

“Passion”

Emotions Study 6

For many people, the idea of being a Christian means playing it safe, being quiet and timid and even outright boring. But is this God’s intention? The origin of the word “passion” is suffering. Jesus was passionate about going to Jerusalem where he would fulfill his mission to die on behalf of all of us. In Revelation he speaks in his proclamation to the church to be either “hot” or “cold”, anything other than lukewarm. Are we passionate about people, our lives, our talents, our faith – and does that passion lead us to make tough decisions in life?

Luke 9:51-62

⁵¹As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" ⁵⁵But Jesus turned and rebuked them, ⁵⁶and they went to another village. ⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." ⁵⁹He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good bye to my family." ⁶²Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴"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. ¹⁵I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! ¹⁶So, because you are lukewarm--neither hot nor cold--I am about to spit you out of my mouth. ¹⁷You 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. ¹⁸I 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. ¹⁹Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. ²⁰Here 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 him, and he with me. ²¹To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. ²²He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Questions

1. In Luke 9:51, Jesus is completely focused and resolute about going to Jerusalem to fulfill his mission. What do his words in verses 58-62 tell you about being passionate about your calling? Is there passion in your life and if not what prevents you?
2. In Luke 9:54, we see the darker side of what passion can bring. What are the areas of temptation in your life that arise as you follow your passions?
3. What causes us to be “lukewarm” Christians as described in Revelation 3:16? Why would God use such a strong image as spewing us out of his mouth for being neither hot nor cold?
4. Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ” has stirred up passionate responses from supporters and detractors alike. Discuss how this film has impacted our culture and those you know who have seen it.

Discussion Guidelines:

1. Allow everyone a chance to speak. If you are bursting with ideas and tend to share a lot – great – but occasionally pause a bit before you go, sometimes the quieter ones are just waiting for their chance and they need a little space before they go.
2. Respect the opinions of others, and refrain from giving advice.
3. Keep discussion focused on the material being studied.
4. Maintain the confidentiality of personal things shared within the group.