

[A Devotional Study *on Having a Passion for God*]

LORD,
Give Me
a Heart
for You



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CHAPTER 1

1. As we begin our study from 2 Corinthians, we watch Paul move from city to city, taking along Silas and Timothy. Why did Paul make this second missionary journey? And how did he know which churches to visit?
2. How would you describe Paul's heart for the church?
3. What was Paul's method of operation when he arrived in a city? What did he do in the synagogues?
4. How did the people respond to Paul's ministry? What emotions does he experience?
5. What forms of suffering and persecution do we see in believers' lives today?
6. What is God's purpose in our suffering and persecution? What do we learn about this from 2 Corinthians 1:3-5?
7. How can you be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit and listen with your heart for His guidance?

8. Look at what the Lord told Paul in Acts 18:10. What can most help you not to be afraid to speak the truth or preach the gospel?

9. If you desire to live a godly life, and are faithful to proclaim the gospel where you are, and your prayer is, "Lord give me a heart like Yours"-what can you expect in how you are treated by other people? How can you stand firm and persevere in the midst of persecution and affliction?

10. Where do you find comfort? Do you seek it from others, or do you run to the Father of mercies and God of all comfort?

11. Are you an encouraging example to others in how you look to God for comfort and in how you endure?

12. Spend time in prayer for one another, and for those who are suffering. Ask God to comfort them with His comfort and to take away every fear.

CHAPTER 2

1. From what we see in 1 Corinthians 16:5-9 and 2 Corinthians 1:12-18, what seems to have happened between Paul and the Corinthians?
2. What was Paul's reason for not coming to Corinth as he had planned?
3. Last week we saw an emotion in Paul-fear-that may surprise us. In 2 Corinthians 1:15-2:4, what other emotions do you see Paul experiencing?
4. Why does Paul deal with forgiveness in 2 Corinthians 2:1-11?
5. What part does forgiveness have in our difficult relationships?
6. What does Ephesians 4:32-5:2 teach us about forgiveness? How are we to forgive?
7. According to Matthew 6:14-15, what is the result of unforgiveness? What does it produce in a person's life?

8. Paul had a clear conscience before God. From what you see in 1 Corinthians 1:8 and 5:5 and in Philippians 1:6,10 and 2:16, what can we keep in mind to help us keep a clear conscience before God?

9. Briefly discuss the points in this week's lesson that can help us deal with being misunderstood.

10. How can we handle difficult relationships that will show we have a heart for God?

11. Are you experiencing a difficult relationship that is breaking your heart? What can you do about it?

12. Why is it important for you to keep your word, instead of saying one thing and meaning another?

13. Do you know of any situations in which you have said that you forgive someone, but you have continued to bring up the issue that caused the sorrow? If you want a heart for God, what must you do about this?

CHAPTER 3

1. According to 2 Corinthians 3:5-6, what was Paul's attitude concerning his adequacy?
2. What does it mean to be a "letter of Christ," as Paul uses the term in 2 Corinthians 3:1-3?
3. Discuss the contrast between the Old and New Covenants. (Be sure to discuss who each covenant is between, and the result of each covenant.)
4. In what the Bible teaches about the New Covenant, what do we learn about the Holy Spirit?
5. Why was the Law given?
6. From what we see in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Ezekiel 36:26-27, does being part of the New Covenant mean you no longer have to keep the Law? Explain your answer.
7. How can we manifest the glory of God?

8. How does understanding spiritual gifts help our feelings of inadequacy?

9. Why is it so important to know the Word of God for yourself?

10. What encouraging truth can we learn in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 about the purpose of affliction in our lives?

11. How do we become adequate in the same way Paul was?

12. Who is reading your "letter"? What do they see? Are you a sweet fragrance of life unto life to those around you? What do you think others would say about you in this regard?

13. How can you be diligent to seek the good of others for their sake instead of for your own comfort?

14. What does it mean for you personally to be willing to defend the gospel no matter the cost?

CHAPTER 4

1. From what you see in this week's Scripture passages, what keeps us from losing heart in difficult circumstances?
2. What truth is Paul teaching with the tent metaphor in 2 Corinthians 5:1?
3. How does the Holy Spirit enable us to face death with confidence?
4. How should our present behavior be affected by knowing that after death we will be "at home with the Lord"?
5. What did you learn from this week's passages about the judgment seat of Christ? What is the purpose of the judgment seat of Christ? Who will be there, and why? And what will be revealed there?
6. What is the danger of rushing someone into a profession of faith? (How does John 10:27-30 help us with this question?)
7. Since Jesus died for all, how are we then to live?

