



STOKED

6 Questions To Fuel
Your **Fire** For **Jesus**

Stoked

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Fire For Jesus

CHASE SNYDER



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He is the author of three books: *Stoked*, *Doer: Becoming a Christian Who Acts In A Passive Culture*, and *Doer Of God's Word: A 30 Day Devotional For Students*. He also writes downloadable studies for youth ministries.

Chase and his wife Anne have two kids, Tripp and Brooke. Chase loves camping, reading, kayaking, playing Go Fish with his kids, Bigfoot conspiracies, and Chemex coffee.

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Start Here

A fire needs three elements for it to burn.

It needs fuel to consume.

It needs oxygen to breathe.

It needs a spark to ignite.

A fire will go out if you take any of these three elements away. Stop adding logs, and the fire will burn out. Take away the oxygen, and the fire will suffocate. Don't strike the match, and the tinder sits alone without a flame.

It isn't rocket science to keep a campfire going. But anyone who has tried to build a fire knows that it isn't as easy as it seems. Even with three variables and a straightforward process, many have to add something extra to keep it going. Some are quick to grab a bottle of lighter fluid or kerosene to stoke a fire. (By the way, that's seen as cheating in the outdoor community, unless it creates an awesome fireball!)

In Christian circles, it's common to hear statements about being "on fire" for Jesus. It's a way of saying that someone is close to Jesus, passionate about their faith, or generally in a good place spiritually.

Too many times, I've seen that fire for Jesus start to burn out. I hear the same questions every time: "Why does God feel distant?" "How can I get closer to Jesus?" "Why am I not on fire for God anymore?"

This book will talk about building and maintaining your spiritual fire. I call that stoking your fire for Jesus.

Can you be honest with yourself for a minute? Ask yourself this one question:

Has there been a time when your fire for Jesus was burning hotter than it is right now?

If so, I invite you on a six-week spiritual journey to discover what is trying to extinguish your spiritual fire and how to stoke your passion for Jesus.

Two Ways to Use This Book

On Your Own

This book will take you on a journey to stoke your fire for Jesus. It's best to read it over the course of six weeks. Each week starts with a session that explains the focus question for that week. The session is a short chapter that ends with a passage to study and questions to answer. Read the session as the first day's study. There are five devotions following the main session, which gives you six days of content per week. The devotions are short and designed for engagement with God's Word.

In a Small Group

You can also use this book as curriculum for a small group. This is great for creating accountability for yourself. Using this book with others will deepen the impact of the spiritual truths you will learn.

Each week has one main session for you to discuss during your weekly group gathering. Use the passage to study and questions to answer to spark spiritual

conversations. Group members can complete the daily devotions during the week and discuss them at meetings.

Each Daily Devotion Includes

Daily Scripture

Each daily Scripture relates to the week's main question. I encourage you to open your Bible and read the verses surrounding the daily Scripture. The more time you spend in the Bible during the next six weeks, the deeper your studies will be. You'll gain an understanding of the context of each verse or passage, and you will see God move in your life.

Daily Devotional Reading

A daily devotional thought follows each Scripture passage. These devotions will get you thinking about the week's topic more deeply. The devotions also cover key concepts from the Scripture provided.

Daily Application

To the right of the daily devotion is a section for you to practice applying that Scripture to your life. To stoke your fire for Jesus, you must apply the Scripture you are reading.

You'll answer the same six questions each day for six weeks. You'll be surprised by how different your answers will be based on the Scripture passages you read.

Even though you will be repeating these questions every day, you will love the results. Your answers will vary greatly based on the different Scripture passages. And you will learn how to read, interpret, and apply Scripture methodically.

This page has three sections: Upward, Inward, and Outward. Under each section you will find two questions to answer and pray through.

Upward – Focus on God

The Bible is the very Word of God, so the first section deals with looking upward to Him. These questions point you to what the passage shows you about God. You'll notice new characteristics and promises to take hold of.

Inward – Personal Application

There is only one interpretation of Scripture (the actual meaning of the passage or verse). But there can be many applications to your life and situation. As you read the Bible, you'll start to see areas of your heart that are in need of God's grace, love, or correction. These questions ask you what the biblical passage reveals about your habits and heart.

Outward – Live It Out

The last section focuses on your active response to the passage you've studied. Some days you will need to seek out others to serve them or share the Gospel of Jesus. It is possible that you might need to commit to a new habit or have a conversation with a friend. The Outward section focuses on how you will live out what you believe. These questions will direct you to practically apply biblical truth to your life and stoke your fire for Jesus.



