

WHAT GOD WANTS FROM US: PASSION

Matthew 22:34-40

January 7, 2007 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

A. Wayne Cordeiro ("A Personal Relationship", Preaching Today), writes...

The more you love something, the more you become like it. For example, I have a friend that loves tennis. He wears tennis stuff. He reads tennis magazines. He has tennis talk. He has a racket, and his hair looks like a tennis ball.

I have another friend that loves surfing. He dresses with surf stuff, and he reads surf magazines. He has a surf talk. He's even starting to smell like seaweed. Everything about him is starting to go that way. But isn't it true whatever you love, you start moving that way? Some of you love food. Case closed on that one.

That's why the Bible says the greatest commandment of all is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. That is the greatest commandment of all. Why? Because the power to change is given in relationship, and what you love you become like.

- B. Loving God with all our heart, soul and mind is the answer Jesus gave to a question the Pharisees asked of him.
1. The Pharisees of Jesus' day observed 613 different laws or commands of their Jewish faith. They often disagreed about which law was the greatest.
 2. They asked Jesus to settle this question for them in the hope that regardless of which command he said was the greatest, he would offend someone.
 3. Jesus answer shocked them and gives us an idea of what God wants from each of us (READ TEXT).

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LOVE GOD WITH ALL OF OUR HEARTS?

- A. In essence it means to have a passion for God.
- B. Kim Peek is the man who inspired the 1988 film Rain Man about an autistic savant with astounding mathematical skills. Peek is what doctors call a mega-savant. A savant possesses remarkable expertise in 1 to 3 subjects. Peek is an expert in at least 15, including history, sports, space, music, and geography. No one in the world is thought to possess a brain as extraordinary as Peek's. He has total recall of 9,000 books. It was discovered that each of Peek's eyes can read a separate page simultaneously, absorbing every word. In fact, a page that might take you or me 3 minutes to read, Peek can read in 10 seconds and never forget.

Kim Peek once went to a performance of Shakespeare's play, Twelfth Night. As the play was ending, Peek stood up and said out loud, "You've got to stop it, stop it, stop it." It turned out that the actor had skipped the second to the last verse of the play. The actor then apologized saying, "The verses are so much alike I didn't think it would matter."

Peek responded, "It mattered to William Shakespeare, and it should matter to you. Kim Peek has a passion for truth.

- C. What do you have a passion for?
1. Success?
 2. Recognition?
 3. Money?
 4. Family?
 5. Fun?

6. Hobby?
7. A.W. Tozer said, "We may want God, but we want something else more. And we get what we want."
8. Jesus said the same thing when he declared...Matthew 6:21....
"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE PASSIONATE ABOUT GOD?

- A. Its not just a feeling or an emotion. It may include it, but not always.
- B. Webster defines passion as....
"A strong extravagant fondness, enthusiasm, or desire for something (or someone).
- C. The Psalmist describes it like this in Psalms 42:1....
"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God."

III. WHY AREN'T SOME OF US PASSIONATE ABOUT GOD?

- A. Some of us can't love God like this because we need a heart transplant.
 1. If you don't know God you can't love God-Jeremiah 17:9
"The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"
 2. We need a heart transplant because we are sick with sin-Genesis 8:21.
"The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: 'Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood' "
 3. We need a heart transplant because without it we will die in our sins-Romans 6:23.
"For the wages of sin is death".....
 4. If we will let him, though, God will give us a heart transplant-Ezekiel 36:26-27.
"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you...."
- B. Some of us have a new heart, we know God, but we don't have a passion for him anymore.
 1. Our problem is "poor circulation". That is, we have allowed sin, disobedience, and selfishness to clog our arteries and love for God.
 2. We still love God, but not with all of our heart-Revelation 2:4.
"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love".
 3. Some of us even give the appearance that we still have passion for God, but down deep inside we know its all an act-Revelation 3:1—To one of the seven churches God said....
... "I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead."
 4. In "Paradise Lost", John Milton wrote...
"Neither men nor angels can discern hypocrisy, (it is) the only evil that walks invisible---except to God."
 5. If we will let him, though, God will unclog our spiritual arteries- James 4:8.
"Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double- minded."

CONCLUSION

- A. Remember, we become what we love.
- B. Do you really love God with all your heart? Do you have a passion for him?
- C. If not, perhaps you need a heart transplant today. Or you may need your arteries unclogged.
- D. God wants to operate on us today if we will let him.