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ZEAL IS NOT ENOUGH

Zeal for God is not enough. "What?" you say! Isn't zeal for God a good thing? Yes, but only if it is rightly placed.

What exactly is zeal? It is defined as:

[1] eager desire or effort.

[2] earnest enthusiasm.

[3] fervor.

A person who shows too much fervor or enthusiasm for a cause is called a zealot.

When the New Testament refers to a Zealot, it is speaking specifically of a member or cohort of a band of Jews who militantly or fiercely resisted Roman rule. They often looked to an individual they thought might be the promised Messiah; a person who would free them from the Romans and set up a free nation of Israel and who would rule as their king. They had a "zeal for God" that was misplaced because they had no true understanding of the biblical prophecies of the coming Messiah or of the eternal Kingdom. Their "zeal for God" was foolishness. It was misplaced.

There was a young man by the name of Saul, who was very highly educated in the scriptures. He was of the sect of Pharisees, the dominant sect of the Temple in Jerusalem. He was very zealous for the written word of God (what we today call the Old Testament). He, along with other Pharisees, and the other sect of Sadducees, considered the practice or beliefs of any Jew that departed from the Mosaic Law to be absolute heresy. They believed all heresy must be eliminated by whatever means it takes.

Saul was full of zeal for God. Thousands of Jews departed from strict adherence to the Mosaic Law so that they could become "followers of the way", being saved by faith in the risen Jesus Christ. Saul saw them all as heretics to be eliminated. The ruling council of the synagogue (Temple), the Sanhedrin, also saw them as a heretical threat. They gave official authorization to the zealous Saul to pursue these "heretics" of "The Way" to imprison them. Many of them would be executed.

Saul was doing this "for God." It was for "God" as he had known from the scriptures in which he had been taught. He had no understanding (nor did the Sanhedrin) that Jesus had fulfilled the scripture as the "suffering Messiah." His zeal was misplaced.

Many others even in the last 200 years have had a great zeal for God that was misplaced. Zeal is not enough. It must be rightly placed.

Joseph Smith and Brigham Young had great zeal for God. It was based on a “new” word from “God” delivered to them by an “angel.” That “new word” was written as “scripture” in the Book of Mormon. It was zeal misplaced.

Mary Baker Eddy had a zeal for “God” and wrote her revelation in the book Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures.” We call it Christian Science. It was zeal misplaced.

Many others have had “misplaced zeal” due to their lack of true understanding of scripture, a lack of a genuine salvation experience through Jesus, and no relationship with Holy Spirit.

Zeal it not enough. It must be coupled with a right understanding. It must be in line with what the Holy Bible gives us. It must be moderated through Holy Spirit.

The church is in great need of those who would be zealous for God. Without zeal, the church becomes lazy, complacent, and ineffective. A church that is filled with “rightly placed” zealots could turn the world upside down for Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven.

Will you be a zealot for Jesus? Will you be a “fanatic” for Jesus?