

Week 10: Zeal - The X Factor

Small Group Lesson

Key Scriptures:

- 2 Kings 9:1-10

Introduction

In this tenth and final lesson in this series we will examine the life of King Jehu. Jehu was zealous for the Lord. Zeal was the X-Factor or secret sauce in his life. Zeal is defined as great energy or enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or an objective. We see zeal present in the life of Jesus when He turned the tables of the money changers over in the temple. The Apostle Paul encouraged believers to not be slothful or lazy but serve the Lord with zeal. In this lesson we will look at four principles of zeal exemplified in the life of King Jehu.

1. Zeal is fostered in private

(2 Kings 9:1-10) - The anointing of kings was usually accompanied by much pomp and celebration. When Jehu is anointed king over Israel it was different. There was no party, no huge crowds of cheering fans. Jehu was different. Your anointing, your calling may not look like someone else. We have to be ok with serving without the celebration or fanfare or cheering crowds. Our obedience to what God has called us to do is much more important than recognition. It may mean that your life looks very different from those in your neighborhood or at your job. A believer who is full of zeal will pursue the call of God and a standard of holiness no matter what others may think.

Question: Have you had to make choices that others did not understand because of your convictions? What was that like?

2. Zeal will cause you to be faithful in the middle

(verses 6-7) - Jehu is anointed as king at probably one of the worst times in Israel. He grew up in an atmosphere of idol worship and dysfunction, but God anointed him to bring about change and to step into what could be. As believers we can be caught between what has been and what could be. Satan knows the most vulnerable time for a believer is in the middle, too far from where we have started to feel the excitement at the beginning, and too far from finishing to see the reward at the end. Even though it was a terrible time in Israel Jehu's zeal encouraged him to get going (verse 16).

Question: Someone said the enemy of faith is fear but the enemy of fear is action. When you are in the middle you will need to take a step of faith and get moving. What are some ways you can move forward in an area you feel has you stuck?

3. Zeal will cause you to move forward from your past

(2 Kings 9:17-20) - Riders were sent to meet Jehu as he approached Jezreel. They demanded to know if he came in peace. Jehu's response was direct and clear. "What do you know about peace?" Israel had become comfortable with a kingdom out of order and away from God. If we are not careful we can become so complacent in our walk with God that we no longer recognize dysfunction. We become so familiar with the pain of our past that we carry it into our present without the desire to be free. If left unchecked, the pain of our past will poison our present. Zeal will cause you to confront your past and move forward into what God has for you.

Question: Our victories over our past are an encouragement to others who are still struggling. Is there an area where you have seen a victory that you could share with those in your group and encourage them that they can move forward?

4. Zeal will empower you to make bold decisions

(2 Kings 9:30-33) Jezebel was a beautiful woman but wicked to the core. When she heard Jehu had come she painted her eyelids, fixed her hair and sat in the window. She tried to use seduction to lure Jehu. When he looked up and saw her he shouted boldly "Who is on my side, throw her down!" To get where you are to where God wants you to be will sometimes require you to make some bold decisions. Bold decisions might look like leaving a conversation or discontinuing a relationship that is pulling you away from God but the rewards are great. Your heavenly Father wants to do great things throughout your life. Zeal will cause you care less about what friends may think about you and more about what Jesus thinks.

Question: Are there some areas in your life that you had to make a bold decision? How did it turn out? How did you feel afterward?

Conclusion

God raised up Jehu in a difficult time for Israel. He is always looking for someone who will rise to the occasion and stand for holiness. Your anointing and call may not look like anyone else. It probably will not be celebrated in front of crowds but it is just as important to God as any other. Zeal will carry you through the mundane seasons and empower you to make some bold decisions. Take a moment and pray for each other that God will fill you with zeal for Him and a greater level of passion for His kingdom.