If you would have had the opportunity to hear Vince Lombardi, the great coach of the Green Bay Packers during the 1960’s, speak before a practice or a game you would have heard him over and over emphasizing the necessity of striving for excellence. He told his players, "What a person's life consists of is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence".

The writer of Proverbs, King Solomon, knew this long before Vince Lombardi. He wrote in Proverbs 22:29, “Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before unknown men.”

What does the word “excellence” mean?

♦ The dictionary states that it means one who surpasses others, to be outstanding, to be superior in quality. If something is excellent then it is of the very best quality. It is exceptional, very fine, first rate.

Being a person who strives for excellent will find that excellence has enemies. What are some of the enemies of striving for excellence?

Two of the main enemies are as follows:
1. Willing to settle for Mediocrity. It means one will only strive for average. The root meaning of this word means “halfway up a mountain.”
2. Lack of goals.

I think one of the keys to living an exciting life, a life of excellence is to take time and consider the outcome before beginning. The principle is called: BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND.

Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow.

In helping us establish some goals let us notice how Jesus developed as a person.
♦ In Luke 2:52 we find that Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, favor with man and with God. In other words, there was intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual development in the life of Jesus.

The next portion of this lesson is designed to give you some ideas on establishing goals for each one of these four areas.
I. The first goal is Intellectual Achievement.
   A. Make a decision to strive to achieve the best grades possible. What is your GPA goal for the semester?
   B. Make a decision to enrich your mind by reading books, (not just those required) magazines and a daily newspaper. Look for seminar opportunities and listen to tapes. The more you read the more you know. The more you know the further you go.

   - The greatest success principle ever given is simply: Whatever you sow, that will you also reap!

C. Make the effort to meet people who are excelling in the field you wish to go in as a career.
   (Remember the people you meet, the places you visit, the books you read and the tapes you listen to, the events you attend today will greatly determine where you will be five years from now).

   - The recipe for perpetual ignorance is: Be satisfied with your opinions and content with your knowledge.

   - You are today writing your resume for tomorrow!

II. The goal is Physical Development.
   A. Make a commitment to eat right. (refuel daily) Breakfast needs to be a necessity!
   B. Make sure you exercise.
   C. Take time to rest. Going sleepless is not spiritual.
   Your body is your home, as well as the temple of the Holy Spirit. Take good care of it.
   ??? How do you practice the principles of the 4th commandment????

   - To be your best you are going to have to be at your best!

III. The goal is Social Development. Social development takes place many ways.
   A. Roommates will without a doubt be used of God to stretch you. Make a commitment to be a considerate, courteous and caring roommate.
   B. You can make great friends at LU, friends for a lifetime. Be friendly and develop deep and lasting friendships.
   C. Dorm life will also help you to develop social skills.
   Make a commitment to be understanding of others and participate in dorm activities.
   D. The classroom gives you opportunity to interact with fellow students.
   E. Liberty has students from numerous backgrounds. Get out of your hometown box and meet and get to know students from, literally, all around the country and world.
   F. The rules of Liberty deal with community living and Biblical standards. They are here for developing discipline into a person’s life. Make a commitment to abide by the rules and set a goal of not getting any reprimands this year.
   G. Liberty offers a great Student Life program. Make a commitment to get involved.
   Be a participant, not a spectator. That goes for attendance to Liberty sporting events, as well.
   H. Without a doubt Liberty offers some great people to date. Make a commitment to seek God’s will
concerning who you will date, how long you date, and what direction the relationship will go.

IV. The goal is Spiritual Maturity.

Spiritual growth is a choice. Below are some challenges for your spiritual development.

A. Have a Consistent Worship to the Lord.
   1. Love the your with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. Seek Him and know Him.
   2. Be consistent in having a quiet time/devotional time that includes Bible reading and prayer.
   2. Be consistent in attendance at worship services and participate with worshipping through praise, prayer, giving and learning. Be a part of weekly services as well as spiritual emphasis week and special prayer meetings.
   3. Be consistent in participating in dorm Bible studies.
   4. Be consistent in being filled with the Holy Spirit which helps you to praise upward, to give thanks inward, and submit outward. Eph. 5:18-21

B. Have a consistent spiritual Workout that brings about godliness. See I Tim. 4:7
What does your spiritual workout consist of presently? What are to spiritual disciplines that are essential to bringing about spiritual growth and godliness?

C. Have a Consistent Walk before the Lord. I Th.2:12
   1. Practice clean talking (clean tongue), practice clean listening (clean ears), practice clean looking (clean eyes) and practice clean living (clean hands/head/feet).
   2. Make a commitment to moral purity, (thought life and practices.)
   3. Say no to drugs and alcohol and tobacco.
   4. Have a humble spirit, not prideful.
   5. Keep a content spirit, not covetous.
   6. Develop a loving spirit, not hateful.
   7. have a forgiving spirit, not revengeful.

D. Be involved in a Consistent Work for the Lord.
   Be a servant and minister to others. See I Peter 4:10-12
   Do you know your what your spiritual gift is? Do you know how to use your spiritual gift? Are you using your spiritual gift to impact and grow the church?

E. Be A Consistent Witness for the Lord.
   Have a testimony before the lost that is blameless. Make it a point to share Christ with your friends, family neighbors, and your world. (Check out LIGHT trips).

F. Be Consistent in Waiting on the Lord.
   Wait for the leading of the Holy Spirit in your life and be watching for His second coming.

   The goal is to strive for excellence in intellectual, physical, social and spiritual development.
Bonus: The top ten areas of your life that you need to give attention to. With these areas I would suggest that you write out goals and a game plan for achieving those goals. In each area seek to have improvement throughout the year.

SPIRITUAL

INTELLECTUAL

PHYSICAL

RELATIONAL (family – close and extended)

SOCIAL (friends, associates, neighbors)

EMOTIONAL

FINANCIAL

VOCATIONAL

PERSONAL

GOVERNMENTAL (CIVICS, COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY)