

## **DISCERNING OUR TRUE DESIRES**

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### **Jesus and desires**

#### **1. Jesus was a man of strong desires**

- Love
- Anger
- Mercy
- Joy
- For Healing, Deliverance, Freedom
- For the lost, the broken
- For His Father's Glory

See John 4:34

*"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."*

#### **2. Jesus hated the cold clinical righteousness of the Pharisees**

See Matthew 9:10-13

*While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" came and ate with him and his disciples.*

*When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?"*

*On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice. For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.'"*

#### **3. Jesus draws out the desires and hopes of others**

- The heart's desires of blind Bartimaeus; Mark 10:46
- Hopes dreams and desires of the disciples for the lost; John 4:35

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#### **4. The source of Jesus' satisfaction**

*On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.*

John 7:37-39

- Everything Jesus does he does as man not as God therefore the same satisfaction that Jesus experiences with the Father is available to us if we are willing to discern the difference between surface pleasure and deep heart satisfaction.

*O God, you are my God,  
earnestly I seek you;  
my soul thirsts for you,  
my body longs for you,  
in a dry and weary land  
where there is no water.  
I have seen you in the sanctuary  
and beheld your power and your glory.  
Because your love is better than life,  
my lips will glorify you.  
I will praise you as long as I live,  
and in your name I will lift up my hands.  
My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods;  
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.*

Psalm 63:1-5

*If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures,*

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*fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.*

C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), pp. 1-2

*God is most glorified in me when I am most satisfied in Him.*

John Piper

*I know of no other way to triumph over sin long-term, than to gain a distaste for it, because of a superior satisfaction in God.*

John Piper, *Desiring God* (IVP, 1996), pp. 11

**Questions to ask yourself:**

1. Am I expressing owning and recognising my own deep desires?
2. Am I engaged with a deep desire for satisfaction rather than a surface desire for pleasure?
3. Am I genuinely seeking God to meet the deep desires of my heart and am I willing to let him shape them?
4. Am I pursuing a dream or vision that excites me beyond my own well-being (or the well-being of my family)? What do I dream about, what am I doing to bring it about?
5. How often do I weep and what do I weep about?

**Some questions concerning day to day desires:**

1. Am I grasping/am I energised to please myself? How much have I thought/imagined/desired it...

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2. Do I need it or do I want it? Have I struggled over the difference between the two?

3. Do I discern the peace of the Lord before buying it/doing it... or am I trying to get peace through it?

4. Am I motivated by an entitlement that I deserve it...or I have a right to it...

5. Will I go into debt because of it?