

## Title: What Must Not Go Back To “Normal”

We have experienced a lot of changes in 2020. I’m sure there will be more to come. As we enter into the last quarter of the year, it is good to take some time to reflect. Consider all of the changes we have experienced together.

- We moved from worshipping together in the building, to worshipping in our homes in March and watching online.
- We moved from worshipping online to gathering in the parking lot to worship together.
- Now we are back in the building.
- Wearing masks has now become somewhat normal.
- Social distancing is a way of life.
- We are now experts with ZOOM! Ha.
- A lot more cooking from home has taken place.

While we experienced many changes, it appears as if things are going back to “Normal.” Texas in particular is beginning to open up more. Restaurants are nearing 75% capacity. Schools are back in session.

Now think back to what your “Normal” was in December, January, and February. No matter what that “Normal” may have been, with respect to your walk with Christ, let’s not go back to it! Let’s go beyond it. Let’s excel still more as Paul encouraged the saints to do in Thessalonica.

*“Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.” 1 Thessalonians 4:1.*

*“...For indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you...” 1 Thessalonians 4:10-11*

If the norm for you was to skip worship with the saints, don’t go back to “Normal.” Repent and excel still more. If the norm for you was to attend worship physically, but your heart wasn’t really into it, don’t go back to “Normal.” Repent and excel and still more. If the norm for you was to attend worship and to be engaged, don’t go back to “Normal.” Excel still more! It’s not just with worship services with the saints, but what we do everyday. It’s easy to say, “Live like you are dying.” But it

can be challenging to live in such a way. Yet, that is exactly how we should be living. We should live in such a way to where we please God and are prepared to stand before Him! If that mindset wasn't a part of our "Normal" then let's excel still more.

Don't go back to your "Normal." Go beyond it. Excel still more. Use 2020 as a reminder that this world is not our home.

- Benjamin Lee