

Paul's 3 Passions

Romans 12: 11 “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.”
Fervent: A primary verb; to *be hot* (*boil*, of liquids; or *glow*, of solids), that is, (figuratively) *be fervid* (*earnest*): - be fervent.

Many people are zealous for various reasons and causes. Some are godly causes and good is accomplished. Others have misdirected zeal and much harm is done.

Proverbs 19:2 “It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.”

Romans 10: 2 “For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge.”

- Hitler was zealous for a “pure race”
- Communists are zealous for a Utopian society
- Muslims are zealous for Islam
- A businessman is zealous for money

Although we have the warning it is zeal, or fervor or passion that moves and motivates to accomplish what God wants us to accomplish. Without it we are armchair Christians. We know a lot but don't practice it.

It is the zeal of God that sees His glory covering the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is as this passion grips our hearts that we are moved to see Christ being glorified, the church of God growing and becoming all that God wants it to be and the Unreached of the world being reached.

Bob having a passion for the Marsh Arabs.

These are Paul's 3 passions.

1) Passion for Christ

Philippians 3: 7 – 11

- This was Paul's primary passion. Compared to Christ he countered all things as loss. Nothing else mattered.
- All that was dear to him:
 - His heritage
 - His education
 - His ambitions
 - Everything that was of profit to him
 - His righteousness
- Paul's passion was primarily to know Christ. It was to have an intimate personal relationship with Christ. His work for Christ would flow from this relationship.
- The greatest or most important command is to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. - Mark 12: 30
- The chief end of man is to glorify God.
- Do we have a passion to know Christ?
- It is easy to want to do things for Him or to come to church every Sunday and sing songs, listen to the Word of God and leave, but do we really know Jesus?
- Do we have a personal relationship that would cause us to live lives that are pleasing to him not because we are under obligation to do so but because we love him.
- We love Him because He first loved us. (1 John 4: 19)
- God was passionate about loving us that Jesus died on a cross while we were still sinners.
- He desires that we have that same passionate love for Him that will sacrifice anything for Him.
- Do we have barriers in our lives that keep us from knowing him intimately?

2) Passion for the Church

Colossians 1: 24 – 28

- Paul's second passion was for the church.
- His passion was that it receives the word of God in fullness and that it becomes mature – all that Christ intends it to be.
- Words that he uses:
 - I fill up in my flesh what was still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church.
 - I have become its servant
 - We proclaim him
 - Admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom
 - We may present everyone perfect in Christ
 - I labour, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me
- Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. (Ephesians 5: 25)
- Christ loves His church.
- We hear a lot about Christ giving His life for the lost, but here we see that Christ gave His life for the church.
- If Jesus gave his life for the church and Paul gave his life for the church then we ought to also have the same passion for the church.
- Matthew 16: 18 “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”

3) Passion for the Unreached (Neglected) Romans 15: 20

- Paul's calling was to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
- He had a constant passion to see those who had not heard the Gospel hear.
- Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.
- “The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost” (Luke 19: 10)
- Do we have a passion to reach the Unreached?
- John 3: 16 “For God so love the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”
- God is grieved over people who do not know him and will go to a Christless eternity.
- Paul's heart's desire and prayer for the Israelites is that they be saved. Romans 10: 1
- When last did we even pray for someone's salvation?
- When last did we tell someone about Jesus?
- Having the heart of God for people who don't know Christ leads us to share the Gospel of Hope in Christ with them.
- Evangelism isn't a mechanical program. It is reaching out to people knowing that their lives are at stake.

Paul's passions were also Christ's. Do we have the passion of Christ within us?