

Key ingredients for a Passionate Relationship with Jesus

Welcome

Intro: I think many American Christians are bored. They love God, they are good people but bored with the brand of Christianity they have been exposed to. Why is that? What is missing? I have been wrestling with this question for a couple of weeks.

What are we excited about? In first century, Rome, it was games and gladiator contest. Today it is Sports- **college football**. **Why?** What if we are trying to find vicariously, through our favorite sports teams, what we were created for but what can only be found by following Jesus? **8 common characteristics:**

Read: Mark 11:1, 8-11, Can you imagine the adrenalin rush in this moment!

Team, Coach, Mission, Obstacles, Dream, Failure, Redemption and Miracles!

1. Team

Explain: The first thing Jesus did, as he started his public ministry, He built a team. This team has been together for three years. Three years of bonding of course before screens or even books. The disciples were going into the fire but they were not going alone. A tight knit team can accomplish almost anything.

Illustrate: Remember the Titans: “This is where they fought the battle of Gettysburg. Fifty thousand men died right here on this field, fighting the same fight that we are still fighting among ourselves today. This green field right here, painted red, bubbling with the blood of young boys. Smoke and hot lead pouring right through their bodies. Listen to their souls, men. I killed my brother with malice in my heart. Hatred destroyed my family. You listen, and you take a lesson from the dead. If we don't come together right now on this hallowed ground, we too will be destroyed, just like they were. I don't care if you like each other or not, but you will respect each other. And maybe... I don't know, maybe we'll learn to play this game like men” Coach Boone

Argue: Mark 10:35-45

Illustrate: We cannot improve, we do not get better, without a team. **Football-** opening weekend. Go train and let's meet here for our first game. How would that work out?

Apply: We need a team. We need a mission! **Core, Community Group**

2. Coach

Explain: The disciples had the best coach. We could make a big list of attributes but at the end of the day, when they were with Jesus, they were inspired to be like Him. When we see Jesus, his life inspires us to live the way He lived. Jesus, like any great coach, believed in them and refused to let them settle for being anything less than their best.

Quote: "The job of a coach is to help men do what they do not want to do in order to become what they have always wanted to be" **Tom Landry, Dallas Cowboys**

Illustrate: Miracle on Ice- True story, the USA could not compete in Ice Hockey. The other teams were just too talented. For our players, most of them tried out just for the opportunity of going to the Olympics. No one thought they could win, except Coach Carter. In 1980, the USA won the gold medal. That is what great coaches do! They get the best out of their players.

Apply: Jesus took a group of seminary rejects and made them world changers. **Be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do...he is our inspiration, our role model, do you see him?**

3. Mission

Explain: The disciples were living for something bigger than personal success. Jesus invited them to join His mission. Jesus is inviting us to be part of His mission. We have to be careful not to get so caught up in our small little world that we miss what God is doing in the world.

Illustrate: Scottie Shefler- This is not fulfilling. Scottie is trying to live for something bigger and leverage his success for a mission bigger than golf.

This is how the disciples lived, on mission and with purpose. Everything else was secondary to that mission.

Argue: Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:36, "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah."

Apply: Acts 1:8, let's live on mission.

- Personally
- Corporately- **Serve Team, sign up this morning**

Apply: Our city needs Jesus!

4. Obstacles

Explain: Just imagine what it felt like that day to march into the city with Jesus. The crowds are shouting, as you and Jesus, walk by. "Hosannah, God save us now!" You also see the religious authorities. They are hard to miss in their black robes. They are watching your every move and they have real power. Ultimately, they will be the ones responsible for the death of Jesus. Furthermore, throughout the city, there is a strong military presence. With crowds this big Rome greatly increases the military presence. You have come to confront them both. It was dangerous, bold, scary, and exciting. **They are in the arena!**

Quote: "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." **Theodore Roosevelt**

"If it is God's will everything will work out." Often, this kind of nonsense is used to justify a self-centered, cowardly, inaction even in the face of emergencies.

"If it is God's will, we are almost certain to face opposition."

Illustration: Church

- **First Building-** Nowhere to meet, new building needs lots of work.
- **Second building-** Impossible!
- **Third building-** Two year wait
- **Fourth building-** We will have to come together. I'll be reaching out.

Explain: Obstacles produce what nothing else can. I have never heard of one successful person who did not have to overcome big obstacles on the way to success. When they tell their story they do not complain about what they overcame. They appreciate the obstacles and all the good they produced, painfully, in their lives. The truth is we all take the path of least resistance and obstacles are a necessary evil on the road to success. If you want to be successful at anything in life, you must face the obstacles, you cannot avoid them.

- Jesus is marching into Jerusalem, marching to His death, which produced the greatest victory in world history.

Argue: **Romans 8:28**, "And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them."

Quote: "The Kingdom of God does not belong to the well-meaning but the desperate."

Apply: Community Group, Serve Team- let's face them together!

Team, Coach, Mission, Obstacles- Four more to learn next week.

Invitation