

# Passion

Passion is a great word. It means someone who's really committed to something or strongly believes in a cause, a thing or a person.

## What are you passionate about? What inspires you?

Apart from your amazing youth leader... Write / draw something positive!!

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### A true story

A friend was working at a Bridal Show where they show off dresses and all kinds of things to do with being a bride and weddings. They were running a stand at the show for their marriage course. Next to their stand was a stand about teeth whitening for your wedding. One of the women there had been married and had her teeth whitened. She was so happy about it, she gave up days to volunteer on the tooth whitening stand. She was passionate about it and got lots of women to sign up for teeth whitening! When the dentist in charge of the tooth whitening arrived, this friend told him how good the woman was and suggested she should get a commission - so passionate was she about tooth whitening!!

**Question** - are you as passionate about your faith as the lady was about teeth whitening?

### Second story

A BBC Radio 4 report in 2011 looked at how some black young people in London are leaving the church in London and turning to Islam. The news article's conclusion from talking to the young people is that many young people want something strong and definite to passionately believe in, unlike the older 'post-modern' generation which (wrongly) believes that any moral set of values is equal with any other set of values. (Interestingly these same people then persecute Christians for Christian values, which seems to be against any kind of equality).

Anyway, the young people felt that the church, in their view, was too woolly and not strong enough, so they turned to Islam. The truth is that passion is needed in the church and as a Christian. This passion (as long as it's genuine and not pushy) will attract other people.

**Question** - how can you be a person whose passion for Jesus attracts others to him?

### Third story

If you use an iPod, iPhone, iPad or Mac computer you'll know about Apple. Apple are renowned for their designs and simplicity of use. In fact in some places, people are such big fans that they volunteer their time to work in Apple stores. These people are known as 'Mac Evangelists' - basically people who believe in a company and products so much they are happy to give up their time to 'convert' people to the brand. (See [www.cultofmac.com](http://www.cultofmac.com) for example).

**Question** - are you as passionate in your faith as 'Mac evangelists' are about Apple?

**Movie Clip - the Passion of the Christ** - Interesting that the phrase 'the passion' is used by some Christians to speak about Jesus and his trial, suffering and death. In many countries, there are 'Passion Plays' which re-enact this time in the life and death of Jesus.



Link to the Crucifixion and Resurrection scene from Passion of the Christ. (Link was checked April 2019) - <https://youtu.be/DIS0IjLIjDc>

### The Bible

Was Jesus passionate? Yes. His love for the world was so great that he left heaven and came to earth as a man, lived, suffered and died, then rose again - so we could get right with God. This is what Jesus said in John 3.16-17:

*"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."*

But hang on - why do we even want to be right with God? Well, the Bible tells us this...

*Hebrews 9.27-28 (The Message, which explains things well) - "Everyone has to die once, then face the consequences. Christ's death was also a one-time event, but it was a sacrifice that took care of sins forever. And so, when he next appears, the outcome for those eager to greet him is, precisely, salvation."*

We will all die. After we die, we have to face judgement - the consequences. If we have said yes to Jesus then he 'covers' all our sins. When he died on the cross (one time), he paid for all the sins of the world. Because he paid the price, we don't have to pay the price, so we are free from God's judgement. God has to judge because he is just. All of us do wrong and do evil things. Because God is good and perfect, evil has to be punished. We can't pay the price it would take. But Jesus can and he did. Without the price being paid, we would have to be punished. The punishment is hell. So here's the deal: if we say yes to Jesus in our life, we are made right with God, given his Spirit in this life to enable and equip us for all we need. The reward is also heaven and not hell. Heaven is no angels on fluffy clouds stuff. This is the most incredible place you can't even imagine...

## **Passion of Jesus**

Everything he did was deliberate and intentional so that we could get to know God again. He did everything with passion, but he didn't let things get out of control and nor should we! He was compassionate (com - 'passionate')! Jesus was passionate about the lost, passionate about people and passionate for those without direction. So should we be!

*Mark 6.34 - "When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd..."*

Jesus was passionate against injustice and abuse by religious authorities... For example, in Matthew 12.34 and Matthew 23.23-33, Jesus called the pharisees vipers, snakes and hypocrites. They were full of lies, full of pride, looking good on the outside but full of evil on the inside. Jesus was passionately against this and so should we be!

*Matthew 21.12-13 - Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'"*

Jesus was also passionate about God and his glory. He was always giving glory to his Father in heaven. Many times in the Bible we are encouraged to put God first - in money, time, prayer and in our whole lives. If we really got hold of this passion for God we'd really see "a generation rising up to take their place" (Hosanna - Hillsong). God won't give his glory to anyone else. What does giving God glory mean - it's saying, "God is the one who's good, he's the one who gave me this gift" and having the attitude that, "I'm doing this for God as he's number one. It's not about me or my fame, it's about God and his fame."

## **Tell God - response time**

Are you someone who God has given different (positive and not selfish) passions? Things like passion for children, Africa, justice, creativity, music, the Bible, using technology..?

Play some music in the background - time to get serious before God...

Tell God now you want his heart for things, you want his passion.

Are you prepared to put God first? Tell him.

Ask God what it is that he wants you to do.

Tell God the things you're passionate about.

Now ask God to show you if there's anything getting in the way - sin.

Say sorry and turn away from this, asking God to help you.

Remember that between the time King David was anointed with oil and the time he became King was around 20 years. You probably won't have to wait that long, but sometimes God calls us before he 'releases' us, so don't get ahead of God's timing. If God's hand is on your life, he will find you! David was out in a field looking after sheep. But God found him through the prophet Samuel. If you're passionate about and for God, he will find you!!