

# MORE, MORE, MORE - To Be Holy Dissatisfied

By Dr. Joe Miller

**Bible Text:** 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

**Preached on:** Sunday, August 5, 2012

This morning I am going to be in 1 Thessalonians chapter four so you can turn there if you have your Bibles. And this morning's message is entitled, "MORE, MORE, MORE - To Be Holy Dissatisfied."

Now John Piper in his book *A Godward Life*, he says this. "One mark of Christian authenticity is discontentment with anything less than the fullness of God." I really love that statement, because it is just jam packed. We live in a world and I believe we live in a church age where this concept of being discontented with where we are at in our spiritual walk is something that is just alien. We are so content with salvation, which we should be, but that is only one part of our journey here. It is, indeed, these ancient words that we cling to, that we desire to see in our lives bring help and bring hope. But more often than not in my experience with students and also with adults, there is this contentment with salvation and nothing else. But quite on the contrary it should be that salvation, it should be that gospel that moves us to want to be more in Christ.

And so Piper goes on. He says, "Coasting is not what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Drifting in self contentment is not like basking in the pool of security, but like floating fast asleep towards the treacherous and deadly waterfall." And that is what we see happening with our children within our church. Eighty-five percent after high school they are going to leave the church and not going to come back. Of those that stay and those that continue to grow in the Church, continue to attend church, one of 11 will have any realistic or bear any manifestation of spiritual growth.

So the statistics keep telling us. We are content with salvation that is it. Leave me alone, God. I have my own life to live. And yet we find ourselves and our church floating fast asleep toward a treacherous and deadly waterfall. We pay, we must pay, as Piper says, much closer attention to what we have heard from God's Word and what we have been taught so that we may not drift away down that river. There is such a thing, Piper says, as holy dissatisfaction. It is not a nail biting uncertainty about our standing with God and our eternal security, rather it is the increased appetite of the true believer who has tasted and seen that God is good. It is pursuit of those who have been pursued and captured by the strong arm of Christ.

When was the last time you experienced the strong arm of Christ in your life? And rather than seeing it as a process of agony and a practice of discontentment you see it as something in credible to be captured by the strong arm of Christ and his love?

The apostle Paul stated, "Not hat I have already attained it or have already become perfect, but we must press on so that we may lay hold of that for which also we lay hold of by whom? Christ Jesus."

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Folks, there is thing called a process of sanctification that we are all called to participate in. Yes, we have been saved. Yes, we are eternally secure, but now we are in the midst of this wonderful process. And that is why in 1 Thessalonians chapter four, along with many other passages of God's Word, there is this desire here at least by the apostle Paul to wake up the drowsy soul, to say, "Enough is enough with being satisfied with where you are at, with your current state in Christ, with your spiritual walk. Enough is enough."

In many ways he saying it is time to saddle up. And for the men and women of God to act exactly like that, men and women of God, to have a passionate desire, to desire this intimate daily relationship with Christ. This is the conviction of John Piper and his quote, but this is also, more importantly, the conviction of the apostle Paul as he is addressing here in this chapter the Thessalonian believers.

And this is not Paul taking time to sort of beat them up side the head. In fact, you will find at the end of this lesson that Paul is actually coming with this incredible encouraging heart. Paul understood that he could urge his Thessalonian children to excel in their Christian walk. But we can also do this same thing with one another. He realized that any encouragement that he can give will only work with the believer—and this is really key—who desires to truly grow. But, folks, in my experience I find very few believers who desire to grow. They are just content. And as a result if, mom and dad, you are content, don't expect your children to be holy dissatisfied. Expect them to compromise. Expect them to be even less than where you are at.

Here Paul is giving them encouragement that will work towards a believer who truly desires to grow, that they would develop this passionate desire that is endless, a desire not only for God's Word, but to understand his will and his good pleasure in their life on a daily basis. When was the last time you asked yourself, "God, what is your good pleasure for my life today? What would bring you pleasure? What would you have me do?"

I find myself more times than not, going to my Spurgeon devotional, *Morning and Evening*, by the way, and reading that devotional and saying, "Wow, Spurgeon, you are right on." Folding that thing up and then I go about my own life. I never ask or rarely ask God, "What is your good pleasure for me today?"

Folks, this happens in the best of churches, in the finest of Bible colleges and seminaries. There is this danger, this danger of the faithful believer that entertains the idea that somehow they have arrived spiritually., because they have done their time, they have done Bible college. They have taught Sunday school lessons. They have listened to a lifetime of iPod recordings from every reformed, evangelical, exegetically driven, expositional pastor that is out there and that somehow they have been able to somehow merit the fact that they have never participated in some horrendous sin that somehow disqualifies them from having that feeling that I have arrived. In other words, in their

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opinion, the process of sanctification and the process of spiritual growth, they have already hit the limit on that. There is nowhere else to go, but just to wait for that calling.

Folks, that is just pride. That is pride to assume that you stand on your own. That is pride to assume that God has nothing more for you to do this very day.

We know this not to be true, because the Bible reminds us that no one in the history of man or in the history of the Church has ever arrived. No one has come to that complete Christ likeness. Even the apostle Paul reminds us this morning of this sober fact.

Turn to Philippians chapter three. Paul, speaking of that energy, that passion that believers should possess in their walk beginning at verse 12.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead...<sup>1</sup>

It is this constant reminder. I am reaching for more of Christ every day, desiring more of him in my life. And therefore, verse 14:

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained.<sup>2</sup>

Beloved, Paul is reminding us, just like he is reminding the spiritual children in his church in Thessalonica. Yes, they have this strong knowledge of God's Word. Yes, they were committed to Christ. But like any believer, they might also be tempted to settle.

You know, one of the challenges of a pastor that has been behind the pulpit for years they can fall prey to the idea of just settling. I am tired. The race is growing weary for me. I am done. I have done my time. And yet Paul is encouraging not only us, but the Thessalonian believers never to be holy satisfied, but be holy dissatisfied.

It is my desire this morning to just give you a glimpse of what that would look like. This letter that Paul has written, there is some background information I think will be meaningful and helpful for you in understanding Paul's heart here. He was the man responsible for shepherding as the apostle of this church in Thessalonica. And when Paul

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<sup>1</sup> Philippians 3:12-13.

<sup>2</sup> Philippians 3:14-16.

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arrived in Thessalonica he did what was so traditional for Paul. He went straight to the Jewish synagogue. He just went straight there. Paul had this go to ministry mentality. He didn't wait for people to come to him. He went to them and he went out and he preached. For 15 days he preached Christ from the Old Testament. He showed Christ as the Messiah, the one who suffered on Calvary's cross and was resurrected from the grave and the fruit of his ministry is seen in those ethnic Jews, those Greeks who embraced Judaism and now had heard this gospel message, embracing it, clinging to it as well as other Gentiles. And yet because of the great success of this preaching, you use these envious Jews have denied Christ and now they are attempting to harm Paul's reputation and destroy his ministry. You see that in Acts 17, beginning in verse five. And these envious Jews did whatever they could to turn people and their hearts away from that church and away from the apostle Paul's teaching, away from the gospel and in many ways their scheme did work and the church fathers sent Paul away with Silas and Timothy.

But Paul is just the man. Paul is the shepherd that just, I am going to go where other shepherds fear. He said, "You might have driven me out, but I am not going to lose contact with my children."

And so he sends Timothy back to Thessalonica to keep a tab on his spiritual children. And so one of Paul's goals here in this letter is to encourage them, not to rebuke them but to encourage them to be even more resolved, that word resolved means to be even more committed, striving towards greater Christ likeness, to never be satisfied with the state of holiness, to be holy dissatisfied, to not be like many with the churches today that if you just follow the rules, if you just go to church, just do student ministry and make sure you show up, Awana and make sure you memorize those verses and you fill out that book and you make sure that mom fills out that book. You need her signature {?}.

But that isn't hat Paul is talking about here. H is talking about something completely different. He is talking about this loving desire to please God, this loving desire to bring glory to him in everything that they would do that day, to bring glory to the one who saved them from their sins and from themselves, from eternal punishment.

So this morning we are going to look at these first two verses in chapter four where Paul is going to introduce two essential elements for helping believers, for helping this pastor, these elders, moms and dads, brothers and sisters, to help them passionately pursue that ultimate goal of Christ likeness, to desire more and more of Christ by learning and living out in their daily lives this first point which is Paul's technique.

Let's look at verse one. Find out what we mean by Paul's technique.

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“Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to live and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.”<sup>3</sup>

So Paul begins this discussion of how a believer can achieve this goal to be pursuing, to be more like Christ and so he is going to give a few hints, a few techniques for helping the Thessalonians, for you and I to grow in our daily walk. We will look back there to the beginning of verse one. Paul says this in this simple phrase, “Finally, then,” or furthermore. What that means is Paul is saying, “Now, look, everything I just got done saying to you, here is my point now.”

