

# Zeal With Wisdom

by K.P. Yohannan

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*The sermon teaches that while zeal for God is essential, it must be accompanied by wisdom to be truly effective in our lives and relationships.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 4:7, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 19:20, Ecclesiastes 3:1, Acts 20:24, Philippians 4:5, Colossians 4:5-6, James 1:5, 1 Peter 3:1-7

**Topics:** "Wisdom in Relationships", "Zeal"

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## Description

K.P. Yohannan emphasizes the importance of balancing zeal with wisdom, drawing parallels from the lives of Paul, Peter, and Jesus, who were passionate in their pursuits yet demonstrated sensitivity and understanding in their interactions. He shares personal anecdotes to illustrate how unchecked zeal can lead to misunderstandings and conflict, particularly in relationships, and stresses the need for gentleness and meekness in our approach to others. Yohannan encourages believers to maintain their enthusiasm for the Gospel while being wise in their actions and words, highlighting that true wisdom comes from a close relationship with the Lord.

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## Transcript

When you read about Paul, Peter, Philip and others in the book of Acts, you see how their lives were marked by passion. They were full of zeal, enthusiasm and excitement, red-hot in following the Lord. Nothing could stop them. I believe the Lord desires for us to be the same way today. Even Jesus had a direct purpose and a goal. He pressed onward toward Jerusalem with an iron will, focused on what His Father required of Him. And so must we--but not at the expense of wisdom. As somebody once said, "We can become so heavenly minded that we are of no earthly good."

We need to be wise in our zeal. Sometimes we need to slow down, be sensitive and listen. In all His zeal, Jesus still took time to simply listen to the woman at the well and play with the children. One time when I came home from the office, Gisela was crying about something going on at the house. I don't remember exactly what it was that was bothering her. I automatically started quoting Bible verses and preaching to her, thinking that was what she needed to hear. She stopped me in mid-sentence, saying, "Can you please stop?"

I can preach all those sermons and quote all those Bible verses too. I just want you to listen." In my enthusiasm and zeal, I had completely missed what she needed. There was no wisdom in that. There are many different ways that zeal without wisdom can manifest. Numerous times, women have come to me

asking for prayer for their unsaved husband. They explain the strife and incredible pain they live with, telling me all the ways they have tried to convert their loved one, but to no avail.

Often, this zeal takes a turn, and soon the wife starts criticizing, putting down and pointing out all the husband's wrong ways. In turn, the husband is driven even further from the Gospel than he was before. And further from his wife. Zeal to see a loved one come to know the Lord is good. The Bible shows us the wise way to handle this zeal--and it never mentions to argue and fight or tell the whole world how bad someone may be. Rather, in meekness and gentleness, we are to live a godly life before that person.

This becomes the means for someone to come to know the Lord (see 1 Peter 3:1-7). How often we end up losing precious friends and bringing such disunity in our fellowship or in our home by handling the truth without wisdom. Once a pastor came to visit the GFA office. As I spent time with him, he began telling me all the things he was doing for mission work. Something within me wanted to rise up and say, "This guy is off-the-wall. He is so completely ignorant about what is really going on."

I wanted to explain the whole picture to him and give him the real story of world missions. But suddenly I thought to myself, "There is a time for everything. Is this the time to do it? He is so happy, so enthusiastic. He wants to pour out his heart and tell me what all he has done and where all he has gone. If I start lecturing at him now, what would be the point? I must love him and respect him and honor him. Dignity should be given to him." So I listened . . . and listened . . . and listened.

I said, "Wonderful, I am so glad you have been to this place." And then I said, "May I have your business card so I can contact you again?" Then I gave him my book *Revolution in World Missions*<sup>1</sup> and said, "When you have finished reading it, would you give me a call?" He said he would. Ten years ago, I would have acted differently. I would have said, "You think you know this and that! Well, let me tell you, you are wrong. It's really like this . . ." But this is not how the Lord would have responded.

We need to make a conscious effort to be sensitive to one another in this way. We need to keep our zeal and walk in wisdom at the same time. Wisdom is knowing how to properly handle the information and knowledge we have, especially when it comes to relationships. And the Word of God tells us we receive wisdom by having the fear of the Lord. That simply means a close relationship with the Lord, seeking His face and living in obedience. This brings wisdom to our hearts. Notes: 1 K.P. Yohannan, *Revolution in World Missions* (Carrollton, TX: gfa Books, 1986).

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