

Ps. 119:139-141 “Consumed by Zeal”

For the Children: Perhaps you have met people who were really excited about a certain hobby or topic. They can't stop talking about it. They spend a lot of time on it. If someone else criticizes it, they are quick to defend it. We say they are filled with “zeal” for that subject – which means that they have strong feelings for it and want to be very much involved in it. For God's children, the Lord should be the Subject we care most about, have the strongest feelings, and spend much time with. When other people make fun of Him, we should want to defend His Name. **Questions:** Are God's people as zealous for the Lord as we should be? How do you know when you are not as zealous for the Lord as you should be? How come the Lord still saves us?

Introduction:

First Point: Recognition of God's Word

- 1) More Than Reciting Doctrine: Recognizing the purity of God's Word (v. 140) is more than reciting a correct doctrine of Scripture. “Purity” means that God has kept all dross out of His Word, but we must also “prove” the Scripture for ourselves – learn by experience that it will never let us down, that it is “sufficient.” Thus we must come to *love* it, having discovered how “tried and true” it is
- 2) Against Opposition: Many will test this conviction. The devil will use those who hate God, the pressure of adverse circumstances, and our own old nature to do so. We may feel “small and despised” (v. 141). But through it all the believer does not forget the Lord's precepts

Second Point: Zeal for God's Word

- 1) Love Leads to Zeal: Love of God's Word results in zeal for it – a strong passion or desire for it. Opposition from those who hate the Word only inflames the Psalmist's zeal for that Word, so that it becomes a *consuming* zeal – as if he were all burned up by it – a zeal to speak, defend, promote, and witness to the Word
- 2) What Zeal Entails: God is zealous for His own Name and glory – His “jealousy,” which is zeal for one's own possessions. His jealousy/zeal is reflected in us. So we are zealous for His Name and glory, His Word, His Law; for the spiritual gifts He gives; His House; and for the repentance that leads us back to Him. All of these are objects of the believer's zeal throughout the Scripture
- 3) The Zeal of Christ: The Lord Jesus is the perfect embodiment of zeal for the Lord, His Word, gifts, and House. See Jn. 2:17, quoting Ps. 69:9 and alluding to 119:139. His zeal was exercised on our behalf, and He died to cover our lack of zeal. We now make a small start in reflecting that work, out of gratitude for what He has done for us

Conclusion:

