

# Radical Zeal

## Lesson 6: How To Spread It

Up to this point, we have been almost solely focused on *your* zeal and how *you* should use it in serving God. Yet, while this is critical, the impacts of your zeal for God will be short-lived if this is where it stops (limited by the amount of time you have on this earth). Instead, the picture presented in Scripture is for followers of Jesus to have such an impact on others that they will also desire to zealously serve God (Matthew 5:14-16; 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2). Therefore, whenever your fire has gone out on this earth due to death, the effects of your fire for Christ will still be burning in others!

**1) Create the right environment.** Fires do not thrive in just any environment. The same is true whenever you are attempting to spread your zeal. For example, Jesus used various environments to help people be His disciples who were zealous for good works. First, Jesus would use the crowds (large gatherings), where many would be taught at one time (Matthew 13:2). This would be an effective way to teach a message many people need to hear. In the same way, there are times when you may have the opportunity to address many people at one time (i.e. during the assemblies of a local church, Acts 20:7). However, Jesus would also use a more relational environment to go deeper with those He was training (Matthew 13:36). This environment provides an opportunity to really help others understand the teachings and then know how to use and apply those teachings in his/her own life. All of this demonstrates that you should spend intentional time with others in a variety of contexts (as Paul also did in Ephesus, Acts 19:8-10; 20:20). So, be thoughtful of each person you are trying to help be a zealous follower of Christ and work to create the proper environment for each one.

**2) Be wise in building.** When you attempt to build a fire, it may be tempting to pile a large amount of excellent wood all at once so that the

beginning product looks like the end you envision. However, if you try to do this, you will smother the fire you are trying to start. Instead, you first get some tinder (dry leaves, paper, wood shavings), then some kindling (small twigs and branches), and then put on the logs and gradually grow it. In the same way, those who are zealous and looking for ways to spread their zeal must use wisdom in how they lead others (Matthew 10:16; Colossians 4:5-6). The Scriptures clearly demonstrate that people are at different places in their spiritual development. To start, those who have never come to saving faith and obedience in Christ are spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1-3) and must yet experience the new birth (John 3:3-6). Then, after this new birth, there are three stages of spiritual progression – little children, young adults, and parents (1 John 2:12-14). As one progresses, he/she becomes more mature in Christ, able to handle an increasingly more mature diet of God's word, and more equipped to serve God. Therefore, you must use wisdom in knowing how to help others take the next steps developing zeal in their lives.

**3) Give opportunities.** As you work to help others develop zeal in their lives, this will involve helping them know what they should do with it. Therefore, you can encourage others to do good works and even help guide them in their efforts. For example, Jesus gave people who were with Him opportunities to serve and use their zeal rather than just doing everything that needed done Himself (Luke 10:1; 22:7-13; John 6:10, 12-13). It can certainly be tempting for those who have developed their skills in serving Christ to just use what they have learned to do themselves. However, there should be a progression with others. Although it begins with others watching you, you should equip and encourage them to use their zeal by giving them opportunities and training to do God's work more and more – until they can do it

without you by their side. Consider, for example, how Jesus gave the apostles the “Limited Commission” when He was on this earth (Matthew 10:1-15) before He gave them the “Great Commission” prior to leaving this earth (Matthew 28:18-20).

**4) Encourage to multiply.** 2 Timothy 2:2 describes God’s plan for His people and their zeal. Paul had been taught and equipped to be zealous in Christ’s service (1<sup>st</sup> generation). Paul had then helped to teach and equip Timothy (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). Timothy was then to teach and equip “faithful men” (3<sup>rd</sup> generation). These “faithful men” were to then teach and equip “others” (4<sup>th</sup> generation). And, the implication is that this should continue. Therefore, through this, Paul and Timothy’s zeal for Christ continues to impact others even long after they have died. The process you help others go through in their development should then continue by those you have impacted being able to impact others, who will impact others, etc. Consider the example of Christians in Jerusalem who had heard the gospel (i.e. Acts 2:41; 4:4), who were then scattered and preached the word (Acts 8:4), who found others who would believe and preach the word (Acts 11:19-21; 13:1-3).

God wants you to be zealous in His service (Titus 2:11-14). Jesus simply did not die for you so that you would just wear the title of “Christian” as a sort of badge. Instead, He wants to use you in His service. Consider the process described in Ephesians 2:1-10, as one moves from spiritual death to working in His service. Therefore, you must consider your faith and carefully evaluate whether you have reached to the roots of your faith and been zealous for Jesus in the radical ways He has instructed!

## 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?