

11 PRIMARY PASSIONS



HORSE & CHARIOT

Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 2, Part 5, Teaching #13)

Instructions: Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

There are eleven primary passions. Five arise in the face of difficulties and trials. Six arise in the face of desires and temptations.

The passions in the face of difficulties and trials are hope, despair, daring, fear, and anger. When you pursue something good that is difficult to attain, you feel either hope or despair—*hope* if you believe you can attain it, *despair* if you don't. As obstacles arise, you are met with *daring* if you believe you can overcome them, or *fear* if you don't. If the good is ultimately reached, your soul rests in peace; if it slips away, you feel *anger*—not the sinful vice, but the rightful discontent that something good was lost or something evil was allowed to persist.

The passions in the face of desires and temptations are love, hatred, desire, aversion, joy, and sadness. When something presents itself as good, you feel *love*—a natural pull toward what seems fitting. If something appears evil, you feel *hatred*—a repulsion, a rejection of what does not belong. Then comes *desire*—the motion toward what you love, and *aversion*—the motion away from what you hate. If the good is attained, you experience *joy*. If it is lost or denied, you experience *sadness*.

Each of these passions is a gift—but only if it is well-ordered. Disordered passions confuse evil for good and chase after shadows. Well-ordered passions chase the light. Disordered passions resist what is truly good and cling to comfort or pleasure. Well-ordered passions run toward truth, no matter the cost.

It has been said, “A man who governs his passions is master of his world. We must either command them or be enslaved by them. It is better to be a hammer than an anvil” (St. Dominic). And so it is with you—you were made to be a master of your inner life, not a slave to it. Let your passions serve your higher purpose. Teach them the way of virtue. Train them by grace. Guide them with reason. And above all, submit them to God.

We'll explore each of these passions in greater depth ahead. But for now, remember: your passions are not the problem—your order is. Bring order to the soul, and you will bring strength and fulfillment to your life.

11 PRIMARY PASSIONS

DIFFICULTIES & TRIALS

HOPE — DESPAIR

DARING — FEAR

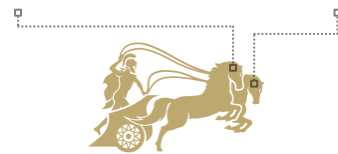
ANGER

DESIRES & TEMPTATIONS

LOVE — HATRED

DESIRE — AVERSION

JOY — SADNESS



Watch Video: Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.

Or, visit horseandchariot.com/11-primary-passions



HORSE & CHARIOT

This teaching uncovers the rich emotional terrain of the soul and shows that your feelings are not random or wrong—they are directional. Each of the 11 primary passions was created to help you respond to the world with energy and purpose. But only when ordered by truth and grace can they lead you toward holiness.

1. Name your passions honestly. You cannot order what you will not acknowledge. → Which passions dominate your interior life right now—hope, despair, fear, daring, anger, love, hatred, desire, aversion, joy, sadness?

2. Don't fear your feelings—form them. Emotion is meant to serve, not sabotage. → Do you suppress certain emotions, or are you learning to integrate and direct them?

3. Recognize patterns of disorder. Passions become dangerous when truth is distorted. → Are your emotions leading you toward what is truly good—or just what feels good?

4. Learn what each passion is for. When rightly used, each passion has a holy purpose. → Are you educating your soul through virtue, or just reacting to whatever arises?

5. Respond with grace, not impulse. Order is not the absence of emotion—it is their transformation. → When stirred emotionally, do you pause and pray before acting?

6. Train for mastery. The Christian life is not about emotional detachment, but emotional sanctification. → Are you letting Christ shape your emotional life through prayer, Scripture, and discipline?

CHARACTERISTICS OF PASSION-GUIDED BY GRACE

Christians who form their passions in virtue show these marks of emotional maturity:

1. Self-Awareness. They recognize what they feel and why.

2. Emotional Wisdom. They know how to interpret emotion through the lens of truth.

3. Holy Boldness. Their hope and daring push them to act courageously for God.

4. Peacefulness. Their soul is not in constant turmoil—they know how to rest in the good.

5. Proper Zeal. They feel strong emotions but channel them toward right action.

6. Redemptive Sorrow. Even sadness becomes a sacred space where God meets them.

Signs of Disordered Passions...

- You often don't know why you feel what you feel
- You overreact or shut down emotionally in trials
- Fear, anger, or sadness consistently override peace
- Desires pull you into distraction, indulgence, or sin
- You confuse emotional highs with spiritual maturity
- You rarely reflect on what your emotions are revealing

Think: My passions are not flaws to fix—they are gifts to guide. When I bring them under the reign of Christ, they become powerful tools for holiness. I am not called to deaden my soul, but to direct it. With truth in my mind, grace in my will, and discipline in my heart, my emotions can move me toward God, not away from Him.

Pray: Lord, thank You for creating me with passion. Teach me to understand my emotions—not to fear them, follow them blindly, or fight them—but to guide them in truth and grace. Let my hope be holy, my desires pure, my sorrows redemptive, my anger righteous, and my joy complete in You. Shape my heart, Lord, so that every feeling may glorify You and lead me into deeper union with Your will. Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP

Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why?
(Reflect, write down, discuss)

Rate yourself from 1-10

1 = My passions often mislead me

10 = My passions consistently serve my higher purpose

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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← (avoid 5) →

Why did you give yourself this rating?

(Which of the eleven passions tends to dominate or disrupt your inner peace the most?)

What benefits will you obtain from raising your rating? (Consider how ordered passions could help you in spiritual growth, emotional stability, and decision-making)

When faced with difficulties, do you tend to fall more into despair or fear? When faced with desires, do you more often struggle with aversion or disordered desire? Explain.

What specific action step will you take this week to better identify, train, or guide one of your dominant passions toward virtue?

Daily Affirmation: Today, I recognize that every passion in me is a gift waiting to be ordered. I will not be ruled by reaction—I will respond with virtue. I will govern my inner life and submit it to God's higher purpose.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

To God be the glory!

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- ☐ 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- ☐ Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- ☐ Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- ☐ Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- ☐ If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- ☐ Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- ☐ Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- ☐ Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).