lot stopped smelling it. I've had that happen actually.

Talking about mice. You know. There was a time. We had a mouse die. In our bedroom. And it was really hard to get to sleep. It was so.

It was such a corruption. It was such a rottenness. That it was just foul odour. And eventually the smell went away. But you know.

We can get like that can't we? The corruption. Oh. What's on TV tonight? Oh. Just a bit of nudity in that one. Just a few blasphemous words.

Just some sleazy scenes. Just some. You know. Lewd connotations. Just the odd swear word. Curse word.

[41:19] The odd bit of filth here. The odd bit of filth there. And the rottenness. We stop smelling it. We lose our sense of smell. The rottenness. The corruption.

That is in the world. Through lust. Don't linger in the plain of Sodom. Don't stay there. God has supplied the escape plan. For you and for me. To submit to God's authority. And to make it your priority.

To grow stronger. Make it your prayer. And the apostles cried out. Lord. Increase. Our faith. And you might say.

Preacher. I have trouble praying. Here's a four word prayer. You can memorize this one. A four word prayer. That's a good prayer to pray. Isn't it? Lord. Increase.

Our faith. Make it your prayer. God calls you to increase. He calls us to increase. The apostles said.

[42:15] Lord. Increase. Our faith. Peter goes on to. Sorry. Paul goes on to say. God's.

Desire for us. Is that you abound. In everything. He didn't. He didn't say. You know. He wasn't talking about material. The obsessions of.

The faith prosperity preachers. You know. I'm still waiting for my first jet. You know. You know. Some of you. No one's got me the first jet yet. But some preachers.

They want to have four of them. You know. You know. We're not talking about that. We're talking about abounding. What really matters. Aren't we? Abounding in everything. In faith. In utterance. In knowledge. In all diligence. And in your love. Abound in this grace. He says. There's some things to abound in. To increase in. And it's saying. You can't abound in everything.

[43:13] So be excellent in everything. In every area. I know there's a. There's a scripture that. It's been paraphrased. Be excellent. At what is good. Be innocent.

Of evil. That's a good way of thinking. I know. Julie and I were talking with someone. A family member. And someone said something. And it sounded a bit like a kind of common swear word. It wasn't a swear word. But it sounded like. A like to some kind of common place. Curse. A foul word.

A foul combination of words. And Julie said. I don't know what you're talking about. She was innocent concerning evil. We should be like that. Shouldn't we? We shouldn't be so conditioned by. All the garbage that's out there. All of the. The filthy. Thinking and talking of this world. Such that. Ah. We kind of snigger along with it.

[44:13] Because it's not funny. Be excellent. About what is good. And be innocent. Of evil. I know there's a scripture that. That's a paraphrase. Of what the scripture says.

But the context here is. Of being excellent. In everything. And brother. Sister. It begins and ends with grace. It's grace from the beginning. And it's grace at the end.

Grace be multiplied. Grace be multiplied. I'm not doing a Masonic thing here. But we're talking about grace here. Grace and peace be multiplied. Grow in grace.

Grow in grace. It's grace from beginning to end. God's grace. God's grace. God's grace. His divine nature. His precious promises. And it tells us. And so. Grace.

It's a concept. That. How do you define that? How can I put that into some simple words here? How can I abound in grace? How do I even know what grace is?

[45:12] How can we get grace? Well. I'm going to show you the secret. This is. I'm going to tell you something really special here tonight. Something. This is. This is something really special. Just for you that are here tonight.

The others that are not here. Are not going to hear this. Unless they watch the video. Let me see. But here is the reason. Here is the secret. How can I get grace? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore God. He saith. God resisteth the proud. But he gives grace unto the humble. How can we get grace? More grace. He giveth more grace.

More grace Lord. More grace Lord. Pour it out into my life Lord. As we get humble. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. He may exalt you in due time.

Humble yourselves in his sight. Don't get so prideful. You know. And as a preacher. It's something I've got to guard against. Because. It's very easy.

[46:11] To. Think. I know it all. I know it all. I know it. A to Z. Genesis to Revelation. I just know everything. And I know the right doctrine.

And I'm going to correct. All you lot. Who differ from me. You know. And you can get like that as a preacher. Can't we? We can get like that as a church too. Where we think. Oh. We've got it all down pat. And we've got it 100%.

Just so. Just perfect. And I'm not saying we shouldn't aspire to that. And seek. God helping us to be such a church. And to have such a confidence.

In his preaching. That you believe. That they are. Truly preaching the truth. And I pray that I am. Despite all my failures. And limitations. But.

