

THE WELL-ESTABLISHED ZEAL FOR GOD

Titus 2:14

Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works

Before I got baptized into Christ, I mean before I became a Christian by God's design, I was persuaded by some older brethren and some older relatives to be baptized. I was nearly lured to take the decision to be baptized, by the intimidating rate at which some of my peers got baptized.

Two things restrained me – **the reason for baptism and the less fire (zeal) felt by those who were already baptized.**

Some who have been baptized just a few years ago, many years ago, some months ago, are already feeling less zeal for God – this calls for concern on the need to have a mature understanding of what the Christian zeal is all about and God's vision for the Christian zeal that is well established.

Charles Itseghosimhe

THE CHRISTIAN ZEAL

The Christian zeal is far more than the ambition of youth or older persons; it is far more than great energy or enthusiasm.

The word **zeal** carries the idea of a desire on fire, and zeal can accurately be called a spiritual fire.

The Christian zeal is a burning desire in action to please God. That burning desire, motivates one to make effort to understand properly what pleases God (**II Timothy 2:15**) and be willing to act according to that understanding, even though, the process of pleasing God may bring inconveniences to us.

In **Romans 10:1-2**, Apostle Paul, gets us to see reason on the

need to understand properly what pleases God. *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.*

Any Jew of the strictest order, like Apostle Paul well knows the extraordinary physical and mental effort which they put forth to obey the commands of the Law of Moses. Their greatest challenge was that their zeal was not founded on the correct truth of God and therefore it does not aim at the glory of God.

It is just enthusiasm without obedience. It is just a display meant to prove a point.

Such zeal can never be well established and can even be possessed by anyone, members of the church, cultists, as well as devils.

However, the Christian zeal is clearly different from that of the Israelites in Romans 10:1-2. We stated that one aspect of the Christian zeal, is the willingness to act according to what pleases God, even though, the process of pleasing God may bring inconveniences to us. In **Acts 8:3, Galatians 1:13; 4:29 and I Timothy 1:13**, there are records of the inconveniences created by Saul, which were

suffered by those who had this Christian zeal.

This is to say that one must develop courage to be able to build a Christian zeal that is well-established. The Christian zeal can open doors for one to be harmed, hated and mocked.

A zeal for God without courage cannot stand the test of time. In Christ's address to the church in **Smyrna, HE said they should not fear any of those things which they were about to suffer, for the devil is about to throw some of them into prison, that they may be tested, and they will have tribulation ten days but they must be faithful until death [Rev. 2:10].**

Peter reminds us of God's promise, that we have nothing to fear in this journey. **1 Peter 3:13 - and who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?**

Without courage, one can forget one's first love for God and possibly fall from God's grace even while one remain a physical member of the church. In Christ's address to the church in **Ephesus, HE said they have left their first love and that they must remember therefore from where they have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else they will**

lose their relationship with God [Rev 2:4-5].

Therefore, the Christian zeal is the courage to exercise great wisdom, great energy, and great diligence in loving service to God.

The Christian zeal has only one objective, which is to give glory to God. It is not to draw attention to oneself; it is for God to be glorified.

GOD'S VISION REGARDING THE CHRISTIAN ZEAL

God sees what **could** be and what **should** be in every person. God has a zeal and it has always been God's desire for His people to imitate His zeal. **Titus 2:14** reveals to us God's vision for the Christian - *Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*

God wants us to be zealous of good works; studious to do, and warmly pursuing, all such works as are acceptable to God, and profitable to ourselves and others.

God wants us to give Him, our affections - affections that has life in them. Zeal is the extreme heat of all affections. It is a burning desire; something

that radiates out; it is not hidden; it glows.

Sometimes, in our song ministry meetings, even in some of our youths mini-lectures, we do deliberate on why it seems so difficult for us as songs' directors to understand why some brethren do not show this zeal in praises

Apostle Paul indicated this zeal, burning desire in **Romans 12:12** - *rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer.*

Not only in praises - God wants us to build this zeal towards His work - positive thinking, progressive ideas, suggestions of faith; characters of maturity; working together to allow God take the glory in the church - no faction, no division, no bitterness, no hatred, unforgiving spirit, no lawlessness - it is all about God and what will bring glory to God.

In **Nehemiah 3**, we could see the physical, mental and faithful efforts put together in rebuilding the wall. It was a burning desire in action. No time for fear - no time for idle talk - no time for sitting on the fence - no time for waiting for failure to happen - no time for thinking that it was all about Nehemiah's idea - what everyone saw was

the wall of God - which must be rebuilt.

Their zeal can be phrased like this - **we go as far for God as HE directs and as it pleases HIM.**

God has a zeal. The prophet Isaiah connects God's zeal with some of the Lord's most impressive actions. **Isaiah 9:7** - *Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.*

Later **Isaiah 59:17** describes the zeal of the Lord as all encompassing. *For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, And was clad with zeal as a cloak.*

There is no doubt that Christians serve a very zealous God. The incredible thing is that He wants us to be so much like Him! God desires for every Christian to be a zealous Christian.

In **Titus 2:14**, we see how the desire of God is firmly established by looking at the

mission, instructions, and actions of Jesus.

Jesus purchased us with His precious blood. He knew His mission would bring Him to Cavalry, but He came anyway because of the incredible value He places on our souls.

He purifies us. Jesus cleanses us like He is restoring a priceless work of art. He gives every Christian a new and pure life. He took possession of us.

His mission took Him beyond payment and purification. When Jesus saved us from sin, we became one of God's most prized possessions. He loves and admires us and wants only the best for our future.

This is the mission of Jesus: to purchase, purify, and possess us and make us "zealous for good deeds." Jesus' mission is to create a zealous people. He wants us to live with a burning desire to please God.

In addition to His mission, Jesus also gives Christians the direct instruction to "be zealous." In **Revelation 3:14-19**, Jesus urged the lukewarm Laodiceans to stop trusting in their comfortable lifestyles, be zealous, and repent.

The Lord's instructions are just as relevant to us as

Christians today, as they were to the saints at Laodicea.

In any area of our Christian lives, that we have been lukewarm – we must repent.

We may have been blinded by our beauty, talent, wealth, self-made belief and security. Such kills our zeal and make us get stucked in lukewarmness. Jesus commands everyone to come back to a zealous relationship with Him.

In **John 2:13-22**, the Lord was so “consumed” by zeal that He drove away the livestock and money changers who were turning the temple into a common house of business.

However, this indicates that Jesus’ zeal is evident in His relentless pursuit of the Father’s will, even to the point of death (John 6:35-40, Matt. 26:42) – that is a zeal that is well established – life-long.

CONCLUSION

Let’s all re-evaluate the kind of zeal, we have for God. What is the sole objective of our zeal for God? Are we willing to make efforts to understand properly what pleases God? Are we willing to act according to that understanding with courage and loving desire?

We pray God to help us develop a well-established Christian zeal in Jesus Christ Name!

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