



SERIES: MY LIFE WITH GOD

Serving God with Passion

Life Reference: Matthew 22:73 & Matthew 6:19-34

Focus Verse:

“. . . Fervent in spirit; serving the Lord” (Romans 12:11).

Pop quiz: “What are you most passionate about in life? What excites you and stirs up your enthusiasm?” Many of us will quickly respond, “God,” “family,” “soul winning,” or some other worthy pursuit.

Next question: “On what endeavor do you spend the most of your time?” It’s possible that this answer will be quite different from the first. Why would this be?



Life Reflection:

Jot down the things that you did yesterday or on another recent day. How much time did you spend on the things that stir your passion?

Do you feel your day had good balance and your time was well spent?

What is passion? It has been described as “a strong feeling or emotion.” We may also think of it as fervor, ardor, zeal, or delight. To put it in simply, something is so compelling that it moves us to action. Some pursue education, saving the environment, politics, animal rights, sports or entertainment. Even shopping or spending time with friends can become a passion if it consumes

our time. The truth is that we usually spend the most time on the thing about which we feel most strongly.

Whatever our passion, it will cost. It comes at the expense of time and effort. The price may include great personal sacrifice, misunderstanding of motives, or even the friendship of those who think us radical. Yet the greater the passion, the less these things matter.

“Passion costs me too much to bestow it on every trifle.”

Thomas Adams 1583-1652

For the Christian, our greatest passion should be God. It is the only way to serve Him.

- “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37-38).
- “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit” (Romans 8:5).

Saul, later called Paul, showed great passion for his Jewish religion and stirred up opposition to the early church because of it. His life changed dramatically after an encounter with God on the road to Damascus. A new passion consumed him. He fully embraced the revelation of Jesus Christ and spent the remainder of his life evangelizing the world with the gospel. Such zeal cost, but he never regretted his decision.

- “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (II Corinthians 11:24-27).



- “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Life Reflection:

Have others tried to discourage you from following your passion in life (career choice, education, special interests, etc.)?

Have you encountered opposition because of your walk with God?

Has this struggle made you stronger in your determination or discouraged you from pursuing your passion?

Life Response:

How do we increase our passion for God? How do we make Him first in our lives? We must ask ourselves two questions. First, what draws me closer to Him? Next, what things in my life hinder this?

In our hectic world it is easy to allow things to sidetrack us from our devotion to God. If our lives are out of balance and we are over-committed, we will not make time for God as we should.

Unconfessed sin or an unforgiving spirit will break our fellowship. Or perhaps we are holding back from fulfilling His will in an area of our lives. These and other things will steal our ardor.

- “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with



patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

When we consider how passionate God is about us, to the point of dying for us, how can we not feel intensely drawn to Him? We demonstrate our fervor by an increased longing to be with Him. We will feed on His Word and spend time in prayer communing with Him. Our greatest desire will be to obey and please Him. As our fervency grows, so will our love.

The opposite of passion is apathy—indifference, lack of concern, or coldness. If Satan can rob us of passion for God—distract us with other things—then he need not worry. Apathy makes his job easy.

The truth is we are as close to God as we choose to be. "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." (James 4:8, NKJV). It is our decision.

My Prayer:

Lord, help me to live my life in such a way that my passion for You will be a witness to others and cause them to desire You also. Help me to never become apathetic or cold in my walk with You. When opposition comes, my strength will come from You. I know that nothing can separate me from Your love. You are my passion in life!

More Life with God References:

Romans 12:1

II Corinthians 11:22-27

Philippians 3:3-14

Colossians 3:23

(Unless otherwise noted, scripture references are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.)

This Bible study is adapted from an article in Reflections Magazine.



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