

# Eagerness

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## Introduction

I recognize that I suffer from a disadvantage tonight. Without attempting to compete with Santa on this Christmas eve, or keep you here until Christmas morning, during the next few minutes, let us consider the concept of eagerness.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines "eager" as "having or showing keen interest, intense desire, or impatient expectancy" (cf. the adverb, *eagerly*, and the noun, *eagerness*).

What about Biblical usage? The concept of eagerness is communicated by a Greek word family composed of the noun, *prothumia*, the adjective, *prothumōs*, and the adverb, *prothumōs*.

The noun, signifying the concept of "eagerness," refers to an "exceptional interest in being of service, *willingness, readiness, goodwill*." The adjective describes one who is "eager to be of service, *ready, willing, eager, of the spirit*." The adverb "pertains to being eager to be of service, *willingly, eagerly, freely*."

Collectively, these words have a spiritual focus, and communicate an eagerness for praying, learning, helping, preaching, and (with maturity) leading.

### *The Noun Prothumia*

The Greek noun *prothumia* (πρόθυμία), derived from *prothumōs* (willing, ready), refers to the concept of "eagerness" (Thomas 4288).

BDAG define it as an "exceptional interest in being of service, *willingness, readiness, goodwill*."

This word occurs 5x in the NT (Acts 17:11; 2 Cor 8:11, 12, 19; 9:2), where it is translated "eagerness" (1x) and "readiness" (4x).

### *The Adjective Prothumōs*

The related adjective *prothumōs* (προθυμῶς), a compound of *pro* (before) and *thumos* (passion), describes one who is "willing, ready" (Thomas 4289).

BDAG say it "pertains to being eager to be of service, *ready, willing, eager*, of the spirit."

This word occurs three times in the NT (Matt. 26:41; Mark 14:38; Rom. 1:15), where it is rendered "willing" (2x) or "eager" (1x) in the NASB.

### *The Adverb Prothumōs*

The adverb *prothumōs* (προθυμῶς), derived from *prothumōs* (willing, ready), refers to action that is performed "eagerly" (Thomas 4290).

BDAG say it "pertains to being eager to be of service, *willingly, eagerly, freely*, [as] opposed [to] ἀποθυμῶς (1 Pet. 5:2), the contrast indicating that officials are to be eager to meet the needs of others rather than seek gain for themselves."

This word occurs once in the NT (1 Pet. 5:2), where it is rendered "eagerness" in the NASB.

## For Praying

Like Peter, James, and John, faithful disciples should evidence a willingness for praying (Matt. 26:36-46, esp. v. 41; cf. Mark 14:37-40).

## For Learning

Like the Bereans, prospective believers show an eagerness for learning (Acts 17:10-15, esp. v. 11)

## For Helping

Like the Corinthians, faithful churches reflect a readiness for helping (2 Cor. 8:7-24, esp. vs. 11, 12, 19; 9:1-5, esp. vs. 2).

## For Preaching

Like Paul, faithful evangelists should manifest an eagerness for preaching (Rom. 1:8-15, esp. v. 15).

## For Leading

Like the apostle Peter, faithful elders are motivated by an eagerness for leadership (1 Pet. 5:1-4, esp. v. 2).

## Conclusion

Are you eager and excited this evening? Is your heart filled with a desire to pray? Are your hands eager to help? Is your mind eager to learn? Is your spirit possessed by a desire to preach? Are you willing to selflessly serve the needs of others?

## Sources

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