

Concerning Zeal

*For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.
– Psalm 69:9 –*

The Apostle John cites our text in its Messianic application to our Lord's cleansing of the Temple (John 2:17). This coincides with other Messianic prophecies found in Isaiah and Ezekiel that most certainly describe the zealousness of the Master and His work (Isa. 9:17; 37:32; 63:15; Ezk. 5:13). Zeal for God was surely the invisible cloak that our Savior donned during his meteoric ministry. The Father's honor was what drove the Lord Jesus. As the Son of Man, the last Adam, Christ was consumed with advancing the Kingdom of Heaven. In truth, if the holy zeal that characterized our Lord had been missing from His Life, there would be cause to question His identity as the Savior of the world – it was that integral to His Person and work. And if Christ was so zealous for God in the days of His flesh, ought not we, His disciples, have a holy zeal as a defining trait of our spiritual lives?

What is zeal? It is an animating energy, an enveloping enthusiasm, a consuming passion. It is a person being anything but passive. It can be and often is the misdirected possession of lost souls. As such, it can stir a pot and create significant temporal disruption, even for wrong purposes and to wrong ends. (Prior to conversion, Saul of Tarsus himself was zealous for God, but not according to knowledge (Rom 10:2)). But when zeal becomes the possession of Spirit-filled men and women, it carries a dynamic and hell-shattering power. It wells up within and erupts with volcanic fury from a soul consumed with God and His Word. It serves as its own fortress because it places the believer on a pummeling offense. It does not pull or push, but drives. It scatters the powers of darkness and puts them in a scrambling retreat. It cannot co-exist with mediocrity or dishonesty. It is a powerful force for the spiritual infant, and even more so for the seasoned saint. It repels the hypocrite, attracts the seeking, and encourages the faint-hearted. In short, zeal is a critical ingredient to meeting out God's purpose for our lives.

How zealous are you for our Master, dear reader? Beware, for there are many things that can quench our passion for the Savior. If our walk is devoid of zeal, something is wrong. Let us rush to Calvary to recapture our gratitude, reset our hearts, and re-ignite our zeal for the One Who loved us so that He shed His blood to save our undeserving souls. This will ensure that we are always zealously affected in a good thing (Gal. 4:18). – D. Murcek