

## A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

### READY TO EXPEND ENERGY AND EFFORT

Romans 12:11 "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord."

There is a concern among pastors and church leaders at the growing apathy of church members. Apathy, you know, is a lack of concern, enthusiasm, and interest in the church, its mission, and ministry. Although your congregation, as a congregation may not be experiencing this growing apathy among its members, there are most likely some of your members who are apathetic. Sowing seeds of apathy is one of Satan's seductive ways of attacking the church and God's people.

One author gives six signs to use to examine whether you and/or your congregation is apathetic: 1) Lack of a concern for souls --- How concerned are you that your family members, neighbors, friends, work associates appear to have no relationship with Jesus Christ? Is spiritual outreach to those not spiritually active your priority? Is it the priority of your congregation? 2) Lack of participation in congregational singing --- Those who don't sing often say they "can't carry a tune." Remember, God listens to your heart, not your "pitch." Congregational singing is not a performance, it is worship. 3) Indifference to needs of others --- Growing Christians are caring Christians. Enthused, energized Christians look for opportunities to love and serve others as God loves and serves them. 4) Lack of members giving their pastor(s) encouragement --- ". . . acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work." (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13) 5) Declining concern for missions --- This occurs when a congregation becomes inward focused and loses its sense of eternal realities and spiritual responsibility to reach the world with the Gospel. 6) Failure to invest in the next generation --- An alive and caring congregation is energetic and committed to a strong teaching ministry for all ages, but especially to its youth and assisting other congregations in

their youth ministry. ([ministry127.com/pastoral-leadership/7-early-warning-signs-of-spiritual-apathy](http://ministry127.com/pastoral-leadership/7-early-warning-signs-of-spiritual-apathy))

St. Paul encourages “Never be lacking (slow and poky) in zeal (expending energy and effort with eagerness) but keep your spiritual fervor (enthusiasm), serving the Lord.” Remember what Jesus said to His mother when she found Him at age 12 in the temple, “Didn’t you know I had to be about my Father’s business.” (Luke 2:49)

Prayer: Holy Spirit, fill me with spiritual fervor to give glory and honor to You, my Heavenly Father, and Jesus my Savior. Amen.

Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord to Thee;  
Take my moments and my days, Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move At the impulse of Thy love;  
Take my feet and let them be Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice and let me sing Always only for my King;  
Take my lips and let them be Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold, Not a mite would I withhold;  
Take my intellect and use Ev’ry pow’r as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it Thine, It shall be no longer mine;  
Take my heart, it is Thine own, It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour At Thy feet its treasure store;  
Take myself, and I will be Ever, only, all for thee.

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