

Enthusiasm can change your life and the lives of others around you for the better! It energizes everyone! Healthy enthusiasm comes from God.

Romans 12:11, “Never be lacking in zeal but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.” How wonderful that God not only wants us to be enthusiastic about our faith and service, He enables us to be enthusiastic for our good and His glory. Enthusiasm is not excitement, because excitement is generated by circumstances that come from outside us. The world desires us to be stimulated by these external circumstances. The word “enthusiasm” comes from two Greek words “*en*” and “*theos*” or “in God”. It means to be influenced or motivated by God from within by His Holy Spirit.

(**Phil. 2:12-13**). “Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” NLT.

Enthusiasm is not zeal without knowledge. Paul warns of this in

Romans 10:2, “For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.” **Proverbs 19:2** says, “It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.” **Galatians 4:18**, “its fine to be zealous provided the purpose is good...”

There’s a story of a knight who returned to his castle at twilight. He was a mess. His armor was dented, his helmet skewed, his face bloody, his horse was limping and the rider was listing to one side of the saddle. The Lord of the castle saw him coming and went out to meet him asking, “What hath befallen you, Sir Knight?” Straightening himself up as best as he could, he replied, “Oh Sire, I’ve been laboring in your service – robbing, burning and pillaging your enemies to the west!” “You’ve been what?” cried the startled nobleman, “But I don’t have any enemies to the west!” “*Oh!*” said the Knight. “Well...I think you do now.” You see, zeal must have proper guidance.

We’re enthusiastic because of what we know. What do we know as Christians? We know that: 1) Christ loved us and died for us while we were yet sinners. 2) All things work together for good for those who are called according to God’s purpose. 3) We are more than conquerors through Him who loves us. 4) God will finish the work that He began in each of us. 5) We have the privilege of being used by God

in the lives of others. 6) Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ecclesiastes 9:10a says, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.” Paul’s advice to the Colossians when he said, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.”

If we would do God’s will, we must do it His way—with all our heart. If we would wholeheartedly serve the Lord, we must serve Him enthusiastically!

Paul inspired great loyalty from the Christians in Philippi. They supported him through prayer, hard work, and sacrificial giving. *Why?* Maybe they were inspired by the enthusiasm they observed in Paul when their church was first founded. Paul believed in what he was doing and his enthusiastic determination to spread the gospel encouraged the Philippian believers (Acts 16).

Your enthusiasm has a profound effect on others. When you approach any task with a determination to get the job done and get it done right, people see that you believe in what you are doing, and it moves them to join in with you. Solomon said, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might”. (Eccl. 9:10) Your fellow worshippers will have a more optimistic attitude. We are blessed in this congregation because our leaders already have this type of positive attitude, and it rubs off on us all.

Do you take things for granted or do you accept things in a spirit of gratitude? The difference in those two attitudes makes a far-reaching difference in your attitude about life. Being grateful is the very root of enthusiasm. We are enthusiastic to perform the purpose for which God created us: to glorify God and be His obedient children. It lights a fire in our spirit to know that, even though this physical life is not over, God’s truth and love will triumph in the long run.

As we have seen, enthusiasm will change our lives... it will influence everything we do... it will shape all of our relationships.

Yet we cannot generate enthusiasm by ourselves. It comes when we open ourselves to the truth of God’s Word; when we let the love of God flow through us by His Holy Spirit; and when we allow Him to work in and through us for our good and His glory.

The Apostle Paul concludes I Corinthians 15 with these words: v 58: **With all this going for us, my dear, dear friends, stand your ground. And don’t hold back.**

Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort. TM

Friends, let us serve the Lord together enthusiastically!