8. What does being a new creature in Christ mean? How should that affect the way we see others?

9. How exactly is a person reconciled to God, and what is the result of that reconciliation?

10. What does it mean to you to belong to Jesus and to hear the Shepherd's voice?

11. What does it mean for you to make it your ambition to be pleasing to the Lord?

12. What does it mean for you to have the love of God control you?

CHAPTER 5

1. What does endurance mean? Give an example either from your own life or the life of someone you've seen make it through distressful times.
2. What is the "word of truth" in 2 Corinthians 6:7? How can you be sure that when you speak for God, you're speaking the truth?
3. Why had the Corinthians withdrawn from Paul? And what is Paul's instruction regarding this?
4. Why does God leave us in this evil world, and how can we keep from comprising?
5. What are our boundaries with unbelievers? Discuss the contrast you saw in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.
6. What is the instruction in 2 Corinthians 6:17? What does this mean in practical terms?

7. What is the difference between "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:11) and the "sorrow of the world" (7:10)?

8. What is the result of godly sorrow?

9. What does repentance mean? And how does it relate to our "perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (7:1)?

10. How can you be careful to give no cause for offense in your actions and in your responses to others? How can they see the reality of Christ in you?

11. Have you determined to endure when faced with "a narrowness of room" that seems to press you in? What does this determination mean for you?

12. Have you made it your goal to be like Christ? Are you diligent to keep yourself pure, to be a faithful servant of God? In doing this, what do you need to say no to?

13. How can you give assurance and encouragement to someone who has repented of sin? How can you keep from communicating to them a wait-and-see attitude through your words and actions?

CHAPTER 6

1. What was this "gracious work" Paul is bringing to the attention of the Corinthian believers? Why does he bring this issue up?
2. In what ways is our financial giving a ministry and a work of grace? For whose benefit have we received this ministry?
3. How does the way a person spends his money show his relationship to God?
4. In what ways were the Thessalonian believers (in Macedonia) an example for the Corinthian believers? What contrasts do you see between these two groups of believers?
5. How is Jesus Christ the supreme example of the ministry of giving?
6. How much are we to give?
7. Why was Paul letting the Corinthian believers know that Titus was coming?

8. As you briefly discuss each principle on giving from 2 Corinthians 9, think about these questions: What can keep us from giving under compulsion or grudgingly? What can we know for sure about God if we are giving as He says to give? What does our giving prove about us?

9. What is really important in your life? Does the way you give show you have a heart for God?

10. Have you faithfully followed up with your decisions to give financially?

11. To what degree are you a cheerful giver? To what degree do you give out of obligation?

12. Does your giving lead to praise and thanksgiving? As you give, what can you especially be thankful for?

CHAPTER 7

1. According to this week's Scripture passages, who was Paul in conflict with? And how are they described?
2. How did Paul approach the Corinthians about this deception from the enemy?
3. Why is it important to understand that "we do not war according to the flesh" (2 Corinthians 10:3)?
4. Where does the enemy attach? Why?
5. What must we do to keep from being deceived by what is false?
6. How was Paul able to keep from being defeated by his enemies? Will this strategy work for us as well?
7. What were the "false apostles" like whom Paul described in 2 Corinthians 11:13? In what form do we see such "false apostles" today?

8. What did you learn about Satan from Revelation 12:9?

9. According to Genesis 3:1-5, how did Satan deceive Eve? How does he continue to deceive today?

10. When Paul speaks of "boasting," what is he boasting about? How did he boast?

11. What do you need to do when you find yourself in warfare with the enemy?

12. Is it easier for you to believe a lie or the truth? How can you be careful to guard your mind against falsehood? How sure are you that what you believe is really what God has said in His Word?

13. What do you need to do to keep from being led away from "the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3)?

14. How quick are you to judge others by their outward appearance?

15. In what ways have you found yourself in war with the enemy? How can you prove by your actions that you believe God's Word is more powerful than the father of lies?

CHAPTER 8

1. What did you learn about Paul from 1 Corinthians 2:1-5? What was it that made his message to the Corinthians so powerful?
2. What else do we learn about Paul from the incidents described in 2 Corinthians 11:30-12:10?
3. Why was Paul given a "thorn in the flesh"? How was he able to accept it?
4. How does one boast in weakness? Why is weakness necessary?
5. What do we learn about God from His answer to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9?
6. What do we learn about Paul from his response in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10?
7. What do we learn from the accounts of Kings Uzziah and Asa about power and weakness? Why is that when we are comfortable and at ease, we often forget God?

8. What is the correct, biblical way to discipline a church leader or any church member? What is the purpose of this discipline?

9. How can we test ourselves to see if we are "in the faith" (2 Corinthians 13:5)? What would be the proof that we are indeed "in the faith"?

10. How would you summarize the warning we find in 1 John 3:7-10 as well as 1 Corinthians 6:9-11?

11. What does Paul mean by the phrase "be made complete" (2 Corinthians 13:9,11)? How are we made complete?

12. How would you summarize Paul's purpose for writing this letter to the Corinthians?

13. Has there been a time recently where you especially realized that God's grace is sufficient for you, and that "power is perfected in weakness"? Share that experience with the group, that they, too, could be encouraged.

14. In your own life, how would you describe the process of going to God for answers, waiting for Him, and then accepting His answer as being best for you?

15. How can you best honor those in leadership in your local church?

16. Is sin a habitual way of life for you? If so, what does that say about you?

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