

The Importance of Godly Zeal!

Zeal for the Lord, or enthusiasm is largely missing among God's people. Zeal or enthusiasm are wonderful words. Perhaps you wonder what I am speaking of. Of all the people in the world, Christians are the ones who have the right to be enthusiastic ... about their position (Eph. 1:4-8) and walk in the Lord, their church, their godly music, their every day life in Christ Jesus. Is zeal or enthusiasm mirrored in your life? We ought to have godly zeal to tell the world the glorious message of the Gospel... that *Christ died for our sin, was buried, and rose again according to the Scriptures.* (II Cor. 15:1-4) It is in this we stand, and this message ought to be declared with much zeal, enthusiasm, and fervency.

What Enthusiasm Ought To Mean To Us:

The word comes from a Greek Word, "*enthousiamos*" and "*enthousiazerein*" meaning literally "***possessed by God*** or ***God in us.***" So the word speaks of supernatural inspiration or being possessed by zeal from the Heavenly Father. Further "*enthusiasm is to be intense, eager, filled with zeal or fervor.*" Another thought is to be a religious zealot or fanatic for the Lord. A person filled with zeal... or burning up with zeal. You can see it is a good word that belongs to the Christian for we are commanded to be fervent in spirit. (Rom. 12:11)

Consider the world around us: In the sports world enthusiasm so grips people we call them fans, literally from the root thought of being a "*fanatic.*" When we go to a football or, basketball game, etc., most people are "swept up with the crowd" in enthusiasm for their team. Cheer leaders are there to bolster that response.

The business world displays enthusiasm. The sales person is out to sell insurance, real estate, cars, shoes, pots and pans or whatever it may be, and he or she does it with enthusiasm. Sales managers endeavor to inspire and challenge their sales people by sales meetings where they motivate and cultivate enthusiasm.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Was filled With Zeal:

The Word of God speaks of Christ, that the zeal of God's house had eaten Him up. (Psa. 69:9; John 2:17) He was controlled by, moved, or motivated by zeal or enthusiasm (if we want to use that term). He is always and foremost our Savior, but He is also our example. (I John 2:6) Jesus was ENTHUSIASTIC! He was not that anemic, effeminate person many want to make Him out to be, or some would picture Him to be.

Some mistook Christ for the fiery, judgment preacher, John the Baptist... that fearless preacher who faced kings and false prophets, fearlessly, and fervently giving truth. Others thought Him to be Elijah. (Luke 3:3-9, 18; Matt. 16:13,14) Still others could well of thought Him to be Jeremiah, the weeping prophet. He was really all three in one, wrapped up in one person. Oh, what judgment He pronounced on the Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites of His day. Yet with great tenderness He ministered to many as He also wept over Jerusalem. It was with tireless zeal that Christ ministered, with compassion, yet with great zeal.

Enthusiasm, what a good word, such a noble word ... *“God in us, possessed by Him, being fervent for Him.”* To be filled with the Holy Spirit, having the fullness of God ought to be the portion of every saint of God.

Consider for a moment: It may be that many pastors are not truly enthusiastic, or full of zeal about their labors, their preaching, discipling or other various aspects of ministry. Possibly many of God’s people have lost their joy, the thrill and wonder of teaching, preaching, witnessing, and winning souls to Christ. Even our giving ought to be done hilariously, with great cheer and joy according to the Word of God. (II Cor. 9:6-7) Many a Sunday School teacher (or Bible teacher) has lost their enthusiasm about people, their class, the potential of reaching others and the blessing of imparting truth from the Word of God. (Consider: Gal. 4:18; Tit. 2:14; Col. 4:13; Isa. 9:7)

It seems the average Christian, (or those who say they are Christians) in our country has little or no real interest and enthusiasm about attending church, praying, reading their Bible, giving, singing, sending missionaries, or reaching the unsaved. How tragic... the joy is gone, the thrill is gone. Maybe some never were saved!

Great Enthusiasm Marked the Lives and Ministries of Peter, Paul, and Many Others:

I think one could say the sermon Simon Peter gave on the day of Pentecost was given with enthusiasm. (Acts chapter two) He was filled with the Spirit, possessed by God, thundering out the message those who had crucified the Lord of Glory needed to hear. He called them to repentance, to faith, and to face what they had done to the Messiah the Father had sent. The early church gave the message about salvation through a Risen Savior with great zeal and fervor. You can’t read the Book of Acts without seeing that emphasis.

Paul had asked, when confronted by the Lord on the road to Damascus, *“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”* (Acts 9:6) And he literally burned out his life with **zeal** performing it. He could say he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. (Acts 26:19) Whether in prison, suffering, beating with stripes, stoned or left for dead. . . Paul did all things with zeal, *possessed by God*, driven by his calling, yet resting completely in the Lord, rejoicing in His love. Paul wrote of some who were **addicted** to the ministry of the saints (I Cor. 16:15).

Conclusion:

I are not writing about being silly, giddy, or slaphappy, but being filled with the zeal of the Lord, being a saint who is enthusiastically serving the Lord with the whole heart, fervent in Spirit -- living with vigor, dedication and determination before the Lord.

Others need to see *“Christ in us... the hope of glory!”* The Holy Spirit desires to live His life through us, thus magnifying Christ and fulfilling God’s will in us. ***Living a life of zeal for the Lord ought to be normal for each one of us.***

To often we lose the thrill of being saved, the joy of having the Lord in our life! We

should always be excited about the things of the Lord, the ministry of a local church, the blessings of the Word of God in our life, having a fervent prayer life. Don't be a deadhead or a deadpan, but on fire for the Lord, living the abundant life Christ came to give. (John 10:10)

Let's let the world know we are saved, that we enjoy having a precious relationship with the Savior. Even in trials, testings and afflictions we can let the love of Christ and the joy of the Lord shine through. We should think much about the word, ***enthusiasm***, and live a dedicated, sold-out life for the Lord allowing the Holy to move fervently in and through us.