

What does Paul mean by asking the Thessalonians to increase “more and more”?

When looking at the “more and more” of 1 Thessalonians 4:1, 10 it is important for us to look at the entire context of the chapter. Chapter four is centered on sanctification, or the process of becoming more like Christ. So we have to look at what activity Paul has just mentioned when he tells the Thessalonians to do this “more and more”. In both verses one and ten Paul has just complimented the Thessalonians on their love for the other brothers and sisters in the other churches. He also commends them on their godly lives and how they are pleasing God by the way they are conducting themselves. So what does Paul mean by asking them to do this more and more? If we go back to the original Greek language we see the words, *perisseuēte mallon*, which are translated to “do this more and more”. This particular phrase carries the meaning of increasing in excellence or excelling still more.¹ When we put that into context with what Paul has just said we can determine that Paul is simply encouraging the Thessalonians to continue doing what they’re doing and to persist with the same vigor and excellence that they have been demonstrating up until this point. This is consistent with other areas of scripture where Paul instructs believers to continue in doing good deeds (Galatians 6:9). When Paul tells the Thessalonians to “do this more and more” he simply wants to encourage them to continue in what they are already doing and to not grow weary but continue putting forth all effort in living holy, peaceful lives that honor Jesus Christ as Lord.

¹ “perriseuó”, *BibleSuite.com*, 2013, <http://biblesuite.com/greek/4052.htm>