

Strive For Excellence (Kulia I Kunu'u)"
(Pastor Wendell "Skip" Wright, Kapena Wright Ministries, "Aloha" Devotional ©2007)

I was recently asked by a very dear friend and fellow pastor what one word drives me or leads me in my life, towards the work that I do and my goals, etc. And, after much thought, much contemplation, I came up with a "word" which is a derivative of a Hawaiian phrase..two phrases actually, the first being "KU LIA KUNU'U" (koo lee-ah koo noo oo) and it means "strive for excellence"..the coinciding phrase is a battle cry of sorts, "IMUA" (ee-moo-ah) which means "onward and upward".

The key word or thought for me in both of the phrases is "excellence"..the sense of going "beyond" the mere satisfaction or accomplishment of a goal, but doing better, going beyond "just getting it done" and into the realm of "more than enough". This is how I see God, He is 'EXCELLENT', He is 'EXCELLENCE'.He never does things "just to get us by", but when He does His thing, it's "exceeding abundantly". The key is if WE allow Him to be Excellent and reveal His Excellence to us and not shortchange HIM or us.

We can shortchange God by feigning to be "humble" and accepting an answer to prayer for the mere sake of the answer. Example: A person, who has been diagnosed with cancer, yet has been battling diabetes, asks for prayer and believes in faith to be healed from the cancer, yet settles to "keep" the diabetes. God heals them from the cancer and has provided through Jesus (*1 Pet. 2:24*), healing for the diabetes as well, but that person chooses only to receive the healing for the cancer, refusing to believe or receive their healing for the diabetes as well, thus keeping it..NOT because God didn't provide the healing from it, but because they "settled for less" by choosing to retain the one and keeping the other, which ultimately leads to their untimely (early) death.

What should happen in all of us who know Jesus Christ as Lord and have accepted the Word of God as truth and have faith in that Word and believe it is that we need to know that through Christ Jesus we now have a more "excellent" promise and ministry in Him (*Hebrews 8:6; 2 Corinthians 3:6-8*), we should not be settling for "just enough to get by", but should desire "exceeding abundance" from Him who is able to do "*..exceedingly abundantly above all that we could ask or think; accordingly to the power(faith) that works (that we put into action & are willing to believe for & pray for) in us*" (*Ephesians 3:20*).

That's the Word, "excellence" and it fits well with the saying, "Ku Lia Kunu'u". We must remember that although excellence, no matter where or how we apply it, does not come with out striving, putting forth strenuous, fervent effort, it's rewards are far greater than the "easy way out" of "just settling for whatever" to have "just enough to get by". The "settling" mentality may sound humble, but it's not God, it's not scriptural.

God blesses us so we can be a blessing to others. If we settle to have just enough to get by for ourselves and "ours alone", than how can we be a blessing to others? The blessings of God are meant to be given away, not hoarded or "hogged" for ourselves.

"For God so loved the world..that He gave His ONLY begotten (from Himself, His Spirit, His DNA) Son" (John 3:16). So, if God gives most excellently above and beyond. How can we consider anything less? And, how can we do less than our best?