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Serve God With Passion

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Are you passionate? I belong to a book club that has studied three dynamic personalities over the last two years: Winston Churchill, John Adams and Napoleon Bonaparte. We have found that these great leaders were active, assertive and *passionate*.

God is also passionate about what He does and about His plans. Bring more of God's passion and energy into your life, and you can conquer even your worst sins, weaknesses and obstacles.

The Holy Spirit is a spirit of *power* (2 Timothy 1:7). The Greek word here for "power" is *dunamis*—the root word for *dynamite*! God's Spirit supplies EXPLOSIVE spiritual power! And you need nothing short of that to win your spiritual war. Those who are so passionate that they *conquer* their sins are those who will rule with God on His throne (Revelation 3:21).

Military leaders sometimes sum up their ethos, their purpose, their passion in a single phrase. *Semper Fidelis. Invicta*. Duty first. Who dares wins. For king and country. God tells His Christian warriors, "Fight the good fight of faith ..." (1 Timothy 6:12); "Strive to enter in at the strait gate ..." (Luke 13:24); "mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13); bring your body into subjection (1 Corinthians 9:26-27). These are the bold actions of passionate people!

Here are three areas to build more passion in your life:

1. Prioritize prayer and study.

"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore SOBER, and WATCH UNTO PRAYER" (1 Peter 4:7). "The fact that Christ's return is so near should *change our behavior*. ... THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST'S IMMINENT RETURN SHOULD MAKE US URGENT SPIRITUALLY," my father writes in [The Epistles of Peter—A Living Hope](#). "Because Christ is almost here, we must be very concerned about our prayer life."

Don't try to work up passion yourself. Stirring up human emotion leads to temporary and sometimes dangerous results. Your passion must come from God. Go to Him in prayer—not in a dreary routine, but drinking in energy, spiritual strength and inspiration from God. Our passionate Father will respond and fuel your passion, *energizing* your life and producing growth, excitement and more passion! Your prayers will get RESULTS (James 5:16).

In Hosea 7:14, God corrected His people for their indifferent prayers: "[T]hey never put their heart into their prayers" (Moffatt translation). Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, "[N]ever have I received an answer from God except when I prayed earnestly from the heart. I have never known of a real answer coming from God of a casual, routine prayer" (*Plain Truth*, August 1978). Make sure your prayers are not casual, listless or said while half-asleep. Psalm 62:8 tells us to *pour out our hearts* to God. Hezekiah "prayed and cried" to God (2 Chronicles 32:20). Christ prayed to the Father with "strong crying and tears" (Hebrews 5:7).

In the same way, ask God to help you bring passion into your Bible study. Romans 10:1-2 describe people who are filled

with misguided zeal that differs from God's knowledge. Studying the Bible fills you with God's knowledge and gives your passion *direction*. Pursuing your own desires and your own righteousness, causes you to miss out on the entire purpose for your existence. Ground your routine and your life in deep Bible study. The truth you learn will have you bubbling over with passion and pointed in the right direction. If you study God's Word with a humble, obedient attitude, it will become a *burning fire in your bones* (Jeremiah 20:9; 23:29).

2. Study the lives of passionate leaders.

Our book club has studied a prime minister, a president and an emperor—and all three were *voracious readers*. These great men studied great men. "Napoleon Bonaparte said that if you want to be a great general, you must study the great generals of the past," my father writes in [The Former Prophets](#). "That is good advice for us spiritually as well. Bible history is the greatest history of all because it's God's history."

My father writes in his booklet on Chronicles that if we don't study history and the lives of great men, we are in danger of being caught up in the present and forgetting the prophetic and historic overview. As a young man, Mr. Armstrong studied the biographies and autobiographies of great men, as well as the stories of great leaders in the Bible. Studying passionate leaders teaches us how to be passionate ourselves.

3. Build passion for God's work.

John Adams was called the "colossus of independence" because of his urgency, unrelenting drive and passion for the fledgling United States. He was passionate for a physical goal. We should be far more passionate for our *spiritual* goal: supporting and doing God's work.

Jeremiah was. He did God's work by "rising early and speaking" (Jeremiah 7:13; 25:3; 35:14). He was urgent and hard-working about getting the work done.

Jesus Christ certainly was. He attracted huge crowds, not only because of His healings and miracles, but also because He had a powerful message that He delivered with *POWER* and conviction. His messages left people amazed and astonished (Matthew 22:33; Luke 2:47; 4:32). After Christ was gone, His disciples said, "Did not our heart *BURN* within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

Doing God's work effectively takes real passion! We should be bold and courageous in our mission, knowing God's Kingdom is the solution to the world's evils and troubles.

Use these three points. They will help you to become truly passionate about what **GOD** is passionate about. ■