WEEK 1

**WHAT IS
EXTINGUISHING
MY PASSION
FOR JESUS?**

Week 1 – Day 1

What Is Extinguishing My Passion for Jesus?

We are quick to finish the statement “Things will be better when ...” with all kinds of hypothetical circumstances.

Things will be better when I have more money.
Things will be better when I have a different job.
Things will be better when I graduate and get out of here.
Things will be better when I get a degree.
Things will be better when I lose weight.
Things will be better when I have better friends.

But those hypotheticals aren't the solution to make your life better.

Nothing in these statements will bring us lasting joy, comfort, and peace. Instead, the seemingly “perfect” circumstances we seek out will leave us wanting more. Only Jesus will make things better.

When was the last time you had one of these thoughts?

Spending more time with Jesus will make things better.
Confessing my sin to Jesus will make things better.
Obedying Jesus will make things better.

Have you ever noticed how quickly we run to everything else and leave Jesus as a last resort? *Nothing will fuel our lives and stoke our spiritual fires like Jesus.*

Secure in the Family

When you commit your life to Jesus and repent of your sins, the Bible says you enter the family of God. That's something a Christian never loses. Jesus Himself promised that.

Jesus said in John 10:28-29, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."

This isn't a book about earning your salvation; earning your salvation is impossible. Ephesians 2:8-10 explains, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Your salvation is secure. But your passion can burn out if you don't stoke your spiritual fire.

All Fires Can Burn Out

When I was a kid, my family would go camping at a nearby lake. For us, camping was a mixture of sleeping in an RV and roughing it in a tent. My parents usually slept in the RV, but my brother, sister, and I would beg to sleep in the tent.

One night, my dad almost caught our tent on fire.

It was an unfortunate accident, for sure. He left a citronella candle burning until we fell asleep. When he got up to blow out the candle, he discovered that the oil had completely burned up. The candle was boiling and burning like a grease fire.

Half asleep and shocked by the small fire in front of him, he did the first thing that came to mind – he threw water on the candle. But citronella candles and water do not mix. As soon as the water hit the boiling oil, a ten-foot-tall fire bomb exploded right next to our tent. Luckily, our tent didn't catch on fire, and my dad was able to extinguish the fire before it spread.

That experience taught me at a young age that there are specific ways to extinguish fires. In fact, there are five different classes of fire extinguishers used to put out different types of fires, depending on what materials are present.

Just like real fires are put out in specific ways, there are specific reasons why your passion for Jesus is burning out.

Think back to a time when you experienced closeness with God.

Perhaps during a camp you experienced a closeness with God that you had never felt before. You saw Jesus move in real ways in your life during the week.

You read your Bible.
Temptations were minimal.
Spiritual conversations were plentiful.
You worshipped Jesus day and night.
Friendships with other Christians were strengthened.

Everything was going well ... until you went home.

You went back to your normal schedule.
Your friends didn't affirm the new you.
Old struggles crept back into your life.
Sinful habits once again became second nature.

And just like that, you no longer felt the closeness with God that you experienced while away at a spiritual retreat.

What happened? Did Jesus somehow change between the time you left the retreat center and your arrival at home? Did you make promises to God in vain? Were you caught up in the emotion of camp? Did your pastor not do enough to prepare you for coming back to the real world?

Nope. I don't believe that any of these are the true reason that your fire started burning out. Jesus didn't change. Your commitments were genuine. Your church wants you to grow. So, what happened?

Busy Isn't Better

Somewhere along the way, you filled your schedule with things that distracted you from Jesus instead of bringing you closer to Him. Somewhere along the way, your eyes shifted from Jesus to day-to-day responsibilities.

The semester gets busy and you don't have time for anything but studying. The season is starting so you add a few extra practices in each week. You want some extra spending money so you pick up a side job after class.

School, sports, and side jobs aren't evil, but they bring shifts in our schedules and thinking that pose a dangerous threat to our spiritual lives if we aren't holding tightly to Jesus. If you aren't careful, you will become so busy that you will become distracted and lose focus on Jesus. Once we take our eyes off Jesus, we start searching for a replacement. We look for love, acceptance, identity, and comfort. Jesus is the ultimate giver of life; distracted living causes our eyes and hearts to wander.

Your spiritual fire will grow as a result of prioritizing the correct things. If you prioritize the wrong things, your spiritual fire will fizzle out. You'll become more busy with worldly things and less busy with godly things.

Christians don't set out to become so busy that they allow their fire for Jesus to burn out. But I've seen it over and over again.

It isn't that we want to ignore Jesus – our priorities simply shift away from Jesus and onto something lesser.

