

POWER OF THE PASSIONS

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 2, Part 3, Teaching #11)

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



Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

The passions within you—your emotions, impulses, and appetites—are not your enemies. They are not inherently sinful or shameful. They are power. And like all power, they can either destroy or build, enslave or liberate, corrupt or sanctify. What makes the difference is not the presence of passion, but whether that passion is ruled or left to rule you.

Scripture says, “An untamed horse becomes stubborn...” (Sirach 30:8). Just like a wild stallion, your passions—if left untrained—will lead you wherever they wish, dragging your soul through the dust of sin and into the margins of vice. But if you learn to tame them, to guide them, to bring them under the command of your intellect and will, those same passions become your strength.

Take the example of a river. If uncontrolled, it can flood and bring great destruction. But it also brings life—providing nourishment to the land, animals, and people of the region. When left wild, its goodness is mixed with its destructiveness. But when channeled—say, by a dam at just the right point—its power can be harnessed purely for good, making it even more fruitful: offering energy, transportation, and recreation to the region.

Our passions are like the river—strong, dynamic, and full of potential. But without virtue, they are prone to overflow and cause harm. Virtue, like the dam, is what channels that power—containing it, refining it, and directing it toward what is good.

Left unchecked, your passions can lead to impulsiveness, indulgence, anger, lust, pride, and despair. But when governed by virtue, they become the very force that drives you to courage in trials, zeal for justice, compassion for the suffering, and passionate love for God and neighbor. The goal is not to suppress your passions—but to sanctify them. Not to silence the river, but to channel its flow.

Temperance does not kill desire—it perfects it. Fortitude does not eliminate fear—it overcomes it. Charity does not numb emotion—it orders it in love. When every passion in you is directed toward God, your soul becomes like a mighty river—rushing, radiant, unstoppable, flowing straight into the ocean of divine purpose.

So do not fear your emotions. Do not see your passions as threats. See them as power—power that, if submitted to virtue and surrendered to grace, can transform your life into something extraordinary. Learn to be the master of the river within, not by your own strength alone, but by the strength of the Holy Spirit at work in you.



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/power-of-the-passions



This teaching reveals that your emotions and appetites were never meant to be denied—but directed. When your passions are formed by virtue and led by grace, they become a God-given force for courage, compassion, holiness, and love.

1. Sanctify, don't suppress. Your emotions don't need to be silenced—they need to be shaped. → Are you asking God to purify your strongest feelings rather than trying to hide or ignore them?

2. Tame your impulses through discipline. A soul without restraint is a soul at risk. → Are there moments when your unchecked desires lead you away from God's will?

3. Let virtue channel your power. Passion is meant to serve the good. → Are you using your inner fire to glorify God, or is it fueling selfishness or pride?

4. Trust the Holy Spirit to master the river. Self-mastery is not self-reliance—it's grace-empowered. → Do you invite the Spirit to govern your inner life, or try to "white-knuckle" your way through struggles?

5. Recognize the potential within. Your emotional life is not a flaw—it's a calling. → Where is God inviting you to direct your passion toward something holy and fruitful?

6. Use emotion to love more deeply. Ordered passion strengthens relationships and mission. → Does your love for God and others flow from the heart—or has it grown mechanical or cold?

CHARACTERISTICS OF ONE WHO MASTERS PASSION

Those who submit their passions to virtue and grace reflect these strengths:

1. Emotional Clarity. They feel deeply but don't act rashly.

2. Zeal for Good. Their passion is not passive—it fuels righteous action.

3. Holy Restraint. They can enjoy without overindulging and act without overreacting.

4. Resilience. They endure hardship without collapsing under emotion.

5. Compassion. Their emotions are harnessed to serve others in love.

6. Fire for God. Their passion is a driving force in prayer, worship, and service.

Signs of Unchanneled Passion...

- You react quickly and regret often
- Strong emotions pull you into sin or vice
- You suppress feelings instead of sanctifying them
- You fear your emotions or see them as enemies
- Desire dominates decisions, leading to excess or avoidance
- Your prayer life lacks passion or feels emotionally dry

Think: God gave me passion not to be a burden, but a blessing. My emotions are meant to be offered to Him, shaped by truth, and moved by grace. I am not called to deaden my desires but to direct them—to be bold in love, courageous in suffering, and full of life that flows toward His will.

Pray: Lord, I offer You my passions. Take what is wild in me and make it holy. Shape my desires, train my emotions, and channel my strength toward what is good. When I feel overwhelmed, help me not to suppress or explode—but to submit every impulse to You. Fill me with Your Spirit so that the river within me may flow with life, beauty, and holy purpose, all for Your glory. 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 control me

10 = I consistently channel my passions through grace

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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← (avoid 5) →

Why did you give yourself this rating?
(Which emotions or impulses tend to overpower you most often, and in what situations?)

What benefits will you obtain from raising your rating? (Think about personal peace, spiritual growth, and your ability to love others well)

Which passion in your life needs to be most sanctified—not silenced, but redirected toward God?

What specific action step will you take this week to better channel your emotions or desires toward virtue—through prayer, accountability, or practice?

Daily Affirmation: Today, I acknowledge my passions are not a threat—they are power. By grace, I will direct them toward what is good. I will not silence my emotions; I will channel them. My desires will serve a holy 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).