



ignition

FIRING UP YOUR SPIRITUAL PASSION

ZEAL FOR GOD

ZEAL IS...

- Zeal is spiritual passion for the things of God. Such is the byproduct of supreme love for the Lord: “*the love of Christ compels us*” (2 Cor. 5:14).
- Zeal is real when God is really most important (#1) in our lives. It is an emotional response to an intellectual understanding of God’s truth.

ZEAL IS...

- Zeal must be properly directed by the objective ***“knowledge”*** of God, Christ and His Word (Ro. 10:2-4).
- Zeal is dynamic ***spiritual life in the Spirit*** (Jn. 6:63), the opposite of being dead and lethargic. A lack of zeal, as seen in the lukewarm, self-satisfied Laodicean church, is sinful and sickening to the Lord (Rev. 3:15-16).

Zeal (*Gr. zelos*)

Zeal is heated or intense spiritual enthusiasm.

- Jesus was consumed with zeal (Jn. 2:17).
- Paul was zealous for God (Acts 22:3).

APPLICATION:

Christians redeemed by Jesus should be “*zealous for good works*” (Titus 2:14).

- We should even be zealous to repent when we realize we are wrong and have fallen short of God’s will (*Rev. 3:19, 2 Cor. 7:10-11*).

Fervent in Spirit (*Gr. zelo*)

“Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Rom. 12:11).

- This verb form of *zelos* means intense spiritual energy.
- In the original conveys the idea of heat that causes water to boil or metal to glow.

APPLICATION:

It is being “*on fire*” for the Lord, that there is spiritual life and passion in our soul to obey God.

- The opposite is being dead like the church at Sardis (Rev. 3:1).
- Jeremiah was moved to teach God’s Word, because it was like “*fire in my bones*” (Jer. 20:9).

Abounding (*Gr. perisseuo*)

“Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

- This ***“always abounding”*** is striving to excel or overflow in abundant good works.

APPLICATION:

First, we “abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (*Rom. 15:13, 2 Thess. 2:13-15, Eph. 3:16-19*).

- Tabitha’s zeal for good works moved her to be continually ***“abounding” in benevolence*** (Acts 9:36).
- We should seek to ***“abound” to the edification of the church*** (1 Cor. 14:12).
- Zealous Christians, ***abound in the Lord’s work***, not lazy.
- Also, elders must be ***“lovers of good”*** (Titus 1:8), meaning their leadership is zealous for abounding in good works.

Exult, Boast (*Gr. kauchaomai*)

The idea behind the Greek word comes from an outstretched neck, raised in excitement, confidence or anticipation.

- A modern phrase is “*being pumped up*” mentally.
- Verbally, it conveys speaking assertively, with conviction and enthusiasm.

APPLICATION:

Rightly considered, we should be genuinely excited about being saved by God’s grace and thrilled about going to heaven (*Rom. 5:2*).

- “*We also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*” (*Rom. 5:11*)
- Paul’s central exultation in his life was the saving power of cross of Christ (*Gal. 6:14*).

Rejoice (*Gr. agalliao*)

The literal meaning of this word is “*leap with joy,*” such as being glad at the prospect of heaven’s great reward (Matt. 5:12).

- Jesus experienced great excitement over the unfolding scheme of redemption being preached (Lk 10:21).

APPLICATION:

Faith and love for Christ will renew our soul and makes us supremely glad. (2 Pet. 1:8-9)

- If we’re not truly joyful in being a Christian, we’ll lethargically mope around, doing as little as possible.
- Also, the zealous disciples will count trials with “*all joy*” (Ja. 1:2), not a mixed blessing, because the zealous disciple sees God’s purposes in allowing suffering in this world.

Diligence (*Gr. spoude*)

The main idea behind the original word is “*speed*,” hence, being energetic.

- We might say, “*get on the ball!*”

APPLICATION:

We’re to grow in faith “with all diligence” (2 Pet. 1:5).

- “*We desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you will not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises*” (Heb. 6:11-12; cf. 4:11).
- We’re **commanded** to be diligent as hard-working Bible students (2Tim. 2:15, 2Pet. 1:15), as well as being unspotted from the world (2Pet. 3:14), and diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the church (Eph. 4:3).

Eagerness, Readiness (*Gr. prothumia*)

The *noble Bereans* were eager to learn and search out the truth in objective Bible study (*Acts 17:11*).

APPLICATION:

Christians show zeal by **eagerness** (*readiness*) in giving (*2 Cor. 8:6*), which motivates others to give generously (*2 Cor. 9:2*).

Contend Earnestly, Strive, Fight (*Gr. agōnizomai*)

We derive the word “agony” from this word, which describes an all-out effort.

- Used of athletes wrestling or runners running all out to win.
- ***“Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able”*** (Lk. 13:24).
- Paul’s example was striving mightily to serve God (Col. 1:29).

APPLICATION:

The zealous Christian will **labor earnestly in prayers for others** (Rom. 15:30, Col. 4:12) and also to **uphold the apostolic faith of sound doctrine** (Jude 3).

- This is also the call to ***“fight the good fight of faith”*** (1Tim. 6:12).

Discipline (*Gr. gymnasō*)

Our English word “*gymnasium*” derives from this word, a place of strenuous effort.

- ***“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness... Godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:8-9).***

APPLICATION:

The Christian spiritual trains, by establishing godly habits, with the dedicated discipline of a world-class athlete (1 Cor. 9:24-27).

- The Christian life is not a casual stroll, but the heavenly call to become our very best for God.

