

DOING YOUR BEST FOR CHRIST: 3. BEING EARNEST

Christian Character in Action: Lesson 33

7 October 2022

Earnest: with fixed attention. With eagerness, zealously.

Most of us allow our attention to be spread out too thin among many different interests and duties. Today we will examine the importance of establishing godly priorities and then keeping our focus and devoting our greatest efforts to the thing that is most important. **“Do it with thy might”** (Eccl. 9:10) **“as unto the Lord”** (Col. 3:23).

Jeremiah 11:6-8 God earnestly protested to the people of Israel, DAILY trying to get them to listen to Him and obey His voice. He did not abandon them after a few feeble attempts to deal with them.

- He earnestly proclaimed His words to Israel for hundreds of years. He didn't quit when they didn't respond. He continued to plead with them because they were important to Him
 - How quickly do you quit seeking the lost when they don't respond to your preaching and ministering?
 - We need preachers and soul-winners and ministers who won't quit because of lack of results. God needs people who are earnest in their devotion to getting the gospel out.
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Jude 1:3 Jude, a contemporary of the apostles, saw a great need to exhort the Christians of his day to **“earnestly contend for the faith.”**

- When people try to destroy the doctrines of New Testament Christianity, we need to earnestly contend for the faith.
 - Our adversary, the devil, is not haphazardly trying to destroy our faith. He is actively, daily trying to prevent people from getting sold out and dedicated to Jesus Christ.
 - We need to earnestly put up a fight against the devil's attacks against our faith.
 - We need to earnestly battle to keep heresy and apostasy from ruining biblical Christianity.
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Luke 22:44 In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed more earnestly to His Father to “let this cup pass from me” until His sweat contained great drops of blood.

- Jesus didn't get His prayer answered the first time. So, He prayed more earnestly.
 - How earnestly persistent are you in your prayer life?
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James 5:17 Elijah earnestly prayed to God to stop the rain for 3 ½ years. The wording indicates that he didn't simply pray one time and it was done. He had to pray to God continually until he was satisfied that his prayer had accomplished what he had asked for.

- Do you want your nation to turn back to God? You need to be earnest about praying and asking God to do something to get peoples' attention. That might require some sacrifice on your part.
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1 Corinthians 12:29-31 Christians are encouraged to “**covet earnestly the best gifts.**”

- Are you lacking the gift that you wish you had (apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues)? Why don't you EARNESTLY ask God for it? Keep asking God until He gives it to you.
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COMPARING GOD'S PEOPLE TO THE WORLD'S PEOPLE

Nehemiah 3:20 God's people were able to finish the wall of Jerusalem because they earnestly wanted to get it done, so they did the work with all their might.

Micah 7:3 The world's people do evil with BOTH hands fervently.

- The people of the world are fully focused on sin. They are not distracted by thoughts of going to church and serving Jesus.
 - Christians today divide their devotion between serving Jesus—and participating in worldly attractions that lead to sin.
 - That is why the church today can't win the battle against the sins of the world. The world is more devoted.
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Luke 11:42 Jesus wants us to continue doing the things we are currently doing in our service and devotions. But He also wants us to do the OTHER things that we may be neglecting.
