## Passion part 2 – Obeying God, no matter what - Leader’s Notes

HOOK

1. Have you ever collected anything? Do you still? What made you stop collecting?

2. Where were you on 9-11, 2001? What thoughts ran through your head?

3. What’s the relationship between passion and greatness?

4. Agree or disagree: “if you want to be great in the kingdom of God, you have to be passionate about the kingdom of God.”

## BOOK/LOOK

## 5. Read Matt. 16:21-23. What did Jesus say he had to do? Did Peter agree? How did Jesus view Peter’s mindset?

## 6. Read Matthew 26:36-44. Did Jesus want to die? What was Peter passionate about? (sleep). What did Jesus want even more than life itself? (To do what God wanted Him to do; to demonstrate His love for us)

## 7. Read Rom. 8:29 and 1 Cor. 15:23. Was Jesus a one of a kind, or was he a prototype of things to come?

**8. Agree or disagree: “Every man is as close to God as he wants to be; he’s as holy and as full of the Spirit as he wills to be…yet we must distinguish wanting from wishing. By “want” I mean wholehearted desire. Certainly there are many who wish they were holy or victorious or joyful but aren’t willing to meet God’s conditions to obtain it.” (Tozer).**

**9. How do we become more like Jesus? Is Christlikeness a realistic goal for a Christ follower?**

**10. Read Phil. 3:10-11. What does it mean to “know Christ”? Is it different than knowing about Christ? What’s the prerequisite for resurrection?** (Death to self. If there’s no cross, there will be no crown. There’s no resurrection without a death, no reward without sacrifice).

**11. Read the attached article from a coptic priest after 40 Christians were killed in a Palm Sunday terrorist attack by ISIS. How does the priest understand the “fellowship of Christ’s sufferings”?**

**12. What is the reward for faithful believers who are passionate about following Jesus in this life?**

**TOOK**

**13. What do you need to do to align your life with the kingdom of God?**

**14. As we pray today, what can we ask God for more of?**

# Coptic Priest sends message of thanks and love to terrorists April 13, 2017 by [Hassan John](https://www.globalchristiannews.org/article/author/hasjohn/)

Fr Boules George of St Mark, Cleopatra church in Cairo, a Coptic priest in Egypt has [**expressed his appreciation**](https://www.christiantoday.com/article/egyptian.coptic.priest.delivers.inspiring.christian.message.to.bombers.thank.you.we.are.praying.for.you/107295.htm) to ISIS in the Peninsular, who claimed responsibility for the twin bomb blasts in Egypt, for the honour to suffer and die like Christ. Delivering an inspirational message preaching Christian love and forgiveness, Fr George said, ‘The first thing we will say is “Thank you very, very much, and you won’t believe us when we say it… You know why we thank you? I’ll tell you. You won’t get it, but please believe us. You gave us to die the same death as Christ – and this is the biggest honour we could have. Christ was crucified – and this is our faith. He died and was slaughtered – and this is our faith. You gave us, and you gave them to die…We thank you because you shortened for us the journey…”

Fr George directly addressed the Islamist terror group: “Thank you for helping us achieve our goal. You’re helping us, and you don’t even know it. I know you don’t understand, but I’m trying to explain it to you. There are people we visited at home to encourage them to come to church – three, four, five times. Still they won’t come. What you’re doing here – you’re bringing to church the people who never come. Believe me – it’s bringing to church the people who never come!…

“Let’s speak plainly here… Usually attendance at the Eve of Monday Pascha (Monday before Easter) is very little. People are usually so tired after a long Palm Sunday Liturgy and the General Funeral, and they don’t come to the Eve of Monday services. When I came in tonight, there were people on chairs outside the sanctuary, there were people in the balcony seating. The church is completely full. There isn’t even one empty nook. Thank you. We are so grateful that you’re helping fill up our churches…”

Fr George also told the bombers that they were loved by Christians because of Jesus’ teaching to love your enemies, and that the attackers were being prayed for.  
“Can you see why we thank you? We’re not being deceptive. A priest holding a microphone can’t lie to you! I say to you: thank you. Thank you for all you have done for us without even noticing,” he declared.

The priest gave the terror group his next message, “The second part of the message we want to send to you is that we love you. And this, unfortunately, you won’t understand at all. Maybe you won’t believe us when we say we’re grateful. But this – you won’t even understand,” he said.

“Why won’t you understand it? Because this too is a teaching of our Christ. I want to explain to you about our Christ. I want to tell you about how wonderful he is… See what Christ said: If you love those who love you, you have no profit or reward with me. Even thugs and thieves love those who love them. Any gang loves its members. Even the drug dealers all like each other and take care of each other. Right? But I want to tell you that “if you love those who love you, what reward have you… But I say to you, love your enemies” (Matthew 5:46, 44).

‘We Christians don’t have enemies. We don’t have enemies; others make enmity with us. The Christian doesn’t make enemies because we are commanded to love everyone. And so, we love you because this is the teaching of our God, that I’m to love you, no matter what you do to me.”

The Coptic priest continued, ‘I love you very much. And I want to say one last thing to you: we’re praying for you. Because the One who told us to love you told us to “bless those who curse you… and pray for those who spitefully use you” (Matthew 5:44). So my instructions from my loving God make it my duty to pray for you.”

Concluding his message to the Islamists, Fr George said, ‘I’m embarrassed to say at the beginning of Holy Week that the Church, though she is in pain, rejoices because today, I don’t know what the final count is. They said 40-something, and, of course, many people in the hospitals will catch up to them. All of these are crowns. They are rejoicing with God. And they will attend the Resurrection up there. And they are praying for us. The rest is on us. O, you lucky, lucky, lucky ones! And until it is our turn. To our God be the glory now and forever. Amen.”