

In Defense of Desire

He will give you the desires of your heart! Psalm 37:4

God created us to pursue a life of _____!

Supporting Evidence:

1. **God _____ true desires.** He does not _____ them.
God's endorsement of true passions and desires:
 - God created everyone and everything to express & experience His _____.
 - He is the _____ God. 1 Timothy 1:11
 - He is the *blessed and _____ Sovereign with sole _____*...
1 Timothy 6:15
 - The **true** God and King is the God of sacred desire and delight.
"...abundance of His love & generosity... His infinite joy." Dallas Willard
 - He created people as image bearers for His _____.
 - ...*for good _____* – His and ours! Philippians 2:13
 - ...*become **partakers** of the divine nature...* 2 Peter 1:4
 - ...*that my joy may be in you* John 15:11
 - ...*so that they may have the full measure of my joy...* John 17:13
 - God condemns _____ – not desire - as the doctrine of _____.
...abstaining...doctrine of demons... 1 Timothy 4:1-4
...everything created by God is good to be shared in...
 - God desires you to live the _____ life. Matthew 5:3ff.
 Romans 4:6-8, cf. Psalm 32
 2. **Empty longing is the result of refusing God's _____.**
distressed and downcast is the result of: Matthew 9:36
 - the wrong _____ (that are based on temporal and passing desires)
All of us, like sheep, have gone astray... our _____... Isaiah 53:6
 - counterfeit _____
Why? ...for what does not satisfy? ...Delight yourself!!! Isaiah 55:2
 3. **Our heart desires can only be filled in _____!**
 - Life and joy are bound up in the _____.
 - He is the _____ God. 1 Timothy 1:11
 - He is the *blessed and _____ Sovereign with sole _____*...
1 Timothy 6:15
 - ...*that my joy may be in you* John 15:11
 - ...*so that they may have the full measure of my joy...* John 17:13
 - Infinite pleasure is found only **with** the _____.
 Psalm 16:11; Acts 2:28; 2 Peter 1:4; Matthew 25:21ff.
 - **God made provision for us to have " _____!"**
 - ...*I bring you the good news of great joy...* Luke 2:10
 - ...*and your joy will be complete...* John 15:11, 16:24, 17:13
 - ...*the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy...* Galatians 5:22
- Discuss: Why did Jesus stir human desires in a way "church" often does not?**
 How should we "do church" in light of the nature and ministry of Jesus?
- Challenge:** Got satisfaction? Are you ready....? 1 Corinthians 2:9

Discussion Guide: In Defense of Desire

Open: The *Big Idea* for this study series is that **God created us to pursue a life of passionate desire!** What was/is your first response to this idea? (Or make up your own rating system)

Explain your response and what heart desire motivates it.

-1	0	+1	+5
Quick cover the kids ears, grab Grama and let's get!	And I'm missing _____ for this????	It's about time we got out of 2 Timothy!	"I'm so excited and I just can't hide it!

1. Agree, disagree, discuss

Our desires are a good indicator of what God wants us to do. - Our desires are a poor indicator of what God wants us to do. - All of us are often confused about what we really desire. - God loves to give us what we really want. - God, alone, knows and has what we really want. - Experiencing discomfort or pain is good spiritual training as it teaches self-denial. - God really wants you to experience joy, satisfaction and significance. - Satan is willing to give you joy, satisfaction and significance. - Left to our own desires, we will always wander off into something hurtful.

"(Desire) is the essence of the human soul, the secret of our existence. Absolutely nothing of human greatness is ever accomplished w/o it. Not a symphony has been written, a mt. climbed, an injustice fought, or a love sustained, apart from desire. Desire fuels our search for the life we prize. Our desire, if we will listen to it, will save us from committing soul-suicide, the sacrifice of our hearts on the altar of "getting by." (May, [The Awakened Heart](#))

"Pleasures are shafts of glory as it strikes our sensibility ... I have tried to make every pleasure into a channel of adoration. I don't mean simply by giving thanks for it. One must of course give thanks, but I meant something different ... Gratitude exclaims, very properly, 'How good of God to give me this.' Adoration says, 'What must be the quality of that Being whose far-off and momentary coruscations [I had to look this word up!] are like this!' One's mind runs back up the sunbeam to the sun ... If this is Hedonism, it is also a somewhat arduous discipline. But it is worth some labour. (C.S. Lewis, [Letters to Malcolm](#) Chiefly on Prayer, Quoted in Piper, [When I Don't Desire God](#))

2. Our second supporting evidence that **God created us to pursue a life of passionate desire, is that empty longing is the result of refusing God's desire.**

- Have you ever *got what you wanted*, only to discover that you didn't want it? Explain. Or...
- Have you ever watched someone who *had it all* unravel their life with discontent? Explain.
- In these situations, what do you think God really wanted for the people involved? How does that compare to what you – or those involved – thought they wanted?
- Read and discuss these Psalms in light of this discussion.
Psalm 16:11, 34:8, 37:4, 42:1-2, 63:1 How do you think this aligns with Jesus discussion with the woman at the well in John 4? Compare John 7:37-38 Then????? How does that all align with Jesus teaching in Matthew 16:24-26?
- Do you think we can shape or direct our desires? Tips?

3. Have you read and could recommend any of these books? Which ones and what impacted your life?

Piper, John, [Desiring God](#), Multnomah Publishers, 2003 -- Curtis, Brent and Eldredge, John, [The Sacred Romance](#), Thomas Nelson (others by Eldredge that apply?) -- Arthur, Kay, [Israel My Beloved](#), Harvest House Publishers -- Barnes, M. Craig, [Yearning, Living Between How it is and How it Ought to Be](#), Intervarsity Press

Prayer Target: Hearts that are passionate and desirous of what is real and fulfilling!

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Supporting Evidence:

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God's endorsement of true passions and desires:
 - God created everyone and everything to express & experience His good.
 - He is the blessed God. 1 Timothy 1:11
 - He is the *blessed and only Sovereign with sole possession...* 1 Timothy 6:15
 The true God and King is the God of sacred desire and delight.
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 - God condemns asceticism – not desire - as the doctrine of demons.
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2. **Empty longing is the result of refusing God's desire.**
distressed and downcast is the result of: Matthew 9:36
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All of us, like sheep, have gone astray... our own way... Isaiah 53:6
 - counterfeit values
Why? ...for what does not satisfy? ...Delight yourself!!! Isaiah 55:2
3. **Our heart desires can only be filled in union with Christ!**
 - Life and joy are bound up in the nature of God.
 - He is the blessed God. 1 Timothy 1:11
 - He is the *blessed and only Sovereign with sole possession...* 1 Timothy 6:15
 - *...that my joy may be in you* John 15:11
 - *...so that they may have the full measure of my joy...* John 17:13
 - Infinite pleasure is found only with the presence of God.
 Psalm 16:11; Acts 2:28; 2 Peter 1:4; Matthew 25:21ff.
 - **God made provision for us to have "great joy!"**
 - *...I bring you the good news of great joy...* Luke 2:10
 - *...and your joy will be complete...* John 15:11, 16:24, 17:13
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Discuss: Why did Jesus stir human desires in a way "church" often does not?

How should we "do church" in light of the nature and ministry of Jesus?

Challenge: Got satisfaction? Are you ready....? 1 Corinthians 2:9 Will you find it by "getting more, going faster, trying harder?" Are you willing to look elsewhere?