

Passion

“A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position.”

John Maxwell

Passion is a word that seems to be used a lot but displayed very little. Passion is defined as a strong emotion that can barely be controlled. Great leaders, great athletes, great ministers, and great performers all have one thing in common; passion. The apostle Paul was one of the most passionate men in scripture. He was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and could not contain his conviction.

Philippians 1:21-22a "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me;..."

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 "Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."

The question that everyone needs to ask themselves is, "What am I truly passionate about?" It really shouldn't be a hard question to answer. Simply answer the following questions. What consumes your thoughts, your time, and your conversation? Remember, there can be more than one thing that any one person is passionate about. If that is the case, list the things you are passionate about in order of priority." If you are a believer, I hope our first passionate priority is Christ. If God is your first priority you have a greater chance of being successful in the other areas you are passionate about.

Psalms 37:4-5 "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it."

Proverbs 16:3 "Commit your works to the Lord and your plans will be established."

Passion Defines Character

How a person displays their passion will define their character. If an athlete is passionate about their sport and yet displays little to no humility it would be safe to

say that they are arrogant. If an athlete is passionate about their sport and not passionate about their team then it displays that's they are self centered. However, if an athlete is passionate about a sport and has a great work ethic, sense of team unity, and a God focused attitude it displays that they are a well rounded Christian athlete that will enhance any roster they are on. These are the athletes good coaches want on their team. There are two kinds of athletes. Those you can build a team with, and those can build a team on. Those you can build a team **with** are talented; those you can build a team **on** are gifted.

James 1:17 *“Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”*

The gifted person will be talented, hard working, humble, and unifying. They may not be the best player on the team statistically, but statistically the team is better because of their presence. The passion of a Christ-centered person, regardless of the sport or profession, elevates their team to a level where success is inevitable.

Are the stats of the team more important than your own stats?

Does your passion seem to decrease if your personal performance struggles?

In what ways does your presence make the team more successful?

Leading with Passion

In the Book “Lead like Butler” the author wrote the following: *“Purpose, or vision, is the steering wheel, pointing the car in the right direction. But passion is the engine that makes it go.”*

That statement is so true. It wasn't the purpose or vision of love and sacrifice that paid the sin debt of the world; it was the passion of Christ that He displayed on a cross.

Romans 5:6–8 *“For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.*

7. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

8. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

All the practice and strategy sessions in the world will be useless without people with the passion to execute. A team is only as strong as the passionate resolve of the players to perform at their peak.

The same is true in our spiritual lives. We can sing the hymns, listen to the sermons, and attend the youth groups, but without the passion to put your faith into action it is all useless. Whether in your Christian walk, your athletics, or your profession we need to execute like those who will answer to God for every word and deed; because we will!

Colossians 3:23 “*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,*
24. knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. “

What do your actions say about your character?

How do you incorporate your passion for Christ with you passion for your other interests?

Do your teammates know by your words and actions that your first passion is Christ?

Explain how passion acts as an engine.

Explain the difference between being a player you can build a team with and a player you can build a team on.