

## Be Filled With Zeal

... Be zealous. [Revelation 3:19]

If you want to see souls converted, if you want to hear the cry that "the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord,"<sup>1</sup> if you want to place crowns upon the head of the Savior and see His throne lifted high, then be filled with zeal. For under G-d, the way the world will be converted is by the zeal of the church. Every element of grace will do its work, but zeal will be first; prudence, knowledge, patience, and courage will follow in their places, but zeal must lead the charge. It is not the extent of your knowledge, though that is useful, it is not the extent of your talent, though that is not to be despised, it is your zeal that will do great exploits.

This zeal is the fruit of the Holy Spirit: It draws its vital force from the continued operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul. If our inner life dwindles, if our heart beats slowly before God, we will not know zeal; but if everything inside is strong and vigorous, then we cannot but feel a loving urgency to see Christ's kingdom come, and His will done on earth, even as it is in heaven.

A deep sense of gratitude will nourish Christian zeal. When we reflect on the miry pit from which we were lifted, we find plenty of reason for spending ourselves for God. And zeal is also stimulated by the thought of the eternal future. It looks with tearful eyes down to the flames of hell, and it cannot sleep: It looks up with anxious gaze to the glories of heaven, and it cannot stay still. It feels that time is short compared with the work to be done, and therefore it devotes all that it has to the cause of its Lord. And it is continually strengthened by remembering Christ's example.

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fact, many believers do these yet remain stagnant in their walk. There are two elements necessary for us to become more like Jesus: instruction and involvement.

The first of these, learning truth, is vital to a healthy walk with G-d. Our Savior proved the importance of instruction by devoting much of His time on earth to it. The apostle Paul is another example, as he wrote letters to educate Christians about godliness.

So how can we gain knowledge and understanding? One of the most important and effective ways is to read the Word of God. Scripture instructs us that just as newborns crave milk, we are to desire His Word so that we might grow. I pray your spiritual thirst will become insatiable. Yet simply listening to the truth does not mean that we've acquired it. I know many people who love attending Bible studies and expanding their knowledge base, but their lives remain unchanged. Just as

merely inputting information. It requires action. James 2:26 states, "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

Are we careless hearers, deceived into thinking that we're growing? Or are we listening intently and abiding in the truth? If we're truly maturing, our lives will be increasingly Christ-like, and our desires will align more closely with G-d's heart. Make sure that you are listening and responding to His truth.

**James 1:22---[NASB]**

22 (A) *But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.*

**Cross references:**

A. James 1:22 : Matt 7:24-27; Luke 6:46-49; Rom 2:13; James 1:22-25; 2:14-20

**The judgments of G-d denounced against rich unbelievers.**

If we heard a sermon every day of the week, and an angel from heaven were. . . *Continued on Page 2*

## Formula for Personal Growth

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. . .the preacher, yet, if we rested in hearing only, it would never bring us to heaven. Mere hearers are self-deceivers; and self-deceit will be found the worst deceit at last. If we flatter ourselves, it is our own fault; the truth, as it is in Jesus, flatters no man. Let the word of truth be carefully attended to, and it will set before us the corruption of our nature, the disorders of our hearts and lives; and it will tell us plainly what we are. Our sins are the spots the law discovers: Christ's blood is the laver the gospel shows. But in vain do we hear God's word, and look into the gospel glass, if we go away, and forget our spots, instead of washing them off; and forget our remedy, instead of applying to it. This is the case with those who do not hear the word as they ought. In hearing the word, we look into it for counsel and direction, and when we study it, it turns to our spiritual life. Those who keep in the law and word of G-od, are, and shall be, blessed in all their ways. His gracious recompense hereafter would be connected with his present peace and comfort. Every part of Divine revelation has its use, in bringing the sinner to Christ for salvation, and in directing and encouraging him to walk at liberty, by the Spirit of adoption, according to the holy commands of G-d. And mark the distinctness; it is not for his deeds, that any man is blessed, but in his deed. It is not talking, but walking, that will bring us to heaven. Christ will become more precious to the believer's soul, which by his grace will become more fitted for the inheritance of the saints in light.

(James 1:26)

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He was clothed with zeal as with a cloak. How swift the chariot-wheels of duty went with Him! He never loitered on the way. Let us prove that we are His disciples by displaying the same spirit of zeal.

1Revelation 11:15

## Rabbi Sha'ul | AKA | Apostle Paul

*. . .for not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. [Romans 2:13 NASB] | Author: Skip Moen [Copyright © 2012]*

**Will be justified** – It's hard to escape the obvious implication of Paul's statement. What matters is doing Torah. Anything less means exclusion from the Kingdom. Paul's words are a fatal blow to the "only grace" crowd, especially since Paul connects required obedience to the verb *dikaioo* ("to make righteous, to justify"). The verb in this verse is a future passive. That means that sometime later someone else will offer justification to the subject of the sentence. You and I will be made righteous because we are doers of Torah. There is simply no way to read this verse as if it claims we are already justified by some past action that guarantees our status regardless of our behavior. Grace may invite us in but we are expected to work out our salvation once we accept the invitation.

