

Rediscovering Your Passion

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I. Introductory Remarks.

Revelation 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

Revelation 3:15-16 *I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth.*

As you take a moment to digest these two scriptures, what are some of the things that come to your mind?

- How do you see your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ in light of these two scriptures?
- What is it in a person's life that could cause them to lose their first love or become lukewarm after being filled with zeal and a passion for the Lord and His kingdom?
- What was it that causes a person who once burned with a fervent intensity that produced a hot fire within their souls and spirits and ignited others with this same level of fervency to go out?

Both of these scriptures are indicative of a person who has lost their passion for the Gospel and the kingdom.

In this message I want to talk about how we can rediscover the passion that once ignited our hearts and spirits. This is something all of us as Christians deal with from time to time. No matter who we are, we all have a tendency to lose our passion for the gospel and the kingdom.

Passion defined: The energy of our soul; "Intense emotion compelling action. A strong devotion to some object, activity or concept." Shared meaning: passion, fervor, ardor, enthusiasm and zeal.

II. Why People Lose Their Passion.

Before we get too far into why we need passion and how we can repossess our passion let's look at some reasons why people lose their passion.

1. **By allowing something precious to become familiar** – when dealing with

people, do you remember how it was when you didn't know Jesus or has it become to familiar.

2. **A desire for acceptance and approval** – Our desire for approval causes us to turn the temperature down on the passion of our lives until we seek to be normal, average = lukewarm.
3. **We live in a society that is passive** – We have become conformed to the world.
4. **Apathy increases with age** – It may be that wise young believers are very rare, zealous old believers are very rare also.
5. **No purpose beyond self** – People who are bound up in themselves become bored with life. Only desire to get up and listen to cereal go snap, crackle & pop.
6. **Failing to count it all joy in the midst of life's trials and hardships.**
7. **Unrepented sin.**
8. **Unresolved issues, pain, hurts, etc**

III. Characteristics of a Person Driven By Passion.

- Is goal oriented and visionary.
- Is a self starter.
- Has a positive attitude.
- Gives 100% all the time.
- Strives for excellence.
- Isn't satisfied with mediocrity.
- Is creative at getting things done well no matter what.
- Has a "whatever it takes" attitude, isn't overcome by obstacles.
- Accepts responsibility.
- Doesn't make excuses or shift blame.
- Inspires others to do their best.
- Rises to leadership.

After looking at this list, do you see yourself lacking in most of these areas? If so, you need to have your passion restored.

IV. Why We Need Our Passion Restored.

In order to change in any area or to rise to a challenge there must, first of all, be that which motivates us to do so. I believe if we really desire to see our passion for the gospel and the kingdom restored to where Jesus desires it to be we must be properly motivated.

1. Passion Is The First Step to Achievement.

Matthew 11:12 *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

The Greek word for violent in this context literally means energetic or those who strive to obtain its privileges with the utmost eagerness and effort.

All of us have an inherent desire to succeed at whatever it is we are doing – relationship with God, our ministries, jobs, marriage and family. Our desire will determine our destinies. The starting point of all achievement is desire. Keep this constantly in mind.

Weak desires bring weak results, just as a small amount of fire makes a small amount of heat. If you find yourself lacking in persistence, this weakness may be remedied by building a stronger fire under your desires. A person who is excited about what they are doing can sell you just about anything. **Your temperature will take you to the level of your excellence more than your gifting or education ever will.**

A proven motivator will make it to the top before a proven genius. When Andrew Carnegie hired Charles Schwab to administer his far-flung steel empire, Schwab became the first man in history to earn a million dollars a year while in someone else's employ.

Schwab was once asked what equipped him to earn \$3,000.00 a day. Was it his knowledge of steel manufacturing? *"Nonsense," snorted Schwab. "I have lots of men working for me who know more about steel than I do." Schwab was paid such a handsome amount largely because of his ability to inspire other people. "I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm among the men the greatest asset I possess," he said, and anyone who can do that can go almost anywhere and name almost any price."*

I think of the example of both Jesus and the apostle Paul – two people who accomplished great things in their personal callings. Jesus constantly achieved the desired affect that He was looking to.

