

From the Family Room

14 April, 2019

**Creekwood Church of Christ
Mobile, AL**

ENTHEOS!

Thanks be to God, who put into the heart of Titus the same concern I have for you. For Titus not only welcomed our appeal, but he is coming to you with much enthusiasm and on his own initiative. 2 Corinthians 8:16-17

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:16-19

If you watched the NCAA basketball tournament any the past few weeks, you may have seen some real enthusiasm. March Madness produces feelings of strong excitement, passion, fervor, and zeal. This is the accepted modern definition of enthusiasm. There were many minutes of television air time devoted to ridiculous clothing and ridiculous antics of enthusiastic fans. I enjoy any athletic event or concert more if there is real enthusiasm shown for the event. We in the state of Alabama understand enthusiasm for athletics.

Last summer, Freda and I worked with the Glyfada church of Christ in a suburb of Athens, Greece for approximately two weeks. While at this congregation we noticed a real enthusiasm for Christianity among its members. No, people did not dress in outrageous clothes and did not do silly things to draw attention to them. They were examples of enthusiasm as defined by the original Greek word. The root word in Greek is **entheos**. This literally means “god within” or “god in us.” What we saw in Glyfada was a congregation where it appeared that the members kept God in their life. Their worship showed it. The worship service was less of a production and more of a simple and genuine worship of God. Their singing was genuine praise and showed God in them through their volume and their intensity. Their prayers showed it. Their fellowship showed it. They genuinely cared for one another. They showed enthusiasm for the Gospel. They showed enthusiasm for the Bible. They showed enthusiasm for God. The Christians at Glyfada kept God in their lives.

Why did the Christians at this congregation show such zeal and fervor? Many of them were in a transition phase in their lives. In Glyfada they were waiting to be relocated to other countries in Europe. They had escaped several countries where Jesus and the Bible were denied. Several had been persecuted physically because of their faithfulness to God. Because of their faith in God, several women and their children were there in Athens because they had been abused and abandoned by their husbands in their native countries. Some of the men and women refugees had lost their jobs, houses, land, and all of their money to escape with their faith. They had lived several years as Christians in cultures without God. In Glyfada it was evident that God was within them. They showed their enthusiasm when they came together as a church.

Enthusiasm for God is evident among members in this congregation of the Lord's church that meets at Creekwood. We show our enthusiasm by our worship, when we serve Him through serving others, by eagerly learning His word and then teaching it to others, and by loving and caring for one another. We must always be diligent that God is alive within each of us as Christians. We as mature Christians must teach and lead younger Christians so that the presence of God within them is evident everyday everywhere they go. I pray it will not take several years of living in a Godless society and being persecuted for our faith for us to truly be enthusiastic about our Christianity.

It is funny today that when most people think of enthusiasm, they think about an athletic event and not a religious endeavor. Assuming we controlled it, wouldn't it be awesome if we brought as much enthusiasm to our work for God and we do for our college athletic events? We can when God is in us. The happiest people I know have true **entheos** – God within them.

RICKY