We should have expected nothing less. Paul (Sha'ul) was a rabbi. He was trained in the school of the Pharisees. He was an expert in Torah. As Neusner says, "for Rabbinic Judaism, 'Israel' is always and only defined by the Torah, received and represented by 'our sages of blessed memory' as the word of God, never by the happenstance of secular history." [1] For Rav Sha'ul, Torah is the defining factor of the Kingdom of God. Those who keep Torah belong. Those who do not are excluded.

Yes, I know, Christians choke on these words. Christians have been taught for centuries that the Jewish Torah is irrelevant to their faith. They have followed Augustine and Luther on the path of *sola fide* (only grace), ignoring the entire context of the Tanakh and the cultural thinking of the New Testament authors. They have drawn a line in the sand where there is no sand. How is this possible? The answer is political, not theological.

When Christianity needed to define itself in the second and third centuries, influential Gentile "believers" began to draw hard and fast distinctions between Judaism and their new "Christian" religion. Christianity identified itself as not-Jewish, and since the very heart of Judaism is Torah, Christianity became the religion of not-Torah. Under the persuasion of the early Church fathers and with the assistance of the Roman Empire, Christianity formed a new way of understanding God and His involvement with human beings. That way was anti-Semitic and it has been so ever since. But in order to justify this new religion, the writings of rabbis like Sha'ul had to be reinterpreted. Their Jewish orientation had to be removed. Torah had to be excised. After twenty centuries, the success of this program is obvious. Most Christians today firmly believe that the "Law" is not essential to their faith. Saved by grace is all that's needed. *Continued on page 4*

## Don't Neglect Your Spiritual Gift

Every Christian is given at least one spiritual gift with which to serve the Lord and build up the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7). But many believers neglect this special empowerment of the Spirit. Although Timothy had some good reasons to forsake his calling from God, Paul advised him to "take pains with these things" and "be absorbed in them" (v. 15). As you look at Timothy, ask yourself if either of the following situations are hindering you from fully serving the Lord.

**Age:** No matter how old we are, the Lord wants us to use our spiritual gifts. Because Timothy was young, he could easily have been intimidated by those with more experience. However, youth isn't our only excuse. Some believers think they're too old to serve the Lord. *Continued on page 3*



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**Age:** No matter how old we are, the Lord wants us to use our spiritual gifts. Because Timothy was young, he could easily have been intimidated by those with more experience. However, youth isn't our only excuse. Some believers think they're too old to serve the Lord. Even though our areas of ministry may change over the years, we're never called into spiritual retirement.

**Inadequacy:** Have you ever avoided a service opportunity simply because you felt totally unqualified? That's probably how Timothy felt about leading the church at Ephesus. Our spiritual gifts rarely come to us fully developed. God often requires that we step out in faith and trust Him to work in and through us. Over time, as we obey and serve Him in our areas of giftedness, He increases the effectiveness of our ministry.

Is anything keeping you from using your spiritual gifts? Though given to us, these abilities aren't for us; they're for the church. To neglect them would not only deprive fellow believers but also rob ourselves: there is joy and blessing in serving others and doing the work God has designated for us.

**1 Timothy 4:12-16---[NASB]**

### The duty towards believing

Men's youth will not be despised, if they keep from vanities and follies.

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# Threshing Floor

*And this is the thing which you shall do to them, to sanctify them to minister as priest to Me. [Exodus 29:1] | Author: Skip Moen*

**Sanctify** - What kind of picture do we see with the word "sanctify"? Most of us are thoroughly Greek when it comes to describing this word. We think about holiness in word, thought and deed. We think about becoming better people, disciplining ourselves to be more like Christ or attaining godly characteristics. In other words, we think of moving from worldly motivations to divine motivations. We think of sanctification as the effort to become sinless.

All of those ideas are useful, but they don't uncover the deeper truth about God's view of sanctification. The Hebrew word *kadosh* paints a fascinating picture that has very little to do with personal discipline. Of course, we know that *kadosh* means to be set apart. That's the basic idea behind the Hebrew translation of this word. We are set apart from the profane for the exclusive use of God. That's why sanctification can be applied to tools, animals and even land. Whatever is set apart for God's exclusive use is *kadosh* (sanctified). But there is a pictograph here that shows us more than this linguistic meaning.