- **The Example of Jesus**

John 2:17 *His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."*

John 4:34 *Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to*

finish His work.

Isaiah 59:17 *For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak.*

- **The Example of Paul.**

The apostle Paul is an excellent example of one who was driven by passion. Look at all the opposition and persecution he faced, yet in the midst of it all he achieved great things. In those places where he was mobbed, stoned, jailed or persecuted, he planted great churches.

Philippians 3:14 *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Colossians 1:29 *To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.*

The one place where Paul failed to build a church was in Athens. There was no persecution or opposition – only indifference and a lack of passion towards anything. Even Paul couldn't build a church in the midst of apathy and indifference.

2. Passion Increases Will Power.

The key to willpower is "want power." People who want something badly enough can usually find the willpower to achieve it.

Galatians 5:16 *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*

Romans 12:11 *...not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;*

3. Passion Changes Lives.

As Christians we interact with other people constantly – unbelievers and believers alike. God wants us to have an influence upon the people we touch.

Your passion for the Lord will influence the many people you come in contact with for the good. There's no greater joy than when you see someone else's life changed as a result of your influence.

2 Corinthians 9:2 *for I know your willingness, about which I boast of you to the Macedonians, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal has stirred up the majority.*

4. Passion Makes Impossibilities Possible.

"Man is so made that whenever anything fires his soul, impossibilities vanish." Passion allows you to see beyond the difficulties and to lay hold of the faith that is needed for impossibilities.

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

5. My Passion for God Protects Me From Wrong.

It will be shown by a great desire for personal holiness. It will reflect the attitude of Matthew 5:29-30.

Matthew 5:29-30 *"And if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

V. Practical Steps for Rediscovering Your Passion.

No one keeps up his passion automatically. Passion must be nourished with new actions, new aspirations, new efforts and vision. It is one's own fault if his enthusiasm is gone. He has failed to feed it.

1. Believe That Passion Is The Deciding Difference.

You must believe that it's passion that is going to make the deciding difference in your life – your marriage, family, ministry & relationship with the Lord and others. A marriage without passion is lifeless.

Matthew 11:12 *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

2. Realize That God Desires Passionate Believers.

We must understand that being fervent and passionate is actually a command. It is God's will and desire towards us.

Matthew 22:37 *Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'*

Romans 12:11 *...not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord...*

3. Pray For Passion.

Matthew 7:7-8 *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

Matthew 7:11 *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

4. Activate Your Spiritual Gifts.

1 Timothy 4:14-15 *Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.*

5. Live In An Environment Where Goals Can Be Seen & Achieved.

- **Physical environment** (wealth, technology, health-the material world)
- **Cognitive environment** (knowledge, information, education – the intellectual world)
- **Social environment** (family, friends, neighbors, church - the societal world)
- **Emotional environment** (feelings, attitudes - the psychological world)
- **Spiritual environment** (the eternal and transcendent - God)

6. Associate with People Of Passion.

7. Remember What God Has Done For You.

The children of Israel had just watched the Lord put an interstate highway through the middle of the Red Sea, but felt sure He wasn't up to bring home their supper. They watched Him rain bread over their whole camp, then swore up and down He was going to let them die of thirst.

Maybe that's why Moses exhorted them seventeen times in the Book of Deuteronomy to "remember" what the Lord had done for them.

Deuteronomy 7:18 *"You shall not be afraid of them, but you shall remember*

well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt...

Deuteronomy 8:18 *"And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

VI. Concluding Remarks.

Consistent enthusiasm and passion come from within, rather than being dependent on changing circumstances. Inconsistency confuses, discourages and de-motivates. Let's purpose to be people of passion. The wind of God is always blowing.... but you must hoist your sail.

Galatians 4:18 *But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.*