

Overington  
11/29/54 "Simon, the Zealot"

11/13/52  
N. W.  
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Text: - Luke 6: 15. And Simon, Zelotes"

Introduction: - This is the way a man was described whom Jesus called to be one of his apostles. I am not quite sure whether the name was given him for his zeal in the service of the Master or whether it was the name by which he was known at the time he was summoned to the discipleship. I presume it was in the latter case.

This man belonged to that fiery party of nationalists who opposed with utmost bitterness and vehemence the Roman claims and pretensions and were willing to lay down their lives in defense of their liberties and rights. It was then, this temper of mind and this capacity for fidelity and loyalty that Jesus desired and on account of which he summoned this man to be one of the founders of the religion that was to conquer the world.

Simon Zelotes is not the only one who was a zealot. What was Peter, if he was not a zealot, burning and impulsive with a fiery purpose, ready to use his sword in defense of the Master and his claims.

What about James and John, when they begged the Master to call down fire upon the villages that had not shown an air of familiarity toward them? What but zealots would you call them as they came with their mother to request of Jesus that they might have the chief places in his kingdom. Christ evidently was not afraid of zeal in his services. He has room for all the fiery enthusiasm of youth, the enthusiasm of age. During the centuries succeeding his life on earth, men had been called into his service who could truthfully be called "zealots for his cause".

The spirit of the Master has not always been the spirit of his followers. Too often they have been afraid of zeal and have been very careful in prosecuting his work. Too many have been very anxious to escape too close contact with that temper of spirit which was the strength of the prophet, of the apostle, of the martyr, and which rested upon the Son of God himself.

There is nothing about the career of



Jesus, other than his belief in the triumph of his cause, that could have won for him the spirit of an enthusiast. He was never blinded for a moment as to the opposition that his mission would engender. I should call it the height of enthusiasm and zeal when a man came to estimate death in ignominy and shame as infinitely better than yielding to the temptation of the hour and falling from his high position.

#### I.

All Christians should be zealots. We have a message that could not be entrusted even to angels, which was brought from heaven by the Son of God himself. We have the impulse of sins forgiven. How can we fail of being zealous for the cause of Christ.

#### I.

We should be zealous for the spiritual life of the church. Apart from the spiritual life that dominates them, all other services that the church can render to the world have no special value that does not belong to other institutions. It has been a great comfort to find that so many practical Christian men who concern themselves about what are called the temporal affairs of the church are nevertheless constant in prayer for the spiritual life of the church, and insistent that its leadership be spiritual. We must put first things first, and we must pray that in ourselves and in others the life of the spirit may be intensified, deepened, strengthened. If we are zealous in these things, others will naturally follow.

#### II.

We should be zealous be zealous with regard to the temporal affairs of the church. I wonder if the Lord ever looks upon a sorer spectacle than that of a man who is enthusiastic in his own business, but is timid, cautious, conservative, faithless, yes, sometimes a brakeman, in regard to the temporal and financial matters of the church of God. There was never a church so prosperous that it could not be ruined by leaders who will whenever they have a chance "talk things down". And at the same time, I doubt that there ever was a ~~church~~



church that could not be made prosperous by a true spirit of zeal and enthusiasm for all that ministers to its success.

### III.

We should be zealous for the social life of the church. We should make every one feel absolutely at home in our Father's house. Out in the world, sometimes with reason, oftener without, we fancy that there are little differences and distinctions that separate, but when we stand uncovered in the presence of our Master, if we really have looked into his face, how can we fail of exclaiming, "All we are brethren"? We should lovingly contribute ~~to~~ to make the church beautiful because all of us may share in its inspirations, its conveniences, and its helpfulness.

### IV.

We should be zealous in all Christian work for the children and the youth. The possibilities of that work exceed our wildest estimates. Nothing is so absolutely certain in its results. It is impossible for us to be overzealous in wise efforts for the saving of the young people who can be brought under our care.

We should be zealous for all the world wide enterprises of the church. We should believe in the possibility of the salvation of all for whom Christ died, and we cease to be Christians when we do not believe practically in the commission that says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature". How can we be anything but zealous, if we are disciples of Christ.

Conclusion:- Christian zeal welds all Christian forces. All our differences in temperament, in personality, in aims will be as apparent as ever in a cold church. But when the zeal for the Master takes possession of us, they all disappear, when we are fused into ~~an~~ all-conquering weapon for the Master, because we are baptized into one spirit of zeal for him. It is said that when the few Spartans met and conquered the Persians the Spartans went into battle singing, and one could hear the cracking of the lashes with which the



Persian commanders were trying to drive their un-  
manegable mobs to fight. No army could drive  
Oliver Cromwells psalm-singing "Ironsides".

What will make us zealous for Christ and for his  
church? Surely none of us can read the promises  
of God without feeling a new inspiration. His  
word bids us not to fear; his word tells us that  
he will give us the kingdom; his word exhorts to  
be instant in prayer, and tells us that whatever  
can come within the scope of his will and of his  
name, will be granted to us.

The men who have done things for Christ that were  
worth doing, have been men of zeal. The world has  
no picture of Martin Luther that does not show  
him him of flaming eye, of burning speech and  
heroic temper. He is ready to defy the pope, the  
world, the devil and to stand alone, because he  
feels he is standing for Christ.

(The end) Flaming zealous, enthusiastic, and de-  
voted youths and older people for Christ. Use as  
an illustration Fred Fishers story of the blood  
bought victory for service.

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