

# "Simon - Greater Than Nationalism" Pastor Jason West March 10, 2024

Luke 6:13-16

| I. Understanding the Zeal for   |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Luke 6:15b "Simon who was called the Zealot"  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Matthew 10:4 "Simon the Zealot"   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mark 3:18 "and Simon the Zealot"  |  |  |  |  |  |
| A. Israel's History   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Deuteronomy 28:47-48 "Because you did not serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart, because of the abundance of all things, therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you." |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mattathias revolts, "Let everyone who is zealous for the Law and who stands by the covenant follow me!" (I Maccabees 2:27)  |  |  |  |  |  |
| B. The Zealots Move Underground   |  |  |  |  |  |
| C. Four Groups Emerge   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Pharisees – the Conservatives  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Sadducees – the Liberals   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Essenes – the Isolationists  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Zealots – the Patriots   |  |  |  |  |  |
| II. The Power of God  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Acts 1:6 "So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?'"   |  |  |  |  |  |
| John 2:15-16 "And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.'"   |  |  |  |  |  |
| A. Following Jesus Will Change How You See  |  |  |  |  |  |

| 1. Overcoming  |  |
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| 1. Overconning |  |

Matthew 9:9 "As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he rose and followed him."

#### 2. Learning to \_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 5:44 "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"

John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

| В. | <b>Following</b> | Jesus Will Cha   | nge How You S | ee the |  |
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#### III. God Will \_\_\_\_\_Your Zeal for the Kingdom of God

Daniel 2:44 "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, nor shall the kingdom be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever."

2 Kings 10:16a "And he said, 'Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord.'"

Romans 12:10-11 "Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord."

Psalm 73:25 "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you."

Philippians 3:4b-5 "If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;"

Philippians 3:6-8 "as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ"

Philippians 3:9-11 "and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead."

Acts 20:24 "But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God."

### March 10, 2024



#### 1. Familiarize Yourself With the Passage and the Gospel

- a. Matthew 10:4; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13
- b. Do a word study of the terms "zealot" and "zeal" finding all the places in the Bible where it appears.

## 2. Introduction to the Passage (Feel free to use this as a reference guide as you discuss the passage)

Historical/Literary Context: Of the four known religious groups among the Jews in the first century (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and Zealots), the Zealots were the most violent of the four, planning various subtle attacks on the Roman government and even the aristocratic Jews to overthrow the powers at be. The term we know as "zealot," about the specific Jewish religious sect, was not used until 66 A.D. when the official war between the Jews and the Romans broke out lasting until 73 A.D.¹ The origins of the group seem to trace back to 6 A.D. Therefore, Simon was probably not a part of the established religious group known as "zealots," because the group hadn't solidified yet. Simon would have strongly held similar ambitions that many of the insurgent attackers held (i.e. Barabbas), however they were more like bandits than an official Jewish group. The first insurgent attack that held the ideologies of the Zealots happened in 47 B.C. by Hezekiah, who was a "patriotic resistance leader" for the Jews. Hezekiah's son, Judas, followed in his father's footsteps with more attacks in 4 B.C.

What led these men, like Simon and others, to commit such violent attacks? The term "zealot," refers to a passionate jealousy for the honor of Israel's God. These kinds of people would have seen people like Phinehas (Numbers 25:7-13; Psalm 106:28-31) and Elijah (1 Kings 18:40; 19:10) as heroes who purged the land of Israel through violence from people who defamed and dishonored God's name. While these zealot attacks may have been misguided, these first-century zealots had aspirations that stemmed from total loyalty to the God of Israel, rather than strictly from a desire for Israel's nationalistic freedom. Archeology has proven that they eventually formed their own synagogue and school demonstrating great knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures.

#### 3. Questions About the Passage

- a. Do you believe that great zeal for an ideal is good or bad? How would you caution someone who has an intense passion for something?
- b. Compare Paul, Peter, and the Jews in the following passages and how they lived out their zeal. Look up these passages. What similarities could you see in Simon? (Paul: Acts 9:4-5, Philippians 3:5-6, Galatians 1:14; Jews: Acts 26:21- Jewish zeal toward Paul; Peter: John 18:10, Matthew 26:51-54 zeal for Christ) Do you see a connection between zeal and violence and why is that?
- c. How do you think Simon's zeal changed as he was following Christ?

#### 4. From the Passage to Life

- a. Can someone be zealous for tradition and God at the same time (Galatians 1:14)? What things are you zealous for?
- b. What kind of zeal do you see in the church (good or bad)?
- c. Do you struggle with being zealous for things outside the kingdom of God and God's priorities to advance the gospel (politics, candidates, stock market, sports, fashion, hobbies, etc.)?

d. How do you think righteous godly zeal should be lived out (Romans 10:2;

Galatians 1:6-9; 2:11-14; Titus 2:14; Revelation 3:19)?

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> F.F. Bruce, New Testament History (New York: Doubleday, 1969), 93-100.