The first three chapters we hit this finally then and now he is going to encourage them to strive after these things. So he calls them brothers there in verse one. See that mention of we there, Paul, Silas, Timothy. They are all asking, they are requesting the Thessalonians as spiritual children to strive towards is Christ likeness. But keep in mind here. That word ask it is not like Paul is going to them like some sort of general saying, “I command you, therefore to do this.” That is not the heart of Paul here. The heart of Paul is more like a parent. It is more like a loving mentor, not like a coach that sits down and give me 20 and then run 20 laps and then after that come and talk to me and I will tell you what. I am going to boot you off the team. Rather, Paul is coming with his loving, gentle, patient, this attitude of requesting these brothers in Christ, these sisters in Christ: Don’t be satisfied with where you are at.

In fact that word urge in verse one, encouraging them towards spiritual excellence, not to be satisfied with the same old, same old like we tend to be satisfied with. But he said, “Look, I am encouraging you,” παρακαλεω (par-ak-al-eh’-o) is the Greek word. “I am coming alongside of you and I am encouraging you.” In fact, there is a good description. It is almost like Paul is giving this sort of apostolic nudge, this little push. Go. Continue on. Don’t be satisfied with sitting there. Go. Like we do with our children and children they go to send your two or three year old to vacation Bible school and they are like, “You know, I don’t want to go in, mom. It is a little bit intimidating.”

“Well, you need to go in there. Vacation Bible school, that is the place to be. Let’s go.”

“Ah, I just can’t do that.”

You find yourself saying, “Just go.”

Why do we encourage them to do that? Because we know something good is going to come out of that experience. And that is what Paul is saying here. It is more than a

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<sup>3</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

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request, but it is less than a command. But it is this encouragement of having his spiritual children run and pursue after spiritual growth.

There is a story of a nine year old boy. The story is about how the mother of this nine year old boy was getting very frustrated with him. She was paying for piano lessons and the boy was getting bored with it so she was constantly having to nag the child to practice and so she thought, you know what? I need to do something to encourage this child to continue on in practicing piano and to strive towards learning how to be a master of that instrument. And so she that {?} the great pianist was performing a concert that next day and so she went out and bought two tickets for herself and for her son. And so when that day came she dressed the boy up in his little tuxedo.

The boy is like, "Where are we going?"

She says, "We are going to a concert."

He says, "I don't want to go to the concert. I don't want to wear his tuxedo."

She says, "You are going, all right?"

We do that all the time as parents. And so they get dressed up. They take off. They enter the concert hall. They actually had seats right in the front row. So mom and son they sit down and, of course, what moms do well is reach over and say, "Hey, how are you doing?" She starts chit chatting with other people. Well, the boy is sitting there in the front. Mom is not paying attention so he gets bored. He starts looking around like children and notices that up on the stage is this wonderful grand piano and the top is open like the top is open here. He sees that the lid is open and so he looks around like kids do and he gets up, walks along the front of the stage, goes up the steps, sits in the leather seat and he starts playing chopsticks.

And so this kid is playing chopsticks and he doesn't care what the crowd thinks and the people in the crowd are like, "Who is that child? What deadbeat mom let that child get up on stage?"

So it was causing a little bit of a commotion. That boy didn't care. He just kept playing. Well, in the back you have got {?} and he is getting ready to come out. He is fixing his tie. He is checking his hair, making sure he has enough, you know, axe hair gel in his hair to make sure he is looking good. And then he all the sudden hears this chopstick music going on. And he looks outside the stage and, you know, he laughs a little. And so he ends up doing something really cool. As this boy is playing chopsticks, he sneaks up around the boy and he puts his hands around the child and he starts playing this melody that just accompanies the chopsticks. And he starts whispering into this child's ear just something that only the child can hear. Keep going. Keep playing. You are doing great.

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Just keep going. Don't stop. Don't worry about what other people are thinking. Just keep going.

All of us in this room need a {?}. We need someone that is going to come up and encourage us to be more than we are in our walk.

We have everything in Christ. He has fulfilled everything, but we still have a ways to go in establishing a moral character that resembles his. We just need people in our lives that will do that, that will come alongside, that will encourage us. And that is truly the desire of the hearts of the elders here at Calvary Bible Church. They want people to come into your life, reach their arms around us and start playing some accompanying music so that your life, your song will be even sweeter of a note than it is today.