The consonants that make up the verb *kadosh* are *qof-daleth-shin* (Q-D-S). The *Qof* consonant is a picture of the setting sun. It displays the idea of something that is in the past. It looks back in order to see where something originated. The consonants *D-S* paint a picture of threshing (literally, the door to eating). In a culture where grain had to be separated from chaff by threshing before you could make flour and bread, this event was a daily occurrence. So, sanctification becomes the visual imagery of something that comes after threshing. What comes after threshing? Useable grain, grain removed from its useless husk.

Now we can see that there is more in this image than simply setting something apart for God's use. The . . .

. . . process of sanctification is the removal of what is not useable and the retention of what is useable. It's the stripping process. Sanctification removes what God cannot use. And here's the deepest insight. I don't make this happen. The harvest from the field doesn't thresh itself. It has to be sifted, tossed, crushed, broken and sorted by the thresher. Sanctification is the way that God gets rid of all the stuff that keeps us from being optimally useful to Him. That process is usually not very comfortable. It's hard to have the husk stripped away, but it's absolutely necessary if God is going to have the pure grain to work with. You might have thought of sanctification as your effort to make yourself into a better Christian, but you would have missed the point. Sanctification is God's effort to sift you. Your role in this process is to let Him do it. Too often we resist the stripping process because we think that sanctification can only be a good thing. It is a good thing, but it usually arrives when we are tossed up in the air. No grain was ever threshed while it lay undisturbed on the floor.

Do you want to become set apart for God? Do you want to experience sanctification? Then be ready to be tossed about, stripped and crushed. Not destroyed, just purified. When all the sifting is finished, God will make great bread from your life, bread that others will eat and be filled.

**Topical Index:** Sanctification

**Recovering the intent of God's Scriptures, one Hebrew or Greek word at a time.**

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## Clean Hands

*He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.*

[Psalms 24:4]

Outward practical holiness is a very precious mark of grace. It is to be feared that many professors have perverted the doctrine of justification by faith in such a way as to treat good works with contempt; if so, they will receive everlasting contempt at the last great day. If our hands are not clean, let us wash them in Jesus' precious blood, and so let us lift up pure hands unto God. But "clean hands" will not suffice unless they are connected with "a pure heart." True religion is heart-work. We may wash the outside of the cup and the plate as long as we please, but if the inward parts be filthy, we are filthy altogether in the sight of God, for our hearts are more truly ourselves than our hands are. The very life of our being lies in the inner nature, and hence the imperative need of purity within. The pure in heart shall see God; all others are but blind bats.

The man who is born for heaven "does not lift up his soul to what is false." All men have their joys by which their souls are lifted up. The worldling lifts up his soul in carnal delights, which are mere empty vanities; but the saint loves more substantial things; like Jehoshaphat, he is lifted up in the ways of the Lord. He who is content with husks will be reckoned with the swine. Does the world satisfy you? Then you have your reward and portion in this life; make much of it, for you will know no other joy.

"Does not swear deceitfully." The saints are men of honor still. The Christian man's word is his only oath; but that is as good as twenty oaths of other men. False speaking will shut any man out of heaven, for a liar shall not enter into God's house, whatever may be his professions or doings. Does the text .

...before us condemn you, or do you hope to ascend into the hill of the Lord?



### Don't Neglect Your Spiritual Gift

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Those who teach by their doctrine, must teach by their life. Their discourse must be edifying; their conversation must be holy; they must be examples of love to God and all good men, examples of spiritual-mindedness. Ministers must mind these things as their principal work and business. By this means their profiting will appear in all things, as well as to all persons; this is the way to profit in knowledge and grace, and also to profit others. The doctrine of a minister of Christ must be scriptural, clear, evangelical, and practical; well stated, explained, defended, and applied. But these duties leave no leisure for wordly pleasures, trifling visits, or idle conversation, and but little for what is mere amusement, and only ornamental. May every believer be enabled to let his profiting appear unto all men; seeking to experience the power of the gospel in his own soul, and to bring forth its fruits in his life.

### Rabbi Sha'ul | Apostle Paul

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And then they read Paul. (One must keep in mind that Romans is Paul's final word on the matter. Don't turn to Galatians to overturn Paul's last thoughts on law and grace.) But they interpret Paul according to the CHURCH. The tradition is more powerful than the text.

**Topical Index:** justify, make righteous, dikaiou, Law, Romans 2:13

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## Today's Blessing

*May the L-rd give you His peace; may G-d take you through your problems to the answers with its provisions. May you, with bold relentless faith, go straight through the problem to receive the promise of G-d. Let this day and the days that follow be days of triumph and victory because G-d is a faithful G-d who will never fail you. In Yeshua's name, receive His answer.*

*And now may the Lord bless you, and may the Lord keep you, and may the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and may the Lord be gracious unto you and give you His peace. AMEN.*

[Numbers 6:24-26]

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