

Are You Zealous for God?



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by [Dave Butts](#)

When you hear the word “zealot” what do you think of? Fanatic? Weird? Overly religious? Maybe an extremely emotional person? I think that most people would say of zeal that it’s just not who they are. Many people have a tendency to identify being zealous as an overly emotional or extreme personality type and would distance themselves from being labeled a “zealot.”

The Bible, however, looks at zeal not so much as an emotion, but as an expression of faith. You become zealous because you have come to know God. It is the awesome character and nature of God that creates zeal within those who worship Him. The more you know the Lord, the more you become zealous for him.

From this perspective, zealousness is more about earnestness toward God, consecration, and undivided service. To be zealous is to focus all our attention on one thing...or rather, one person...the person of Jesus Christ. Perhaps most important for followers of Jesus, to be zealous is not an option but a command. Consider these scriptures which speak of a zealous life:

- “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deut. 6:5).
- “Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart” (Ps.119:2).
- “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding” (Prov.3:5).
- “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart” (Jer.29:13).
- “Even now, declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning” (Joel 2:12).

The greatest example of zeal is the One who knows the Father the best, our Lord Jesus. The prophet Isaiah spoke of the zeal of Jesus in Is.59:17: “He put on righteousness as his breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.” In the gospels, John wrote: “His disciples remembered that it is written: ‘Zeal for your house will consume me’” (Jn.2:17). Following in the steps of Jesus means becoming as zealous as He is.

Living the Christian life is not a casual attachment to religious activities. It is an all-out, loving desire to walk with Jesus day by day. With single-minded passion we draw near to Him and serve him with everything that is in us. Our prayer life moves from mundane requests to zealously seeing the purposes of God brought to earth by our cries of intercession. May it be said of us, as was said of our Lord, “Zeal for your house will consume us!”

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