And this is part of Paul's technique. He has this wonderful pastoral warmth. You know, when you think of Paul you don't think of Paul as being this really kinder, gentler guy. You know? You think of him as being this staunch let's get it done. John Mark, you are not coming. Thanks for playing. Go on. You know? Just leaving devastation behind. That is not Paul. Paul has this wonderful warmth as he has this wonderful love for Christ's children. And this is what Paul is doing in this letter to the Thessalonians here in chapter four. He is asking them to keep playing, keep pursuing, continue on, don't get frustrated. Don't let sin that you are struggling with take you out. Let's find a way in which we can help you put it off and then put on something that is made in the image of Christ. Let's continue to build your moral character. And that is our desire here. That is the desire of this pulpit. That is the desire of the men that lead this church and guide this church and shepherd this church, to find where your perfect niche is at, to find where you can thrive in your relationship with the Lord, not only in service, but how we can help you grow in your love and in your passion for Christ.

So back in the middle of verse four Paul reminds the Thessalonians that they are brothers and sisters in the Lord. He is reminding them that you have been supernaturally regenerated, that you have been born again by saving faith. You are in. But now it is time to get serious about our walk, this process of pursuing wisdom. It is not a wisdom that we just leave locked here in that brain. It is a wisdom that comes from this head and enters that spiritual heart and we start manifesting a difference, more Christ likeness, becoming holy dissatisfied with where we are at. That status quo of life must be put aside.

Back in 1 Corinthians chapter two and verse 14 Paul speaks of that natural person who does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness. They can't even understand it. They have no way of spiritually discerning its truths. And yet, folks, there have been many points in my walk where I have reflected this, where I am sitting there and I am like, you know, I understand what the Word of God says, but right now I love my sin more than I love God. That is a matter of fact. I have made that statement in the

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quietness of my heart. But yet it has been the Spirit of God. It has been the Word of God. It has been other believers that have come into my life during that time that have noticed, you know what? You are not on your game today. What is going on? How come you are not at peace? You are not having this great joy. Something is not right with you. And they have come around, come into my life and put their arms around me and started playing an accompanying melody, just to get me back on track.

Do we need that? Yes, we do. Why? Because Christ has supplied it for us. That is what the body of Christ is for. Not to show up on a Sunday and then boogie and have the other six days to yourself. It is to be holy dissatisfied with where I am at and to get around other transformed, regenerated believers who have the same Spirit that I have and can encourage me in greater likeness in Christ. I mean, that is what we are supposed to do. And yet we find that we become so comfortable with pulling in for two hours throughout the week and thinking that is enough.

Folks, it is not enough for me and, therefore, it certainly must not be enough for you. I say that with a jest. But it is true, folks. It is not enough. Paul is talking about something that is happening all the time. And yet we have become so content with where we are at. And so Paul's technique here of excelling in Christ, it doesn't happen when you just come to church for a couple of hours and maybe come on Wednesday night. It doesn't happen when you click spiritual red ruby shoes and think, presto, chango, I am done. It is not like that, folks. The process, it can be relentless at times. It is joyful. It is challenging, but it is more than saying a prayer, going to church every once in a while.

That is why Paul in the middle of verse one says that we have given you these divine principles, these spiritual truths and you have ... that you have receive how you ought to what? Walk and do what? Please God. It is one thing to do your quiet time. It is one thing to give your offering. It is one thing to show up. You know, I am doing my walk thing. I am letting everybody... I am doing my walk thing. It is an entirely different thing to know that when you get up in the morning, you prepare yourself. You are going to do that quiet time. Having that thought that I am pleasing God in this process, whether anybody is watching me or not, I am pleasing God.

Folks, pleasing God is not a matter of personal choice. It is this unquestionable need and passion that we possess. We can't do it on our own. It is inspired. It is powered by the Spirit of God. It is when individuals come into your life and point out wonderful truths from God's Word and look at this. The Word of God is sufficient. Look at this. There is help and hope here. Look at what the Word of God has to say about what you are struggling with right now.

