



John – The Passionate

Adapted from “12 Disciples” series by Dennis Marquardt.

Note: This lesson includes a **360Man Challenge**, a special call to DO something seriously challenging in order to know and serve God better. Learn more about what it means to be a 360Man at 360Man.ag.org.

Neither the church nor the Christian can survive without fervent passion. It is passion which fuels most foundational things in society. Why do you think products are sold promising moving experiences if only you buy or use their products?

For example, "*There ain't no power like Mountain Dew ... Just dew it!*" A commercial showed all kinds of dangerous and exciting things people do for thrills and then connected it to drinking Mountain Dew. The idea was that drinking Mountain Dew was not just drinking a soft drink—it was a powerfully passionate experience. Likewise, Princess Cruise Lines is known as the "love

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boat" cruise line company. Thus, a cruise with them guarantees romance and intrigue.

Car makes and models are often connected to such things as attractive models, rugged mountain activities, treks through the wilderness, cruising through scenic cityscapes, etc. Certain beers once associated with a pool party in the middle of the desert where beautiful girls and exciting people would show up to enjoy an adult beverage with you.

One of AT&T's commercials promised their phone lines will be so clear and affordable that family members at odds with one another would suddenly call each other and reconcile...talk about passion!

All humans are passionate. But we don't become passionate for the first time when we get saved. Sometimes we must exchange some passions—the wrong ones—for the right ones. The Bible teaches us to submit ourselves to God for developing the right passions or our lives. Christians must guard against passions that hurt themselves, the body of Christ, or others.

John went from a being "son of thunder" (see "The 12 Disciples," lesson 3 for reference) with a passion for self, to a man of love, with a passion for others. Being the closest to Jesus, John soon not only heard Jesus' heartbeat but found Jesus' heart beating in him. It is impossible to get close to the "God of love" and remain arrogant, hard, angry, and uncaring.

What you draw close to will determine your passion.

“COURAGE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

Luke 9:46–56 (ESV) An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side and said to them, “Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great.” John answered, “Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you.” When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them. And they went on to another village.

John 19:25–27 (ESV) But standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

1 John 4:19–21 (ESV) We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

C1: John goes from being a “son of thunder” with passions all about self, to a man of love whose passions are about others. Would you consider yourself to be a *son of thunder* or a *man of love*? Why?

C2: Have your passions ever been clouded by arrogance, anger, or pride? If so, how did it manifest itself in your life?

Exercise #2: John was a passionate disciple. Write down three of your strongest passions. Next, write a note to yourself as to how those passions might have changed (or need to change) since accepting Christ as Lord and Savior?

Passion #1:

Note to self:



Passion #2:

Note to self:

Passion #3:

Note to self:

Exercise #3: Write down a memory about a time when your right passions caused you to fight the wrong battle.

C3: Does your passion for Christ fuel your desire to go deeper with Him, deeper with His Word, and deeper in your prayer life?

Exercise #4: Write out a plan to successfully live out that passion for more of God.

C4: Passion without love is not effective. How can spending more time with Jesus help you become more effective for Him rather than yourself?



Challenge!

If you have the courage to DO this challenge, you'll grow into new dimensions of knowing Christ.

Over the course of the next 30 days, examine your passions. Make another list of what you are truly passionate about and see if you can reconcile it with God's Word. What did you learn from your study?

“STRENGTH” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

Luke 9:46–56 (ESV)

S1: In these verses, how does Jesus teach his disciples about being great?

S2: In these verses, John allows his passion to become pride. Describe a time when your passion appeared to others as arrogant, prideful, or hurtful?

S3: Passions can be good or helpful, but some passions can lead a man into sin and/or disaster. What are some passions you have which might result in arrogance, pride and/or anger?

Exercise #2: Please read and answer or discuss the following.

John 19:25–27 (ESV)

1 John 4:19–21 (ESV)

S4: John goes from being a “son of thunder” to a man of love. What does it mean to be a *man of love* in the world today?

S5: What is YOUR definition of a *man of love*?

Exercise #3: From these verses, John gives some straightforward words and even a command about love. Reread John 19:25–27 and 1 John 4:19–21, discuss both, and what it means for you to love God AND love your brother (other people).

S6: Where do you find the strength to allow your time with Jesus to change your passion from self-motivation to Christ-minded motivation?

S7: Write some things from your past or present where your passion has hurt your relationship with Jesus. Are there steps you need to take to restore the relationship?

“ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

Luke 9:46–56 (ESV)

E1: John was called by a few nicknames: son of thunder, beloved disciple, and man of God. What do you think contributed most to John’s transformation?

E2: Which of those nicknames of John might you identify with the most?

E3: After walking with Christ for a while, some men can become arrogant or prideful like the disciples in the verses you read. Have you ever allowed pride, arrogance, or anger to motivate your passions?

Exercise #2: Take a moment to write down a few reminders to yourself that you are a disciple of Jesus, a man of God, and can influence other men. Remember to submit yourself to the Holy Spirit so He can use you.

E4: You can have a godly passion but go about using or sharing about that passion in an off-putting way. What are some ways you can make changes to how you share your passions in a godly way?

E5: Greatness has less to do with grandstanding and brilliance and more to do with serving Christ and His family by humble acts of service. How do you allow your passion for Christ and the Holy Spirit to show in your local church?

Exercise #3: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 19:25–27 (ESV)

1 John 4:19–21 (ESV)

E6: In John 19, John silently witnesses the Crucifixion as a changed man. How has your experience and relationship with Christ changed you in the same ways they surely changed John?

E7: In 1 John 4, John provides some specific things about love. How can you exemplify these as you influence other men?

Exercise #4: Write down specific ways to address loving God and loving other men in a godly, manly way.

E8: What are you passionate about? Does the love of Christ show as you live and walk in those passions?

Exercise #5: Some passions need to be corrected, redirected, or just softened a bit (especially when they are not godly).

Write down the name of ONE MAN whose passions appear to need some gentle correction or redirection by a more spiritually mature brother in Christ.

Now, **PRAY and ask the Holy Spirit** to give you greater influence in that man's life and family so that his passions will bless his family and honor the Lord.