We simply get distracted.

Turn Away from Worthless Things

Psalm 119:37 says, “Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.”

Even though Psalm 119 was written a long time ago, worthless things haven’t disappeared. They are all around us.

Right now you might be wondering what part of your day I would consider worthless. Your day is probably packed with school, work, and activities that have to get done. And I bet most of the things you do all day are productive and purposeful.

So what does the Psalmist mean by “worthless things”?

Something is worthless if it fails to bring you closer to Jesus. And many productive and purposeful activities fail that test.

Here are some examples of worthless things you may encounter. Some will be obvious, and some won’t.

Sin is worthless. It’s the No. 1 extinguisher of our passion for Jesus. Guilt creeps in and pulls us away from our Savior, and our passion for Him fades with every sin we purposefully commit. God commands us to resist temptation and flee sin so we can live passionately for Jesus.

Busy schedules are worthless. In an attempt to do *everything*, we miss doing what is *necessary*. If you are too busy, too tired, and too committed to spend time focusing on God, your schedule fails to bring you closer

to God. Heaven isn't full of high achievers. Heaven is full of Jesus-followers.

Bad influences are worthless. If a relationship extinguishes your fire for Jesus, you may need to walk away from it. Some influences you allow into your life are great, and you should embrace them. But some pull you away from Jesus. Those are the relationships that need to be evaluated and/or removed.

Worthless things show up in a variety of ways. They often promise to bring life, security, and success. The true test is whether they bring us closer to Jesus or leave us feeling empty and separated from Jesus. *Something is worthless if it fails to bring you closer to Jesus.*

If you can't decide if something fails to bring you closer to Jesus, you may be tempted to label it as "neutral" and move on.

In the Bible, Paul offers a way to distinguish between what is worth our time and what is worthless. Philippians 4:8 says, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

This verse offers a powerful aim for your spiritual life. Focus on what honors Jesus by testing your activities, relationships, tasks, and thoughts on those attributes.

What Is Extinguishing My Passion for Jesus?

The question for this week is this: *What is extinguishing your passion for Jesus?*

You probably already know the answer to that question.

If you don't right away, think it over. What is different between how you go about your day now and how you operated at a time when you felt closer to God?

You can't stoke a fire if you are throwing water on it at the same time. You may need to make some changes.

Turn from worthless things.

Set your eyes on Jesus.

Repent of your sins.

Throw off everything that is hindering you.

Talk with your small group about your struggles.

It's time to stoke your passion for Jesus.

Now What?

Passage to Study: Romans 6:1-14

Questions:

1. What "worthless things" are causing your passion for Jesus to burn out?
2. What is your definition of sin?
3. Even though sin is no longer our master, why do we feel controlled by it?

Week 1 – Day 2

1 John 1:8-9 – “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

To reignite your spiritual fire, you must admit to God, yourself, and others that you are not perfect. It's OK to admit that you have sinned. In fact, it's necessary.

Chances are, you have felt the temptation to portray your life as better and more put together than it is. But that is being fake. You aren't perfect. Keeping up a fake life is tough work that produces stress, doubt, and insecurity.

That isn't the way Jesus intends for us to live. We are all broken and in need of Jesus' forgiveness and love. Acknowledging your sin to God, as today's verses instruct, helps you stoke your passion for Jesus. It must be a habit you perform daily, because sin is an everyday occurrence.

This is God's promise to us: Jesus is willing to forgive our past sins and invite us on a journey with Him. Through the cross, Jesus has made a way for us to walk in His forgiving grace. He wants our passions to burn brightly for Him.

Week 1 – Day 2 Applied

Upward – Focus on God

What does today's passage tell you about God's character, promises, plans, or heart?

What attitude or emotion should that spark in you?

Inward – Personal Application

What does this passage reveal about your habits, attitude, and heart?

Is there an attitude you need to change, action you need to take, or sin you need to turn from?

Outward – Live It Out

What is the next step you must take to live out the truth of today's passage?

When and how will you take that step?

Week 1 – Day 3

Proverbs 14:12 – “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”

Have you ever thought you were right about something, only to find out that you were completely wrong? That feeling stings, doesn't it?

Proverbs 14:12 warns us that sometimes what seems right at first isn't the best decision. That's because we are all born with a sin nature, so our first instinct isn't always the best one. We may think something will lead to prosperity, but instead it could lead to emptiness.

This gets to the very core of the problem with all the worthless things we allow into our lives. If a habit, action, commitment, or influence is worthless, it will lead us away from Jesus. If we continue to give it our devotion, it will extinguish our passion for Jesus.