Dr. Mayhew who has done a work in Paul's letter to the Thessalonians here, he brings a really neat insight where most people's translations of the Bible leave out the last half of verse one. They say they fail to include it and it sort of takes away the sweetness of the



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meaning of what Paul is trying to communicate here. And yet there are these... really these five wonderful words where he says:

“...that you do so more and more.”<sup>4</sup>

He is saying, “Look, you have learned and received from us how you ought to walk and how you ought to please God, just as you are doing. That you do so more and more.” And Paul is saying, “You are doing it. Just do it more and more. Just keep going.”

The finishing line is not here yet. Keep running that race. Keep actively pursuing this. We need to be doing that in the lives of one another

You know, you go and do a word search on the one anothers. That list is pretty long. The question is: Are we doing the one anothers?

What are some of the things, some of the fundamental techniques that will help in our Christian living? I think we need to do this. We need to confess sin regularly. I think it is appropriate to do it in the quietness of your heart with your Lord and Savior, but also appropriate to maybe ask for forgiveness of someone that you have dishonored, someone that you have disrespected, someone you have sinned against. I think we need to be practicing that more often. We need to pray continually and trust Jesus with our daily needs. Are we doing that? Are we just taking these daily needs for granted? Are we pursuing humility? That is a big one. To have a humble heart, because without that humble heart we realize that we are nothing without Christ. To be content with God’s Word as seen or with God’s will as seen in his Word. Are we pursuing his will? Or is it something that we learn about but we never really bring to the point of action and doing? Are we willing to suffer for Christ’s sake?

I was just reading that letter from that missionary in the South Sudan and that is a guy who has suffered who was willing to do that, not just for the sake of people that he is ministering to, he is doing it for the glory of God. That is just a wonderful example to us all. Are we willing to evangelize the lost? Are we walking by people every day that we know are not saved and just letting them continue in that state without interjecting a that can transform their lives?

When we celebrate the Lord’s supper, we will being that, I believe, next week, are we remembering not only sacrifice, but the fact that he is going to return one day and the fact that that return is immanent. And given the fact that it is immanent puts us on sort of a deadline, a state of urgency. Do we live with that urgency? Are we caring for one another?

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<sup>4</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:1.

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Do we honor God in our marriages and in our families? Husbands and wives, are you playing a role of that sanctifying process with your spouse? Are you helping them to grow? Are you speaking truth into their life? Are you challenging them? Are you encouraging them? Moms and dads, are you investing the time that your children need or are you spending more time trying to accomplish a Sunday school lesson or mow the lawn or maybe prepare for the next day, the job requirement? Are you investing in your children?

Our society right now is seeing the results of not investing in our children inside and outside the church. Are we desiring to be faithful and fruitful in all of the areas of service to Christ?

See, this is just some of the things that we can do to encourage one another, to live a passionate life for Christ. The Thessalonians they were getting it done. But yet Paul was not satisfied with that. He wasn't even satisfied with where his walk was at. He was desiring, as Paul says, to do so more and more, to excel.

The Greek word περισσευω (per-is-syoo'-o), that word to excel or to do so more and more and more. It is the idea of that which is abundantly supplied to overflowing, to exist in its full quantity, to be over and above and around it.

Can you bear testimony that your life in Christ and aspiring to be more like him has the sort of adjectival description that you are overflowing with that passion. It exists in full quantity that over and above and around this is who you are, desiring not to live an ordinary life, but an extraordinary life. That is what we desire for you here.

As a shepherd to the flock, as an elder to the church, we desire for you to have this extraordinary life in Christ. We are not talking about its quantitative where we are filling every seat here. God desires for that. If that is his will, awesome. But we are more concerned about the qualitative. Where are you? Are you growing? Are you putting off self, putting on Christ? Do you have that psalmist viewpoint in Psalm 42 and verse one? Do you pant for the flowing streams that is available in Christ Jesus? It is available in our Lord and Savior. These are the basic ingredients for pursuing this kind of spiritual growth and, again, just let me be clear here. It is not about simply gaining knowledge. I have been in enough Bible colleges and seminaries to know that gaining knowledge is not what it is all about. I mean, that is part of it, folks, but here must be something supernatural going on in your heart. There must be a practice of where you see these great truths coming into that ear canal and it is being translated and transforming your spiritual heart attitude, because there is a lot of things that we can do that are just simply manmade. I can get up. I can come to church. I can get up. I can read my Bible. I can get up and go and serve someone. I can do that in my flesh. And everybody can look and say, "Wow, he is super spiritual."

