

THE POWER OF DESIRE

When was the last time you let your mind wander and just dream?

Picture being in a hammock. It's slightly swaying back and forth with the melody of a gentle breeze. You close your eyes. What do you see?

Perhaps you don't let yourself experience the wonder of your imagination anymore. Why? Is it because your dreams seem larger than life? Is it because this broken world has shamefully taught you that dreaming is...*silly*?

Can I ask you, for a moment, to think like a child and let your mind soar past all sorts of boundaries that our adult brains have cautioned us not to cross? What larger-than-life world does your imagination take you to? Does it look different than the life you currently live?

Have you thought about any desires you may have that have gone unfulfilled?

We can acknowledge our desires, or we can suppress them. But as Christians, honesty is always the healthiest and best policy, so will you agree to be honest about the desires of your heart? God already knows what they are, so the only person you may have to be honest with right now is yourself...fair enough?

Desires are things that we crave or long for.

Did you know that desire can be used in two different ways? It can be extremely beneficial, or it can be extremely destructive.

Before a person becomes a believer in Christ, we are told in the passage Ephesians 2:1-10, that we were dead in our sins..."sons of disobedience." Further it says, "we all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath."

For those who have chosen to reject Christ as their Savior, God honors that choice and lets them go their own way...which is such a scary truth! We are told in Romans 1:24-26, "Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie ...God gave them over to degrading passions."

Note there is a difference between fantasy, lust, and desire. Fantasies live only in the mind, and similar to desires, can either be harmless or toxic. Fantasies, however, *stay* in the mind...there's never really a call to action. Depending on where the fantasy takes you, it could fan the flame of fleshly lusts, and those *can* be acted upon which is always done in sinful ways. Negative fantasies and lusts will always hinder the full, effective life God has ordained for you.

On the contrary, desires...the God-given *productive* desires...also beg for a call to action. In other words, moving us to do the fruitful, good works He has prepared for us. While childlike harmless fairytale fantasies aren't necessarily bad, we weren't called to live and stay in fantasyland and be unproductive. Visit if you want and leave with a smile, but we have work to do, a model set for us in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15).

If a person has accepted Christ and is saved...well, the Scriptures refer to us as His workmanship. Since we are God's creation, wouldn't that mean He knows what's best for our hearts and the desires within?

Are we still being honest?

As much as you and I would love to be magically removed from the power of sin, the truth is that as long as we walk this earth this side of eternity we will still battle the flesh...part of the curse, right? We know that believers should fully submit to and trust God, but sometimes we don't do it do we?

Therefore, as a believer, there is still temptation for you to slip into old habits and give in to the desires of the flesh. Can I remind you of a few temptations the enemy likes to use against you?

Temptation #1: Pulling away from the body of Christ and removing yourself from other believers who can help hold you accountable. "A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; he rages against all wise judgment." Proverbs 18:1

Temptation #2: Forgetting that you are His workmanship, and He has prepared good works for you. "The desire of the lazy man kills him, for his hands refuse to labor." Proverbs 21:25

Temptation #3: Settling for mediocrity and chasing things of this world instead of God's riches. "But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?" Galatians 4:9

Temptation #4: Asking for the wrong things. "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures." James 4:1-3

Temptation #5: Becoming discontent with where He has you right now. Instead, pray for balance between being grateful for what you have and waiting for Him to answer your bold, impossible, prayers...longings that can only be fulfilled by what He can do! "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." Philippians 4:11

Resist the devil and he will flee. Be smarter than the enemy. Know he sets traps for you, but dodge them and shoo him away!

Claim the victory God has for you and properly channel your desires. Relax, the Bible has a plan for you to know how to do this. Let's take a look!

1. Lay ALL your desires before Him...good AND bad. "Lord, all my desire is before You; and my sighing is not hidden from You." Psalm 38:9
2. Confess the truth about your desires. "Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom." Psalm 51:6
3. Humble yourself. "Lord, You have heard the desire of the humble; You will prepare their heart; You will cause Your ear to hear." Psalm 10:17
4. Meditate on the good desires He's given you. Reject the bad. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philippians 4:8
5. Fear God. "He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them." Psalm 145:19

6. Delight in Him. "Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart."
Psalm 37:4
7. Ask Him. "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." John 14:13-14

Does this help? Are you feeling better about the things you pray over? Does this encourage you to pray more boldly about the dreams or desires you've refused to think about?

Now, go back to your hammock. Snuggle in and return to the God-given desires of your heart.

Take your time...and dream big! Is there something much bigger He is calling you to do? We have much freedom in Christ. He's given us certain passions because He likes to give good gifts and knows we will enjoy the good work He's set before us!

Don't settle for tiny petitions, mud pies, or eating out of a trash can. God has personally invited you to ask for the unthinkable, enjoy prime-rib, and sit as the honored guest at His banquet table!

He is the author and perfecter of our faith. We don't have to wait until we get to heaven to enjoy His treasures and victory. Through His power, we can have all of that now! Our God can move mountains...trust that He will!

What desires has He put on your heart today? I'd love to hear your comments, and I hope this post has encouraged you to pursue the desires He's placed on your heart...perhaps ones you've ignored for quite some time! Encourage me by letting me know what bold steps He's leading you to take!

Encouraging You to Keep Faith,

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