

Live Amazed!

Doing things to impress people and to be admired are not good motives for serving God.

Are you excited about being a Christian? Do you enjoy being with and worshiping with other believers, and talking about what God is doing in your life and in the lives of others? Or have you become accustomed to the idea that you will live eternally and God is watching over you?

God once spoke to my heart that I should always live amazed and not get blasé about things that once thrilled me. I remember how excited I was when God revealed His love to me. Wow! God loves me—and just because He wants to.

His love is unconditional and everlasting. I was so excited and enthusiastic I felt I was going to burst. But after a while, I got used to the fact that God loves me, and I didn't feel the same passion.

Are you experiencing the same thing? If so, I believe there is something you can do about it.

Paul told Timothy to stir himself up, to fan the flame and rekindle the embers of the fire he once had (see 2 Tim. 1:6). Paul was talking about Timothy's faith, which had been passed on to him by his grandmother and mother. Timothy let himself become afraid, and the message from Paul was "Stir yourself up." Apparently it was Timothy's responsibility, not someone else's.

What can we do to keep ourselves passionate about God's purposes for our lives? We can be careful about how we live and think and with whom we spend our time.

All these things affect our attitudes and emotions. If we think about something in the right way, it will fill us with

enthusiasm. Likewise, if we think the wrong way, we can dread doing what we should be excited about.

Stop thinking this way: I'm so tired of doing the same old thing all the time. I go to church, but nobody appreciates the effort I make. I have volunteered in the nursery for three years, and nobody has even thanked me. That kind of thinking will depress you and make you feel resentful.

If you are serving to be thanked, then your motives are wrong. God is not impressed with what we do or how much we do. He is impressed only with why we have done it, and it must be for a good, godly reason.

Doing things to impress people and to be admired are not good motives. Serve God, not man, and your reward will come from Him.

Instead, think like this: I am looking forward to going to church today. I remember when I was miserable and didn't even know if I would go to heaven when I died. I am so glad to have an opportunity to serve God by working in the nursery. God sees everything I do, and none of my labors go unrewarded by Him.

If we spend a lot of time with people who have no vision for their lives, no purpose, no passion and no enthusiasm, we will probably start to be like them. The Bible says unholiness is infectious, but holiness is not (see Hag. 2:12-13). For example, we can catch a cold from someone else, but we cannot catch good health—that must be chosen.

When we have our whole hearts committed to something about which we're passionate, we don't just drift along and go with whatever comes along. We pray, think things over and make purposeful choices.

Stay focused. It is easy in society today to get sidetracked and begin drifting in a direction that will be detrimental to

your future. Be determined to serve God wholeheartedly.

I imagine some of you may be thinking, Joyce, I wish I felt that passion you're talking about, but I just don't.

Let me remind you: Passion is a decision about how we will approach life before it becomes a feeling. Those who purposefully pursue their passions are people who will glorify God and be long remembered.

As Christians, let us wake up every morning excited about the relationship we have with our Creator and what He's going to show us and teach us today!

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times best-selling author and one of the world's leading practical Bible teachers. She has written more than 70 books, including the popular *Beauty for Ashes* and *Battlefield of the Mind*, and her most recent, *I Dare You* (all FaithWords). She is also the founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries Inc. and the host of *Enjoying Everyday Life* radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. To read past columns in *Charisma* by Joyce Meyer, log on at