

Call to Obedience #449
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What Are Your Desires?

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What are your desires? Do you desire a better job, or a house in the country, or better furniture, or a child, or to live closer to your grandchildren, or a more comfortable car, or just a bicycle or a spouse, etc? If you were to write down all of your desires, how long would that list be? Certainly, it is natural to have these desires, but is it supernatural?

Following are some questions concerning your desires: What are they doing to your thought life? How much time and space of your mind do they occupy? What influence do they have on your budget, on your expenditures? What are they doing to your relationships with your spouse, your children, your church? What have they done to your church attendance, your prayer life and your life of witnessing to bring others to Christ? How much time and energy do these desires draw out of your life? How much virtue do they draw from you as you try to focus on the course that God has set before you? Are you forever looking over the fence at something you do not have yet, or are you taking inventory of what you already have in God and in God alone? Is God good enough to satisfy? Have you yet come to the end of exploring His goodness? In other words, what fills your heart?

Here are a few questions involving God's perspective: What does God think about your desires? Is He smiling at them or do they put a frown upon His sacred brow? Will your desires stand up on that awful day of judgment at the throne of God as good works?

You may also want to consider pondering these questions: How deep are your desires? Is there any desire that you have that dominates your life? In other words, is there a desire that that grabs you, controls you, burns within you like a hot fire, driving all of your passions and birthing all of your decisions?

So much for the introduction. Now let us investigate what the Bible says about desires: *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple* (Ps. 27:4). Notice that in the life of

David, all the desires he had were like small rivulets, all flowing together into a mighty river of God's perfect will. It created a force as irresistible as the great Amazon River, which cuts right through the heart of the South American continent and flows into the vast sea of the Atlantic Ocean. *One thing have I desired of the LORD.*

Can you see the passion, zeal and oneness of purpose in this prayer? Elsewhere David said: *...unite my heart...* (Ps. 86:11). He meant that all other desires must be like the little tributaries of the Amazon, which lose their identity completely when they become lost in the expansive river: *One thing have I desired of the LORD...* and I will seek after only that one thing.

Do you realize that if you seek after that one thing, all God has for you will flow into your life without human effort on your part (Matt. 6:33). Seeking after many things will only create chaos in your life. Can you see how your desires and wishes can dilute and hinder your passion and focus, and drain you of your energy to *press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 3:14). Can you also see how they can dampen and cool your intimacy with your Savior?

My friend, when you finally get what you desire, do you really think you will be happy with it for very long? You need to know that if you are not in God's perfect will, that desired thing may bring leanness to your soul. Only God knows what will make you happy. When you become one with Him, His desires will become your desires. For this to happen, you must delight yourself in Him (Ps. 37:4). "Delight" means more than just being satisfied, it means to be thrilled about something. It is expressed in an overflowing life of joy.

The difference between God's perfect will and His permissive will is like the difference between pure manna from heaven and quail blown in by the wind. In Numbers 11, Israel complained about manna, wanting meat instead; so God permitted them to have their desires and sent quail. Now quail has very little meat on it, rather it is full of bones and beaks and feathers and intestines and claws, and a large number of people got sick and died; and the camp was polluted.

Israel became dissatisfied with bread, because they were dissatisfied with God. When you become dissatisfied with God, you become dissatisfied with what He has given you. All seeking after God's permissive will begins with a dissatisfaction for "God and God alone."

A few generations later, the hearts' desire of the people of Israel was to have a king as other nations. When you stop being thrilled about God, you start desiring what the pagans have. That will become your heart's desire. It is truly amazing that God pays attention to your heart's desires even when they are of the Self-life. First they prayed for meat and then they prayed for a king. Again, God gave them their heart's desire. He gave them a king, He even selected one for them and anointed him! But what was the end result? They experienced hardship, idolatry and slavery. God says in the Psalms: *So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, to walk in their own counsels* (Ps. 81:12 NKJV). God gave them over! He gave them what they wanted! In the first chapter of Romans, Paul talks about people in sexual perversion and homosexuality. That is what they wanted, that was their hearts' desire, that is what their hearts burned for and God let them have it: *...God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting, being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness...* (Rom. 1:28 NKJV). God gave them their hearts' desire and let them pave their own way to hell. Do you still want God's permissive will?

How bright is this passage now: *One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; ...to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.* You can have God's permissive will, but I want God and God alone. David was passionate about this. As a busy king in frequent warfare, how many desires could he have begged God for to be satisfied? But his all-consuming desire was to behold the beauty of the Lord. My friend, that is true worship and pure worship.

It is something you can do also. You can do it now—you do not have to wait until Sunday morning to do it. Do it now. Do it every day. You might as well get started now because that is what you will be doing forever at the throne of God. It will transform you; it will empower you; it will illuminate you; it will put the fire of the Holy Spirit into you. Stop just coming to God in the mornings to give Him your wish list and then running off. First worship Him. It will make Him happy and it will make you happy. After you worship Him, bring your needs and cares before Him. You are likely to get a better hearing that way. Yes, *Lift up your heads, O you gates! ...And the King of glory shall come in* (Ps. 24:7) before you do anything else.

You can see why God called David *...a man after his own heart...* (1 Sam. 13:14). Yes, we all know he was not a perfect man, but he had a perfect heart when it came to chasing after God. He was a man who had one foot in heaven

while still battling with the perverse elements of the world. You should consider competing with David and not let him have a monopoly on this because he does not! Neither did Moses, who talked with God as a man talks with a friend. Moses and David both lived before Pentecost. You live after Pentecost; therefore you can be as intimate with God as they were, yes, even more so.

God has never told any man to ask for His permissive will. You should not even think about it or dream about it. You will never win the crown of life that way. Crowns of life are not sold at supermarkets for one dollar each during weekend specials. These golden trophies are earned by those who are worthy, by those who have given their all having gathered all their energies into seeking only that *one thing* without vacation or variation. Here you have Jesus' own words on the importance of your worthiness in black and white: *And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence... He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me* (Matt. 10:11, 37-38). *Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy* (Matt. 22:8).

Be amongst the company of the worthy who, on that Great Day, will have a crown to cast at their Savior's feet (Rev. 4:10).

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