

Enthusiasm makes a BIG difference!



commentary and compilation by Drew Crandall,
based on the writings of the Rev. Norman Vincent Peale

There are various definitions of enthusiasm: passionate admiration or interest; religious emotion extravagantly manifested; God in you, full of God, fullness of joy.

Key Scripture text: "Render service with *enthusiasm*, as unto the Lord and not to men and women."
(Ephesians 6:7)

Key elements of enthusiasm are heat, intelligence, and motivation (2 Tim 1:7). Enthusiasm is a *kind of* faith that has been set afire under the control of the Holy Spirit. Enthusiasm also *breeds* faith, which in turn stimulates a sharp awareness of life, a consuming interest in living, and *ACTION!*

Under the control of the Holy Spirit, enthusiasm *creates and builds*. It is "relaxed power," full of drive but lacking tension. Uncontrolled enthusiasm dominates the person and causes him/her to be overheated, overconfident, and full of uncontrolled anticipation, which leads to a running away from judgment and reason. Uncontrolled enthusiasm leads to unreasonableness, an attempt at too much too fast, loud talking, high pressure, and in the end defeat and frustration. It eventually washes out because it is *overpressed*.

The alternative problem is a lack or low supply of enthusiasm, which leads to cooling and apathy. Apathy makes jobs more difficult, tiresome, and tense. Common "coolants" in any organization are so-called sophisticates, intellectuals, wealthy cynics and critics. (Sounds like the chief priest, scribes, Pharisees in Matt 23:13-34!)

To ignite and keep enthusiasm, you need to "mentally ventilate" at the *start* of each day, to cleanse your mind of discouragement, gloom, hate, prejudice, resentment, dissatisfaction, and worry (Phil. 4:6-9). The word worry means "to choke or strangle" one's personality.

Once you've mentally ventilated, the next step is to undergo a high degree of "combustion of the mind." This happens when you're aroused by (a) an ideal that takes your imagination by storm, (b) a definite plan for carrying that ideal into "real world" practice that's broken down into little goals, and (c) initiative to then *do it!*

Specific everyday benefits of enthusiasm: (a) joy; (b) motivation; (c) cancellation of fear and worry; (d) new perspective on "problems." They now become fun, because each problem has a soft spot and carries with it the seeds of its own solution! God wants us to be creative problem-solvers!



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