It starts and ends with grace. Doesn't it? He gives more grace. He gives more grace. And he gives grace unto the humble. We've got to keep that humble spirit. We've got to keep humble. And.

[47:05] I know I touched on it briefly this morning. That actually some people help us. In that department. Don't they? They help us to have grace. We need people like that.

They help us to have grace. The people who hurt us. The people who vilify us. The people who attack us. They actually help us to exercise grace. And God's helping you to grow in grace.

It's a good thing. So. Friends here tonight. Do business with God. Be a torch bearer. Be a firebrand. Be one of those who will excel. Let's aspire.

Let's go beyond the multiplication. And get into the addition. To let God grow you. To extend you. To stretch you. To stretch you. So you can grow. And grow. And grow. You know.

John must have done a bit of that. As a young man. Just. You know. You grow. Don't you. You extend. You might be a basketballer one day. You know. God. You know. I'm talking spiritually though. How can we grow spiritually?

[48:04] We know the Bible says you can't add. A little bit to your stature. But. Sometimes we've got to actually. Get down. Not get high.

And lofty. But get low. And lowly. And humble ourselves. And then God can do a true work. Can't he? When we get on our face. When we get.

On our knees. When we get. Depending upon him. Ultimately. And absolutely. That's where it begins. And we serve the Lord Christ.

It says. These are scattered thoughts. But. With that. Essential theme. That you can grow. You can grow. And Peter says.

I want you to remember this stuff. This is. This is important. He says. Put it in remembrance. Stir up your minds. Remember this. This is going to help you. Grow in grace. He says.

[49:03] The whole book. Both the books. Talk about this. Growing. This feature of growing. Growing in grace. And it starts with getting to grips with. Who do we serve? Who is the one who we serve?

Do we serve ourselves? Or do we serve the Lord Christ? And if we serve the Lord Christ. Then whatever we do. We want to do it heartily. As unto the Lord.

Get to grips with who you serve. Don't settle for average. And it's getting that. In our thinking. When we're down at the workplace.

That actually. I'm not serving my manager. My supervisor. I'm serving the Lord Christ. So I'm going to do a good job. Because. I'm accountable to him.

And he will reward. Don't settle for average. Be Mr. And Mrs. Excellent. Follow Christ as your role model. And what does that mean?

[50:03] It means the cross. It means the cross. That's discipleship. We can stay in the plane.

With Lot. And lose the sense of smell. Oh. That's rotten. That's corrupt. I don't want the world.

It stinks. I don't want to. I don't want to hang around that. I want to get out of that. I want to escape.

And God tells you. You can. You can escape the world. And you can exceed.

And you can be. A man. A woman. With an excellent spirit. Wow. Wouldn't that be good? God says. You can be such a man. And you can be such a woman.

Let's pray. Lord. We thank you. That your word tells us. That. We are to grow in grace. Not to stay. Stagnant. And. And. Unstable. But rather.

[51:06] To be strong. And steadfast. Lord. Help us not to be. Like Reuben. Unstable as water. Help us Lord. To. Be like Daniel.

A man. With an excellent spirit. We pray. If there's any here. In the hearing of this. Lord. That. People might know. What it is. To. Know grace.

And peace. Multiply. The grace of God. The peace of God. To know your. Majestic. Mighty. Amazing grace. Abounding grace.

To the chief of sinners. Grace. Abounding. And peace. Peace that passes all understanding. That will keep our hearts and minds. Through Christ Jesus. Peace with God.

The peace of God. Grace and peace. Be multiplied. To have the knowledge. Of Jesus. To know Jesus. To know you.

[52:02] As Lord. To know you. As Savior. To know you. As our Redeemer. To know you. Dying on the cross. Rising from the dead. Triumphant. Our living Savior.

And Lord. Our Master. To know your power. God. That by that power. That by that power. We've got. Access to the. Holy of Holies. We've got.

Entrance. We've got. Grace. Beyond. Our. Comprehension. And salvation. By grace. We're saved. Through faith. And Lord. That faith. Let's not. Leave it. At that. But let's go. Beyond. That will add to our faith.

These godly truths. These godly characteristics. These godly virtues. These godly strengths. That will be a growing. Christian. And will be.

[52:57] Such that. Others will see. There's an excellent spirit. In this one. Not by any. Doing of our own. But because. We've humbled ourselves. And received. Your gracious gift.

We bless you Lord. Help us to grow in grace. In Jesus name. Amen.