

**The Story: Chapter 30**  
**Mother's Day 2019**  
**"The Passion of Paul"**

Last Week: Andrew talked to us about WHAT Paul did as his mission. Then he mentioned a few times the WHY that Paul did all that he did.

**Acts 9:3-6**

<sup>3</sup> As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" <sup>5</sup> "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. <sup>6</sup> "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

He lived the rest of his life in "response" to meeting Jesus.

**Question:** How should this look in our lives today?

Here's my goal for us today: [I pray that we would learn to live our lives in response to what Jesus has done for us.](#)

- worship
- serving
- loving our neighbors
- 

Paul's motivating factor in his entire mission was his passion for Jesus.

**The challenge for today is this:** If we want to live our lives in response to us meeting Jesus, **He has to become our number one passion as well.**

Let's look at that passion today:

[\*\*Passion:\*\* strongly and barely controllable emotion.](#)

**Passion in our definition:** What we live for...

- Just clearly stated

[Passion for Jesus will...](#)  
[Motivate You](#)

[Acts 9:19-20](#)

[Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. <sup>20</sup> At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.](#)

He understood a “NEW NORMAL”!

- Remember two weeks ago when we talked about that?

Paul was making his living persecuting and killing Christians, and then he met Jesus!!!

From that point forward His passion was Jesus and that was all the motivation that he needed to spend the rest of his life on this earth taking the story of Jesus to anyone he could get to.

Our New Normal: That same passion is what will help us create our new normal.

- Big question two weeks ago: [How do I create a new normal in my life?](#)

- **Answer:** Your passion for Jesus is what motivates you to a new normal.

So, if you're struggling to find the new normal take a few minutes to look at your passion!

[Passion for Jesus will...](#)  
[Guide You](#)

Paul went to the Gentiles where most people didn't want to go.

Paul's journey was guided by his passion to take the Gospel to anyone who had not heard it.

[II Corinthians 1:1-2](#) **The Message**

[I, Paul, have been sent on a special mission by the Messiah, Jesus, planned by God himself.](#)

Paul truly believed Jesus had called him to take the Gospel to every group he could get to.

- He spent his life traveling to different places to take the Gospel

- Started churches everywhere he went so that the Gospel could continue to spread.
- And, interestingly, you don't see him stop very often and "wait for direction" from God. He truly allowed his passion for Jesus to guide him where he needed to go.

**Here's the truth:**

When our passion truly motivates us and guides us we spend less time waiting to hear God's will for our future and more time doing what He's already asked us to do.

**Read that with me on the screen:**

[When our passion truly motivates us and guides us we spend less time waiting on God's will for our future and more time doing what He's already asked us to do.](#)

**EX: Athletes in the room**

We have a good number of athletes in this room. Some of you winning championships right now. Some of you, it's been a few years but you still think you could...

Either way, one thing that we know if true: Our passion guides us on how to workout, how to prepare, how to get better, etc.

Our passion truly determines the direction that our life goes. Sadly in some cases, but also true, it ends up being "**what we live for.**"

**Passion for Jesus** does the same thing.

- When your number one passion in this world is Jesus, that passion will guide you to study, teach, share your story, go to that place, and be all you can for Christ.

We are truly **guided** by our number one passion.

[Passion for Jesus will...](#)  
[Cost You](#)

[Acts 16:23-24](#)

<sup>23</sup> After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. <sup>24</sup> Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Other times Paul was beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, etc...  
Eventually he was killed for his faith!  
His passion definitely cost him!

For us: We have taken a verse that says, “God will work all things out for the good of those who love Him” and made it so much about us that we’ve forgotten the verses that say, “If you want to be my disciple you must pick up your cross and follow me”.

Our passion for Christ means that we don’t get to do everything those around us in this world get to do.  
That passion means that our money is His and not our own. God’s word says, “where our ‘treasures go’ shows where our ‘heart” or our ‘passion’ goes.”

### **Galatians 2:20**

<sup>20</sup> I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- We simply don’t get to live our lives for ourselves anymore.

And, honestly, if you’re willing to “pick up your cross daily and follow Him” it will only be because of your passion for Him!

But, here’s some great news...

**Passion for Jesus will...**  
**Carry You When Things Get Tough**

### **Acts 16:25**

<sup>25</sup> About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

This is the end of the passage where they had been flogged and thrown in jail.

- And they're singing praises at midnight.

That is only possible because of their passion for what they are doing: Spreading the message of Jesus Christ.

**Truth:** Any goal that you set for yourself that does not include a passion to reach that goal, you will quit when the journey gets tough.

- Weight loss
- Financial responsibility
- Working on a better marriage

If Paul was not motivated and guided by his passion for Jesus Christ, he would have quit and gone home a long time ago.

**Our struggle:** We're trying to live good lives, make our Momma's happy, and look like we have it all together, but we have no passion for Jesus.

- And that passion for Him helps us get through those tough days.

**And, here's the best news of all:**

[Passion for Jesus will...  
Be Worth It](#)

Look at what Paul says toward the end of his life:

**II Timothy 4:6-8**

<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

He says, "I did it. I lived the best I could for Jesus. And now I'll get to meet Him again face to face"!

For us: When we create a new normal of living our lives in response to Jesus, motivate by our passion for Him, in the end it will all be worth it.  
- I want to live a life that makes an impact for the Kingdom!

**Problem:** Four of these things will be true of your passion no matter what your passionate about.

Paul, before meeting Jesus, was passionate about killing Christians.

In Acts 8, right after Stephen was stoned to death...

**Acts 8:3**

<sup>3</sup> But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

**Listen:**

Your passion for your college football team, or whatever your deal is...

- Will motivate you
- Will guide you
- Will definitely cost you
- Enough passion will even carry you through some tough times  
(Like when your team hasn't won a game in a year and you're still with them)

The DIFFERENCE is, in the end, none of that really matters.

- It's simply not really worth it.

And our goal is to live a life that makes an impact for God's Kingdom.

So, here's what we know:

Paul had such a passion for Jesus he was willing to spend every day of his life spreading His story.

- He was even willing to be beaten, stoned, flogged, shipwrecked, and ultimately he dies for Him.

So, for us today:

- Where is your passion?
- Do you have a love for Jesus that motivates and guides you to make your new normal a life lived in response to what He has done for you?

In our understanding that “our passion becomes what we live for” we’re left to answer this question:

Is what you’re living for worth dying for?

Look at it with me...

**Is what you’re living for worth dying for?**

If it’s not, you need to find a new passion!