

Indifferent

Dig in Deeper Guide
John Lohmar
Director of Life Groups
Oasis Church

It's been over forty years now since I first came to Houston to go to work as a geologist for an oil company. Business was good back then and I soon found myself in a group with six other young men who had recently hired on.

Our group was drilling a well off the coast of California at the time and Bob, our boss, thought it would be good to send us newbies out to the rig to (a) see if we could find our way back, in which case we would get paid, and (b) get some experience being part of a drilling operation. This would have been a fine plan were it not for the fact that the drilling superintendent on this particular rig was a good old boy from west Texas named Buddy who hated newbies. So Bob sent a more experienced geologist named Fil out with each of us from time to time to smooth things over and keep the peace.

Fil was a very gracious and charming woman nearing retirement who had been around men like Buddy her whole career. She had no trouble calming him down. He did, however, continue to complain about how hard it was to remember all of our names. It took a while, but Buddy eventually came up with a solution to his problem that was pure genius. He decided to call Fil Snow White and named each of us after one of the seven dwarfs.

One of us was a fella named Mark who got up on the wrong side of the bed every day of his life. He, of course, became Grumpy. Getting up on the wrong side of the bed was less of a problem for me than getting up at all, so I became Sleepy.

But Buddy saved his favorite name for Emil, a guy who was so passionate about being a geologist that he seldom thought about anything else. Emil loved his work and would spend hours looking at the rock samples coming up out of the well we were drilling, often ignoring Buddy's plea to tell him whether it was time to stop drilling or go on. He reminded me a lot of a guy watching football on Sunday afternoon and tuning out his wife. He was that passionate.

Buddy was not a fan.

I was completely unaware of this friction when I arrived at the rig one afternoon to replace Emil at the end of his tour of duty. What greeted me when I opened the door to the geologists trailer was a sight that stopped me dead in my tracks. There was Emil taking notes at his desk with his hard hat sitting so far down on his head that all you could see was the tip of his nose.

I said "Emil, are you all right?"

He tilted his head back so he could see me and said "Yeah, yeah. I'm fine."

"Are you sure?"

"Yeah, of course. No problem."

So I closed the door, walked over to the drilling superintendents trailer, and stepped inside.

I said "Buddy! What's wrong with Emil?"

"Who?"

"Emil. What's wrong with Emil!"

"Who?"

"Emil! The geologist you've been working with for the last week!"

"Oh! You mean Dopey!"

That's when I found out about the dwarfs.

"Buddy! What have you been up to?"

"Well ... "

It turned out that Buddy had spent the last week following Emil to the cafeteria and adjusting the band inside his hard hat each time he took it off to eat. Every day that hat made a round trip up and down Emils head. Emil, as passionate as ever about his work, never noticed.

After telling me his story, Buddy asked me if I was going to tell Emil what he'd been up to.

I thought about that for a moment and then said "Nah. He's happy. Let's just leave him be."

So I spent the rest of the night and into the early morning hours sitting in a trailer with Emil, watching the hat go up and down his head and wishing I had his kind of passion for what we were doing.

And when the next day dawned, I watched him bounce happily up the steps to the helicopter pad and fly off into the morning sun.

Passion has been defined as an intense, singular and barely controllable desire for someone or something. When that someone is God and that something is love for Him and His people, it is a powerful and irresistible force for good.

It is also the one and only antidote for the indifference that plagues our world today.

We live in a time when many of us have grown accustomed to thinking only of ourselves, leaving us indifferent to the needs of others.

We indulge in the celebration and gratification of self and are indifferent to God and the need to please Him.

We have become comfortable with our materialistic lifestyle and are indifferent to the need to stretch ourselves and grow.

We are numb to the suffering of so many and are indifferent to how much better this world could be if we believed by faith that with God's help we can make it a better place.

We must be passionate about living by faith and pleasing God to turn this mess around (2 Cor 5:7-10, HEB 11:6).

We must be hungry for His word and thirsty for His spirit, praying without ceasing, trusting without doubting, obeying without question and acting confidently on what we believe.

We must believe by faith that things will get better and do our part by caring for the poor and forgiving those who have harmed us.

We must turn from indifference and tap into the power of living by faith, surrendering our life to Christ and centering our life around him (Rev 3:15-19, Rom 1:17).

Our passion in life needs to be walking in faith and pleasing God. And when our time comes, we will journey into the morning sun on our way home, knowing we'll be welcomed as a good and faithful servant when we get there.

Key Verse: Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Hebrews 11:6 NIV

Key Message: Our passion in life needs to be walking in faith and pleasing God. And when our time comes, we will journey into the morning sun on our way home, knowing we'll be welcomed as a good and faithful servant when we get there.

Message in Music:

Love Always Wins, by Michael W. Smith

<https://youtu.be/MQOwVIG5m9Q>

Questions for Discussion:

What is your passion and how are you using it to do good? If you're already doing that, please tell us about it and how it's changed you.

What troubles you most about our community? How can we work together as a group to make things better?