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I am not super spiritual and I will not be doing it to please and glorify God if I am doing it for ulterior motives. We are looking for people here at Calvary Bible Church that desire to know, to love, to please and to glorify God more and more and more.

1 Corinthians nine beginning in verse 24, “Do you not know, Calvary Bible Church, that in a race all the runners run?”

He is making a very clear point. All the runners run, but only one receives the prize. Do you not know that? And if that is true, only one receives the prize, then run that you may obtain it. Run that you may be the one that wins this race. Every athlete exercises self control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we here at Calvary, we do it to gain something that is imperishable. So do not run aimlessly. Don't box as if you are boxing in the air. Have a target. Have a goal. Discipline your body. Keep it under control like a slave, lest you find yourself laboring and even preaching and you find yourself disqualified.

What are we trying to do here? What am I trying to do here without I hope not coming across condemning at all, because I am speaking to myself. I am coming across as trying to be the guy who is encouraging you to greater Christ likeness, wanting to love Christ more and more and more. And it is not just about learning. It is about learning and doing. It is about getting involved in people's lives. It is not... folks, too many times we see people that are struggling within the church walls and we just wink at that. We let them walk through the doors and we do nothing to come alongside and help them. Folks, we cannot do that. We are called to the one another. That is our desire here at Calvary.

That was a long first point. Now for a short second point. And how do we do that? Verse two. What is sort of the foundation of all this?

“For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.”<sup>5</sup>

All the encouragement, all the subtle nudging, all the information, all the data that he is saying, “Don't be satisfied with where you are at. Be holy dissatisfied. Shoot of the extraordinary.” He says you can do it. Why? Because we have given you the transforming truths. The Word of God is sufficient, 2 Timothy chapter three beginning in verse 16, sufficient to transform your lives. It is sufficient to bring you help. It is sufficient to bring you hope, because they are the spoken Word of God. And that is what Paul is trying to encourage them to do to one another, giving them the green light, take this instruction in, the instruction from Christ. Give this command, this directive. It is not just to command people to do it, but it is the idea of take what you have heard from us. Pass it on.

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:2.

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Good grief, folks. This pulpit ministry for maybe 15 years, give or take a few—I am not really dialed into the exact time that this pulpit ministry began—but this pulpit ministry is extraordinary. And yet what are you doing with the extraordinary things that you are hearing? How many of you are taking these truths home and you are reflecting on them throughout the week? I mean, we think that we can come as elders and present this student ministry and children's ministry where we teach your children these wonderful things from these curricula that we think are really solid, rock solid, guys that are preaching the Word of God and yet if we are not writing these things down and taking them into our families and then reflecting and talking about them throughout the week in the rising up and the walking and the lying down, we're fooling ourselves. We are absolutely fooling ourselves thinking that somehow our children are going to be ok. Somehow my spouse is going to be ok. Somehow they are not going to struggle with any sin issue that we find as being horrendous and all of the sudden we are shocked and awed. How could this have happened?

This pulpit ministry is attempting to do that. But you have to take these truths, start writing them down. If you can leave here with one nugget of truth and apply it to your family's life or to your spouse's life or to a neighbor that week, man, you are golden, absolutely golden. But if you walk out of here writing down a bunch of notes, you stick it in your Bible and all of the sudden, oh, you find out you have 15 of them because they fell out one day as you were getting out of the car, you have got a problem. We should be actively pursuing to be more and more in Christ. We have the instruction. We have the commands.

I love this story. It was one day said that Mark Twain while he was traveling on a train he ran into this ruthless businessman who was from Boston and this business man was boasting about everything. He was boasting that he got his way with everyone. And he was determined to get his way in everything. And he said this to Twain. He said, "Before I die, Mr. Twain, I want to make a pilgrimage to the holy land and I am going to climb Mount Sinai. And when I get up there I am going to read the 10 Commandments out loud at the top of my voice."

Unimpressed Twain paused a little bit and he turned and he looked at the guy in the eye and he said, "You know what? I have a better idea for you. Why don't you just stay here and just do them."

Folks, I think in the same way God is asking us to do the same thing in our lives. We can take these truths and we can study them and we can write them down. But if we are not applying them, if we are not taking these truths that we have learned and we are not coming up to individuals that might be a newly married couple have a child, just kind of playing the melody in front of him, if we are not doing that, shame on us. If we are not coming to a chaplain who has been in ministry for years and assuming that he has got his act together and it is all good and he is all golden, if we are not coming alongside him,

# MORE, MORE, MORE - To Be Holy Dissatisfied

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playing a melody alongside what he is doing, shame on us. If we are not doing that, then never be surprised when you hear, oops, did you hear about this couple? Oh, you mean the couple that we failed to get involved in?

