



DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS

Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

March 22, 2024



Photo: Our Daily Bread

SHARING EXCITEMENT FOR CHRIST

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

Romans 12:11

READ Romans 12:9-16

The first time we met our neighbor Henry, he pulled a well-worn Bible out of a bag he'd been carrying. Eyes sparkling, he asked if we'd like to discuss Scripture. We nodded, and he flipped to some highlighted passages. He showed us a notebook full of his observations and said he'd also created a computer presentation full of other related information.

Henry went on to tell us how he'd come from a difficult family situation and then, alone and at his worst, he accepted Jesus' death and resurrection as the foundation of his faith (Acts 4:12). His life had changed as the Spirit helped him follow the Bible's principles. Although Henry had committed his life to God years ago, his enthusiasm was fresh and powerful.

Henry's zeal inspired me—someone who'd walked with Jesus many years—to consider my spiritual passion. The apostle Paul wrote: "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord" (Romans 12:11). That seems like a tall order, unless I'm allowing Scripture to nurture the kind of attitudes that reflect an ongoing thankfulness for all that Jesus has done for me.

Unlike the emotional highs and lows we experience in life, zeal for Christ comes from an ever-expanding relationship with Him. The more we learn about Him, the more precious He becomes and the more His goodness floods our souls and spills out into the world.

By **Jennifer Benson Schuldt**

PRAY & REFLECT

Dear Jesus, please revive my excitement over knowing You! Amen

How do you think Jesus feels when He sees that you're excited about Him? What's the relationship between thankfulness and zeal?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

Paul's letter to the Roman churches can be divided into two parts - doctrine (chs. 1-11) and duty (chs. 12-16). The apostle instructs believers in Jesus not to conform to the pattern of this world but to live a transformed life that honors Christ (12:1-2). Romans 12:9-21 reads like the snippets of isolated sayings that we find in the book of Proverbs. But Paul is still talking about a renewed mind and a transformed life. The clearest demonstration of this is Christlike love (vv. 9-10), zealous service (vv. 11-12), and generous giving (v. 13). He tells us how we're to relate to both believers and nonbelievers in a world of hate and revenge. Loving others - particularly enemies - is a key test of the reality of a renewed mind and a transformed life (v. 21). – By **K. T. Sim**

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