

Passion For God's Heart

Matthew 22:34-40 NIV

“Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

I. God Wants Us to Live and Love Passionately.

“**White Hot**” In a recent Wednesday evening broadcast, Pastor Roberto said, “We need to be “Red Hot,” No, “White Hot,” for God.

We must come to understand the “In’s and Out’s” of the dynamics of passion. Unchecked, ungodly passions can lead us astray and cause destruction in our lives and the lives of others.

We are not talking about idealizing passion. True spiritual power implies holiness and a sanctification process in our lives as we allow God to purify our passions.

II. True Godly Passion Cannot be Indifferent.

Revelation 3:14-22 NIV

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, **because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.** You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my

throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

God cares, God feels, God is not dispassionate.

Indifference or lack of passion leaves us in the condition of being “...wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked...” God hates indifference or being dispassionate.

Hebrews 4:14-16, Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

III. Dictionary Definitions for the Word, Passion:

- * Any powerful or compelling emotion or feeling, such as love or hate.
- * Strong amorous feeling or desire; love; affection; instance or experience of strong love or sexual desire.
- * A strong or extravagant fondness, enthusiasm, or desire for anything e.g. music
- * The object of fondness or desire e.g. Accuracy became a passion with him.
- * Violent Anger
- * The Passion: meaning the sufferings of Christ subsequent to the Last Supper and on the cross as recorded in the Gospels.

Passion is neither good or bad in and of itself. Passion is an emotive motivator that often pushes us into “Action.”

IV. Secrets of Success Require Engaged Motivation over Time.

Passion and Motivation are inextricably linked. Enthusiasm wanes when achievements are delayed.

Incremental steps towards goals are important to maintain systematic success and keep the fuel of passion burning over the long haul.

Personal Illustration:

When I was managing the InterNET Satellite Network (March of 1994 to January of 1999), I reported directly to Harrell Canning, the President of International Communication Corporation of America. Harrell had made a careful study of every manager that reported directly to him, to understand the desires of each and every person under his care. Harrell always tried to find what made each of his employees tick, and what each person needed to keep the fires of passion burning within their hearts. From the start to the finish of my time working for Harrell, my personal experience with him was so positive that I consider him a genuine friend to this very day.

V. Passion is Sustained by Endurance.

Long Term Success isn't for sprinters, but for those who maintain a consistent pace like a distance runner.

Hebrews 12:1-3, Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

VI. Passion Clarifies and Immerses Us in Our Calling

God has placed a divine calling on every single person. Ask God what He is calling you to be and to do.

Finding one's calling is sometimes as simple as responding like Moses to the question God asked him.... **What is in your hand?**

Exodus 4: 1-5... Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you?' Then the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied. The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So, Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. "This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has appeared to you."

"What is in Your Hand?"

God puts the equipping tools that we need to successfully fulfill our calling within our reach.

As God asked Moses, "What is in your hand?" God is speaking to you and me... Look at what is in your hand, within your reach. God makes everything readily accessible that we need to use to fulfill our calling.

Moses had his rod.

David had his sling.

Elijah had his mantle.

Elisha had and sacrificed his oxen.

Gideon had his lamp.

Peter had his boat and net.

Handel had his organ keyboard.

Martin Luther had his thesis and the Wittenberg Door.

Gutenberg had his printing press.

George Whitfield had his portable pulpit.

John Wesley had his horse.

D.L. Moody had his Sunday School class.

William Booth had his drum.

Ask God to give you His heart and His passion for what He has called you to do. Look close by; look around you. Look for what He has placed in your hand.

When I am editing a video project currently, or when I used to produce musical projects (a lifetime ago now), I literally spent days and nights living on very little sleep; often I did not even stop to eat. I was so absorbed in my passion for the project, that I scarcely felt time passing at all.

Obviously, it is important to sustain a long-term balance of taking care of our bodies, or we will quickly burn out. However, doing what we know God has called us to do, and loving what we are doing, produces a fulfilling, exciting life brimming with bounty.

VII. True Passion Releases the Father's Creativity.

When we think of the word "Passion," we can't escape thinking about the passionate union of a husband and wife, that brings forth and produces life itself.

At the very foundation of the understanding of the word "Passion," we see a direct link to the act of producing life. Life is a God-given gift, foundational to the earliest command that God gave to us as humanity.

Genesis 1:27-28 NIV... "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God is the source of life and His life is the source of Creativity and Passion fostering not only children but every created thing:

Architects bring forth buildings.

Fashion designers bring forth beautiful clothes.

Musicians bring forth music.

Writers bring forth books, articles, poems etc. etc. etc.

VIII. Passion Empowers our Holy Calling and Productivity.

Parable about 3 bricklayers: A traveler came upon three men working. He asked the first man, “What are you doing and the man said, “I am laying bricks.” He asked the second man the same question, “What are you doing? The second man replied, “I am putting up a wall. When the traveler asked the third man, “What are you doing?” the third man replied, “I am building a cathedral.”

They were all doing the same thing, laying bricks. The first man had a job. The second man had a career. The third man had a calling.

Do you envision what you do every day as a calling? It doesn't necessarily have to be the job of your dreams, but do you see the big picture in your daily actions? Do you realize what a difference you are making?

We may be laying bricks every day, but if we envision the cathedral and intentionally move through each day with holy passion, we will fulfil God's destiny for our life.

IX. Passion Produces Joy which Connects Us into Community.

When we are living “passionately” we can anticipate God's Joy (one of the Fruits of the Spirit) that overcomes challenges, hardships, and setbacks. Holy passion nurtures a perspective of gratitude, which propels us to live joy-filled lives.

Joy produces an “Attraction” that draws others to us. This magnetism draws us into relationships and connects us into communities. These communities are where our need for “belonging and accountability” provide “pathways to become seasoned mature believers.”

X. Holy Passion is Born Out of Knowing that We are Loved by God.

Only God's Love can fuel and sustain our passion and motivation.

Individually and collectively, as the Body of Christ, we must become convinced of God's unfailing love for us. The Apostle Paul expressed his intimate connection with God's love:

Romans 8:35-39 NIV

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul was so transformed by the love of Christ and it was this Love that motivated him.

Anything motivated by desires for personal acclaim, earthly wealth, position and status will implode because their roots are corrupt.

Religious fervor that is not grounded in Jesus (the Way, the Truth, and the Life) will produce death. e.g. Pharisees

If we do something three (3) times and observe some sort of success we, "Ritualize It."

Example: prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel cutting and flagellating themselves are a clear example of passionately worshiping the wrong way. (I Kings Chapter 18).

XI. We Are Entering a New Season

Jesus gave 3 years of focused earthly ministry from the day of His baptism by John the Baptist to His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. He laid down His life for us to be in an eternal relationship with Him.

Will we consider giving our lives, and specifically these next three years, to passionately enter into Christ's calling to become a community through which God can reveal Himself in this city?

Will we dedicate our lives to become the community through which God can manifest His glory and grace to this region? Will we surrender our agendas to help ignite the Revival that God desires for His Church (Capital "C") for our city, our local communities, New England, and our nation?

God has set leaders in place. Leaders are important and we need to be grateful for them! Congregation Lion of Judah has one of the best Christian leaders in the city of Boston. Over these past 3 weeks, we have heard Pastor Roberto's heart's cry, longing for more of the manifestation of God's power and purpose to be fulfilled among us.

But leaders can't do it alone. Leaders can't be the only ones pushing or advancing the ball. God is building a team and we are all a part of His (God's) team to behold His glory and lead our communities, our city, our region and this nation to Christ one person at a time.

Live "White Hot Passionate lives for God and His heart."