

How to Stay Enthusiastic for a Lifetime

By Rick Warren

“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer” (Romans 12:11-12 NIV).

In order to reach your goals, you have to figure out how to maintain your enthusiasm over the long haul.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Nothing great is ever accomplished without enthusiasm.” I believe that with all of my heart. I have found it to be true in my life. You’ve got to have passion, you’ve got to have enthusiasm, or you’re never going to make it to the finish line.

Most people would consider me an enthusiastic person, and I am. But I haven’t been an enthusiastic person for a week or a month. My enthusiasm has not waned over a year or five or 10 years. I have been consistently enthusiastic about the goals that I’ve set for more than 30 years.

How do you do that? How do you stay enthusiastic day after day in spite of delays and difficulties and dead ends and problems and pressures and criticisms? How do you stay enthusiastic for more than 30 years?

Positive thinking is not enough. Pulling yourself up by your psychological bootstraps is not enough. Talking yourself into optimism is not enough.

The way you stay enthusiastic for a lifetime is found in the word “enthusiasm.” The word “enthusiasm” comes from the Greek word *en theos*. *En* is the Greek word for the English word “in.” *Theos* is the Greek word for “God.” So *en theos* means to be “in God.”

When you get *in God*, you will be enthusiastic. It’s the kind of enthusiasm that isn’t affected by the economy or the weather or your circumstances. It’s eternal because you are tied to the eternal God. You are in Christ.

Paul tells us how to do this in Romans 12:11-12. He says, “*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer*” (NIV).

If you want to reach your goals this year, you need to get God’s power by being joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Pray this prayer today: **“Dear God, I don’t want to go another day without you in my life, controlling every part of my heart. I offer you my body. I dedicate myself to you. In light of all you’ve done for me, I give myself as a living sacrifice to you as a spiritual act of worship.**

“I humbly admit that I need help. I want you to help renew my mind. Help me to think the way you want me to think. Please forgive me for my pride. I don’t want to think more highly of myself than I should.

My faith needs to grow, and I need your help to set goals that can be measured so I can manage them.

Forgive me for trying to change on my own.

“I want to fill my life with love. I want to fill my life with you. Help me to get group support. Help me to take delight in honoring other people, to focus on giving my life away so that you can take care of my needs. I want to nurture my enthusiasm by being *in you*. Help me to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer. I give myself to you. In your name I pray. Amen.”