

## SCRIPTURES FOR 6/11/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

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### **2 Timothy 4:2**

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

### **Colossians 3:17**

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

### **Colossians 3:23**

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men

### **Luke 11:39**

Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness.

### **1 Peter 1:13-16**

Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

### **Philippians 1:9-11**

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

<p>NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed</p>
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## LESSON 1: LET'S DEFINE EXCELLENCE

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**NOTE TO LEADERS:** All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

### INTRODUCTION:

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*Have someone read 2 Timothy 4:2.*

In order to encourage excellence, Paul exhorts Timothy, like the Boy Scouts, to “be prepared” and also to be “careful,” and in Colossians he tells us why.

### EXCELLENCE IS NOT...

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*Have someone read Colossians 3:17 & 23.*

Since we are instructed to do everything “in the name of the Lord” how should that impact our activity?

Does this mean we must do everything perfectly?

Excellence is not perfection. We are called to do everything to the best of our ability “as working for the Lord” not perfectly.

Do you have to be a professional to serve?

Excellence is not professionalism. We are called to do our best not impress people, doing everything “for God, not men.”

Should you step away from a particular ministry you love because someone else could do it better?

Excellence is not comparison to others or trying to be someone you are not. You are called to do “whatever YOU do” “in the name of the Lord.” What someone else does is between them and God.

Does something have to be firmly grounded in tradition to be excellent?  
Does it have to be the newest thing?

*Have someone read Luke 11:39.*

Excellence is not chasing after the latest trend or keeping up appearances. It goes below the surface to your motivations. Just do it “with all your heart.”

When we strive for excellence and plan things out and prepare, do we crowd out the Holy Spirit?

*Have someone read 1 Peter 1:13-16.*

To prepare and be self-controlled is counted as holy. The Holy Spirit can work through your preparation.

### EXCELLENCE IS...

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*Have someone read Philippians 1:9-11.*

Excellence is striving for you best because it brings glory to God and knowing it is best because the Spirit empowers you.

What can we do to improve and still bring God the glory?

How do we strive for excellence without attracting attention to ourselves?

Excellence is hard work. It is never easy doing your “best” when you know you could get away with just “good.” You can see how God feels about that by looking at Ananias and Sapphira. They lost their lives, not because they did not give all they had, but because they said they did and they didn’t. God does not want you to do everything perfect, He just wants your honest best effort.

### CONCLUSION

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Excellence means God deserves our best always.