Did you hear about this child? Oh, you mean the one that we just... we could have disciplined him, but we really didn't.

Folks, please don't get me wrong. I am not saying that the burden of responsibility is totally on us. But we are called to invest in people's lives. And just to say, you know, the sovereignty of God, then I think we have a wrong view of the sovereignty of God if it excuses our moral responsibility to invest in people's lives.

We must be continually dissatisfied with where he is at, with where she is at, with where I am at, with where pastor Dave is at. We should be dissatisfied. What we should be desirous of is seeing the extraordinary taking place every week, Lord willing.

I am running out of time so I am going to conclude here with the story of a giant, but even this giant had a problem. Jonathan Edwards considered the leading evangelical theologian in American history. He was part of that first great awakening during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He is the one that delivered that sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." A faithful pastor, a faithful writer and evangelist and yet even Edwards struggled with where he needed to go, what he needed to do. Undeniably a success in life and ministry. He had this unquenchable passion. He desired to study the things of God. He wanted to know God's purity. He wanted to know about God's holiness and virtue in truth and he labeled these as these religious affections. I want to understand the affections of God.

Yet at the age of 19, good grief, 19, I mean I just cringe thinking about where Edwards is at at 19 and where I was at. Oh, my goodness. At the age of 19 he began seriously to consider the direction of his young life and he started examining his life from the Word of God and how powerful cutting these truths were concerning his character at that time and desiring to put on the nature of Christ. And so he studied God's Word. And more and more he began to soberly grasp: This is where I want to be. This is who I want to be in Christ, because this is who God is and I want to be like him. And so this young man at the age of 19 he starts pointing out the aspects of God and his character and nature, the aspects of God's Word, all of these aspects that he desired to be significantly implanted into his life. And so he writes these 70 resolutions of how he is going to live his daily life in light of the existence of a holy and righteous God, 70 resolutions. At the age of 19 I wasn't even thinking about who God. And I was just glad I was saved. That was right at the moment of my salvation. I am glad I am hid. To say the least studying God's Word and writing resolutions to myself of who I want to be in Christ.

Oh, beloved, can you imagine having a Jonathan Edwards reach his hands around your

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life and start playing a melody to accompany yours? Can you imagine having a Spurgeon doing that? I know that there have been those here at Calvary that have had the privilege of having pastor Dave bring his arms around your life and play a melody. And yet as this church grows it is more than what one man can do. It is more than what two men can do. That is why we are called to do it to one another. We do want to help you to be more thoroughly equipped to do that really well, to be the {?} in someone's life.

I want to close with this poem and I ask you to close your eyes as I follow with a closing prayer. But think of these words. These words come from a Puritan devotion.

Quote:

My life is all yours to shape as you will  
I'll be the glove for your hands to fill  
I want to be pleasing to you, may it be  
That you might be glorified somehow in me

*Father, I thank you for your Word. I thank you for Paul and for this divinely inspired Word. Father, I thank you for men in my own life that you have brought in to be the Spirit filled {?} in my life, the guys that came and encouraged me to not only know God's Word more effectively and more richly, but also to apply that, men who challenged me through those subtle and at times just in your face rebukes about sin that is apparent in my life. And, Father, I just, when I think about those men it sends a shiver of joy up my spine, Father, because it is during those times where I saw the greatest growth. It is during those times where I realized I should not be satisfied with where I am at, but holy dissatisfied, desiring to grow more and more in the image of your Son. And so, Father, I pray for our church right now. I pray for men and women, young and old to rise up, to rise up and say, "I want to be a {?} in someone's life, but maybe I need {?} to come into mine for a time." Father, help us here at Calvary Bible Church to provide men and women who will disciple and counsel others so that they can go and wrap their arms and play that sweet accompanying melody that will help others grow. And, Father, help us to do it not by additions, but by multiplication. Help us to take this church by storm, Father. And as people visit our church and begin conversations and hear the prayers of your people here, that they will be inspired and desirous of having what we have. Father, thank you for growing us to this point, Father. But, Father, we look forward to being more and more and more like your Son and a powerful reflection in our society and our community today. Father, thank you. It is in your Son's name we pray in Jesus Christ.*