

# Radical Zeal

## Lesson 4: What To Do With It

When God builds a spiritual fire inside of you through the powerful and life-transforming teachings of His word, He intends for that fire (passion) to be used to do the good works He approves, desires, and even requires (Titus 2:11-14; Ephesians 2:8-10). As we have seen, being connected with Jesus produces spiritual fruit that pleases Him (John 15:2, 5, 8). Let's consider some specific ways God desires His people to use their zeal.

**1) Faithful obedience.** What God wants from your life can be summed up in the concept of "faithfulness" (Matthew 25:14-30). Your zeal should prompt you to be trustworthy to keep God's commandments no matter what challenges you face to do such (Revelation 2:8-11; 1 Corinthians 15:58). This will include living a holy life that does not tolerate sin, as defined by God's standard of holiness (1 Peter 1:13-16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1). This will extend to holiness in your thoughts, words, actions, dress, entertainment, etc. Furthermore, your zeal should lead you to obedience regarding personal responsibilities God has given you concerning the roles you have to fulfill (i.e. as a member of a local church, a husband/wife, father/mother, etc.; Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:22-6:4). In everything, you will desire to conform your life to the instructions God has given in the pages of the gospel.

**2) Spiritual growth.** Whenever you became a Christian, you began a journey. A key part of this journey involves making spiritual progress in your knowledge of God's will and becoming more mature in Christ. For example, your zeal should compel you to study God's word regularly and diligently so as to know more about God's will for your life and not to be misled by false teaching (1 Peter 2:2-3; 2 Peter 3:14-18). Doing this will help you progress from a spiritual diet consisting of milk (basic principles) to solid food (more advanced principles, Hebrews 5:11-

14). Then, your zeal for God should compel you to diligently strive to become more like Christ each day – in your thoughts, speech, character, decisions, actions, etc. (2 Peter 1:3-11). For, your goal as a disciple of Christ should not merely to possess knowledge of God's will, but to become mature in Christ so that you can be more and more useful and fruitful in Christ's service (Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:3-8; Colossians 1:27-28).

**3) Service.** Your zeal for God is not just to be something that transforms your beliefs and character, but something that also transforms how you conduct yourself toward others. In fact, your zeal should lead you to develop the character of looking for and taking advantage of opportunities to serve other people – even when it costs you significantly (i.e. time, money, energy, convenience, etc.; Luke 10:25-37). Rather than being zealous (jealous, envious) for people to serve you, you must be zealous to serve others (John 13:12-17). The Scriptures speak of many different ways we can serve and indicates that whether you have served others or not will directly be subject to Jesus's judgment (Matthew 25:31-46; Galatians 6:7-10; James 1:26-27). However, zeal for God will not make such service a burdensome thing. Instead, zeal for God will recognize that serving others is just another way that you can serve Jesus! So, you must use your zeal to carefully evaluate your opportunities and abilities and commit to serving those around you.

**4) Evangelism.** Of all the ways you can serve someone who is not a Christian, there is no greater way than to help them understand the gospel of Christ (John 4:13-14)! Although Jesus often had compassion on others so as to serve them physically, His greatest compassion was for spiritual needs (Matthew 9:35-38). This is why Jesus left Heaven to come to earth, suffer, and die! It is no wonder, then, that those who followed Jesus in the New Testament

(His disciples) would also learn to be zealous for the lost (Matthew 4:18-20; Matthew 10:6-7; Luke 10:1-3, 9; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:4). This should also be true about every disciple of Jesus Christ today – that he/she is concerned about the lost like Jesus was! If you are zealous for the Lord in this way, you will try to grow in both your knowledge and abilities to impact others for the cause of the kingdom of God so as to help rescue those caught in Satan’s traps (2 Timothy 2:2, 24-26)!

**5) Fellowship.** God’s people are not just to be zealous for those who are lost in sin, but also for those who are saved in Christ! As a Christian, you share (have fellowship) with other Christians in this relationship with Christ as brothers and sisters (1 John 1:5-7). The New Testament often paints the picture of Christians being eager to be with others who are Christians (i.e. Acts 2:42, 46). This relationship involves several responsibilities Christians have toward one another such as: Loving one another (1 Peter 4:8), showing hospitality to one another (1 Peter 4:9), carrying one another’s burdens (Galatians 6:2), correcting one another (James 5:19-20), encouraging one another (Hebrews 3:12-13), praying for one another (James 5:16), weeping and rejoicing with one another (Romans 12:15), etc. Zeal for God will lead you to accomplish such to the best of your abilities and sacrifice whatever is necessary to do so!

Radical zeal for Christ will ultimately accomplish whatever God’s word teaches you to do. Regardless of what it is and how much it calls for you to sacrifice, you will give yourself to God as a living sacrifice eager to do His will (Romans 12:1-2)! Therefore, you must look carefully at both the word of God and your own life and identify the opportunities for you to carry out God’s will in your zeal!

## Discipleship Questions

(2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**Teaching:** What did you learn from this lesson?

**Rebuking:** What are some ways this lesson challenges you to live differently?

**Correcting** How does this lesson help you make positive changes for Christ?

**Training & Equipping:** How can you apply this lesson to be trained and equipped in God’s service?