

Let's Go!

Who makes you drop everything just so you can spend a few minutes with them? Where would you go at a moment's notice regardless of the time or cost? What invigorates you to get involved even when you feel weary? There are certain people, places, and activities that evoke a zealous response in us. We are immediately engaged and shout, "Let's go!" On the flip side, there are people, places, and activities that simply leave us indifferent and cold. Our knee-jerk response is, "Who cares?!" Thus, let's take a few moments to consider what we should care about. What should make our hearts ache with hope, fan the flames for change, and catapult us forward to sacrificial service?

As believers and followers of Jesus - those who have received a new heart and a mind - it should reason that our passions and purposes are also transformed. Paul explains to Titus:

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a **people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.**" (Titus 2:11-14).

In the opening eleven verses of Nehemiah, the author describes his response to hearing of the trouble that has cast a long shadow over the former exiles and the City of God which remained in a state of disrepair. Nehemiah's response includes genuine interest (vv. 1-3), earnest empathy (v. 4), expectant prayer (vv. 5-10), and humble availability (v. 11). Behind his reactions lie two items that should captivate the soul of every believer: **a concern for God's people and a devotion to God's glory.**

It is important, like Paul and Nehemiah, to have a firm grasp of these, because they reveal the very heart of Almighty God and evidence that we have been reborn into His family. They determine whether we care or not, whether we get involved or turn a cold shoulder, whether we strive for holiness or slip into spiritual lethargy. They determine whether our interest will be piqued, our souls will be burdened,

our prayers will be fervent, and our conduct will be fruitful. In short, caring for God's glory and people (Matt 22:36-40) will motivate us to be "zealous for good works." Do you care for what your Heavenly Father cares about? If so, it's time to shout, "I care!" and "Let's go!"

1 John 2:3-6 (ESV) - "And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."