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Theme: "Zealousness and Kindness"

Scripture: Galatians 4:18

"It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you."

A Thought: The Lord enjoys our zealousness on His behalf. He is a jealous God and He expects us to glorify Him in everything we do. However, we must take heed to the one who was on his way to a rock concert. That is to say Paul's misguided journey in pursuing our Christians ancestors and hurling rocks at them. Misguided zeal to be sure. The former anti-Christian zealot was zapped by the Lord and because of his transformation he subsequently exhibited the same zealousness on behalf his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Similarly as Christian men we should not shy away from zeal that rests on a bedrock of righteousness. Paul moved forward with a clear understanding and a desire of sharing the good news of the gospel with Jews and gentiles. He started with the Israelites as stated in Romans 10:1 (NIV)... *"my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved."* We must submit ourselves to God's righteousness and to do so we must have clarity in our zealous quest. Apathy should not be in our vocabulary. Take notice to Paul's command in Romans 12:11... *"Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord."* How we think and what we do as Christian men is of the utmost importance. Our Christian faith is simple but God's word is as powerful as a two-edged sword. Hebrews 4:12a (NIV) *"Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword."* Luke tells us in Acts 2:40b-41(NIV) about a very important gathering of thousands of souls with Peter at the helm. His exhortation... *"Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."* Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. Peter's zeal was well placed not by the desires of the flesh but by the Holy Spirit. Focus, focus! As someone said, *"Our only weapon should be the life-giving, restoring the gentle Word of God."* Now....what are your thoughts? Write them down.

Talk to yourself:

- Pray, Pray and read the word with zeal...join a Bible study.
- Be a bondservant (look it up - it will give you better insight).

- **Scriptures to read:** Deuteronomy 22:5; 1 Samuel 12:24; Joshua 22:5; 1 Chronicles 28:9; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 6:24; Luke 22:26-27, 22:49-51; John 12:26;
- Romans 7:6,10:2; Galatians 5:13; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 4:10-11;

Quote: A. W. Tozer, Preacher, Author, "Paths of Power" pp. 12-13

"No one dare be so rash as to seek to do impossible things unless he has first been empowered by the The God of the impossible."

Bottom Line: As Christian men we must be diligent concerning misguided zealousness. Zealousness with wrong intentions is not unlike Peter's whipping out his sword and cutting off the ear of Malchus a servant doing the dirty work for the High Priest Calaphas in the arrest of Jesus...John 18:10-11 (NIV). The "Rock" of the church submitted his actions before thinking of the consequences. Though he was a changed man under the holiness teaching of Jesus...his fisherman's fiery temper and emotions flared. What was he thinking? He and his small group were surrounded by sword carrying soldiers! Once again Jesus came to Peter's rescue and healed the soldier's ear...Luke 22:51(NIV). Let's be clear Jesus did not want to shut down Peter's zeal. After three years of studying under our Lord...Jesus confronted him about his own understanding of the Lord's existence...Luke 22:61b (NIV) *"Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times."* No doubt we must be zealous in our walk with Jesus and we must submit ourselves with every inch of muscle and breath (within) us. Therefore, discernment and wisdom are in play....Romans 12:10b-11(NIV) *"Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."* Zealousness is not only fashioned by external actions (evangelizing, dancing, clapping, singing, church ministries) but with the love of God and compassion. Theologian Frederick W. Faber on zeal and kindness, *"Kindness has converted more sinners than zeal, eloquence or learning."* At our church when you have eye contact with any of our pastors (even across the sanctuary) a smile, twinkle of the eye and a hug will ensue. Now, in my estimation - that's love and zealousness for the Lord!

NOW.....THAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE. Spiritual Dabbler, Your bro, Ray

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