

The Terre Haute

SPEAKER

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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ARE YOU EXCELLENT?

Nicolas Edwards

Psalm 16:3, “*But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the **excellent**, in whom is all my delight.*” The saints are said to be the Lord’s “*excellent ones*” (NKJV). As children of God, we have a high standard! We are to be excellent. This is defined as: “of the highest or finest quality, exceptionally good.” The opposite of “excellent” is: “average, mediocre, usual, ordinary, just getting by.” Many people want to do the bare minimum, and still get by. This is not acceptable! Are you excellent?

GOD IS EXCELLENT.

“*Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his **excellent** greatness*” (Ps. 150:1-2). Just as God is excellent, He expects His people to be excellent!

“EXCEED” AND “ABOUND”.

“*For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall **exceed** the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*” (Mt. 5:20). Notice our righteousness must “*exceed*”. This means to abound, go above and beyond, excel, overflow, to make abundant or excellent. 1 Corinthians 15:58 tells us,

“*Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, **always abounding** in the work of the Lord....*” We are to be an abounding people! This too means: “to overflow, to excel more than, to go above and beyond.” This is the exact opposite of average, just getting by, or doing the bare minimum. The Corinthians were said to “*Abound in everything*” (2 Cor. 8:7). They did not do the bare minimum, nor did they just get by. They excelled and went above and beyond in every thing! How about you?

GOD HAS ALWAYS REQUIRED THE BEST. “*But whatsoever hath a blemish, that shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein*” (Lev. 22:20-21). “*And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? Saith the LORD of hosts*” (Mal. 1:8). In Genesis 4, God respected Abel’s offering but had not respect unto Cain’s. “*By faith Abel offered unto God a more **excellent** sacrifice than Cain...*” (Heb. 11:4). God has never accepted anything less than the very best!

“*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service*” (Rom. 12:1). Do you give your best? Do you exceed and abound in everything? Are you excellent? Sadly, so many, even members of the Lord’s church, who claim to be faithful, want to do the bare minimum and still expect to be accepted by God and go to heaven. They are like those in Malachi 1:13 who said, “*Behold, what a weariness is it!*” Is it a weariness to assemble with the saints faithfully? Is it a weariness to dress your best to show reverence? There is a reason David washed, anointed, and changed his apparel before going to worship the Lord (2 Sam. 12:20)! “*God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him*” (Ps. 89:7). Is it a weariness to give your best in every thing? “*The righteous scarcely be saved...*” (1 Pet. 4:18). You will not accidentally make it to heaven. You will not “Just get by” and make it to heaven. Either you will make it or you won’t. God expects us to be excellent and only accepts the very best! Do you accept average or are you excellent? It takes more than the bare minimum to be accepted by God!

BIBLE MEMORIALS

John Edwards

With May 29 being Memorial Day, a day for remembrance of those who have died in service to our country, it is a good time to call attention to memorials of the Bible.

THE RAINBOW. God made this promise after the Genesis flood: “...neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth” (Gen. 9:11). As a token of His covenant, God set His rainbow in the cloud saying, “*And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant...*” (Gen. 9:14-16). Thus, the rainbow is a reminder of God’s promise to never again send a flood to destroy all flesh.

THE LORD’S PASSOVER. The Lord’s passover was heaven’s way of protecting

Israel from the tenth plague brought upon the Egyptians — the death of the firstborn (Ex. 11-12). It became a memorial day unto the children of Israel (Ex. 12:14). The Lord instructed Moses to say unto the people, “**Remember this day...** *And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes...*” (Ex. 13:3-10).

THE SABBATH. The fourth commandment of the ten was, “**Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy**” (Ex. 20:8). Do you know why God commanded Israel to keep the sabbath day? Deuteronomy 5:15 holds the answer: “*And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.*” The sabbath was a memorial day.

TWELVE STONES OF JORDAN. At the Jordan River crossing, when “*the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant*” (Josh. 4:7), “*and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground*” (Josh.

3:17), the Lord instructed that a man out of every tribe take twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan. He said, “*...and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever*” (Josh. 4:7).

THE WOMAN WITH THE PRECIOUS OINTMENT. Matthew tells of “*a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment*” who came “*and poured it on*” the head of Jesus in Matthew 26:6-13. The Lord said, “*Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her*” (v. 13).

THE LORD’S SUPPER. The Lord’s supper is a memorial of the Lord’s death. When Jesus instituted the Lord’s supper, He took bread (which represents His body) and the cup (which represents His blood) saying, “*...this do in remembrance of me*” (1 Cor. 11:23-25). This great memorial is observed by Christians “*...upon the first day of the week...*” (Acts 20:7).

Don’t overlook the great memorials of the Bible.

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