The fight against worthless things like sin, busyness, and bad influences requires action! You must make an effort to stoke your fire for Jesus (like you are doing right now). If you do, you will experience more and more closeness with Jesus.

Week 1 – Day 3 Applied

Upward – Focus on God

What does today's passage tell you about God's character, promises, plans, or heart?

What attitude or emotion should that spark in you?

Inward – Personal Application

What does this passage reveal about your habits, attitude, and heart?

Is there an attitude you need to change, action you need to take, or sin you need to turn from?

Outward – Live It Out

What is the next step you must take to live out the truth of today's passage?

When and how will you take that step?

Week 1 – Day 4

James 4:8 – “Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

When our spiritual fire isn't burning brightly, Jesus can seem far away. But Jesus isn't distant or unattached. He is active in His creation, including in your everyday life.

God's Word makes it clear that as we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. God loves you, and He desires to have a friendship with you.

You *can* draw nearer to God than you are right now, even if it seems difficult. A great start is to identify what is causing you to drift away.

Identifying the root of your spiritual burnout may be painful. Sin wants to remain a stronghold in your life. It will not let go without a fight!

Thankfully, our strength to fight spiritual battles comes from Jesus. Draw near to the One who loves you most. He will show you what is causing you to drift away from Him, and He will help you overcome it.

Week 1 – Day 4 Applied

Upward – Focus on God

What does today's passage tell you about God's character, promises, plans, or heart?

What attitude or emotion should that spark in you?

Inward – Personal Application

What does this passage reveal about your habits, attitude, and heart?

Is there an attitude you need to change, action you need to take, or sin you need to turn from?

Outward – Live It Out

What is the next step you must take to live out the truth of today's passage?

When and how will you take that step?

Week 1 – Day 5

James 5:16 – “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

Have you ever tried to move a couch by yourself? It is extremely difficult for one person to move such a large object alone. At best, you are able to pick up one side and pivot the beast a few inches closer to the new location. Don't even think about carrying a full-size couch up a flight of stairs by yourself! Carrying something that large requires more than one person.

In the same way, experiencing passion for the things of God requires more than just you. Before you knew Christ, you may have tried to do life on your own. If you try that approach while following Jesus, you will experience hardship.

You would never leave your couch facing away from your TV because you were unwilling to ask a friend for help. In your spiritual life, you must also get help – from God and other Christians.

Life isn't meant to be lived in solitude. We need to rely on our relationships with Jesus and others to encourage us to walk boldly, proclaim the power of God, show love, and apply discipline to our personal lives.

Week 1 – Day 5 Applied

Upward – Focus on God

What does today's passage tell you about God's character, promises, plans, or heart?

What attitude or emotion should that spark in you?

Inward – Personal Application

What does this passage reveal about your habits, attitude, and heart?

Is there an attitude you need to change, action you need to take, or sin you need to turn from?

Outward – Live It Out

What is the next step you must take to live out the truth of today's passage?

When and how will you take that step?

Week 1 – Day 6

Luke 5:16 – “But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.”

Some people enjoy alone time and seek it out. Others try to avoid it. But if we are going to follow Jesus, alone time is important.

Jesus often sought out alone time. And though he was physically alone and away from other people, He wasn't really alone. He prayed.

As a follower of Jesus, you should seek out alone time each day to pray. Jesus, being fully God and fully human, took time out of His daily schedule to pray. That ensured that His passions were burning brightly for heavenly things.

If Jesus withdrew to lonely places, prayed to God, and connected with His Heavenly Father, we must do the same.

Prayer is a time for confessing your sin to God, sharing your burdens with Him, and praising Him. It is also a time for listening to God.

It may seem like what I'm suggesting is too simple. Often, people seek out complicated processes to solve their problems. Instead, I propose that you take your spiritual walk back to the basics. Emphasize prayer this week. See if doing that helps you recognize what is extinguishing your spiritual fire.

Week 1 – Day 6 Applied

Upward – Focus on God

What does today's passage tell you about God's character, promises, plans, or heart?

What attitude or emotion should that spark in you?

Inward – Personal Application

What does this passage reveal about your habits, attitude, and heart?

Is there an attitude you need to change, action you need to take, or sin you need to turn from?

Outward – Live It Out

What is the next step you must take to live out the truth of today's passage?

When and how will you take that step?

I hope that week one has already started to stoke your fire for Jesus.

Be sure to pick up a copy of *Stoked: 6 Questions To Fuel Your Fire For Jesus* on Amazon to continue the journey!

For more information, head to ChaseSnyder.blog/Stoked

Blessings,

Chase Snyder