

**What is desire?** Merriam-Webster defines desire as "to long or hope for." The Latin origin desiderarel means "heavenly body," which we can understand as a longing for heaven, or a perfect world. We think of desire in terms of things we long for, such as: to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, to have the approval of others, or to be successful. If we look at each of these longings, we can see within each there is a deeper desire: to be known, to be loved, to be valued, to be accepted, etc.

**Desire gone awry.** There is a tension we feel living with unmet desires this side of heaven. Pascal said, "An infinite abyss can only be filled with an infinite object." The infinite object is God himself, and the abyss is the longings in our soul. As we live in this tension of not being able to satisfy our deepest desires, we seek to fill that abyss on our own.

## I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

Stories of met desires

*MY EXPERIENCE ...*

*YOUR EXPERIENCE ...*

# WHAT TO DO WITH DESIRE

## 2. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

**SHARE** about a desire that has **not** been met in your life.

**HOW** did you dismiss or minimize the importance of that?

**HOW** have you used other things to try to fill the ache of that longing?

### ISAIAH 55:1-13

1 Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. 3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. 4 Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. 5 Behold, you shall call a nation that you do not know, and a nation that did not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, and of the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. 6 "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; 7 let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. 12 "For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."



# WHAT TO DO WITH DESIRE

## 3. EXPLORING THE SOLUTION

This passage was written to the Israelites during the Babylonian exile. God's people had fallen into idolatry (turning to things other than God for life and satisfaction). They had forgotten who they were and Who God was. Isaiah was calling them to remember God's promise and that He is still near.

When we try to fill the abyss that desire creates with anything other than God, we forget who we are and Who God is. God is still inviting us into life.

### 1. WHAT IS THE SPEAKER INVITING US INTO?

What is this analogy of "thirsting" and "buying" and "eating" practically talking about?

### 2. WHY DO WE SPEND MONEY ON WHAT DOES NOT SATISFY, AS IT SAYS IN VERSE 2?

### 3. WHY DOES HE WANT US TO COME TO HIM "WITHOUT MONEY"?

What does that mean?

### 4. WHY DO WE FEEL LIKE WE NEED TO COME WITH MONEY?

Why are our hearts resistant to letting God provide for us?

### 5. HAVE YOU EVER FELT DISAPPOINTED BY GOD?

How has that impacted your view of God?

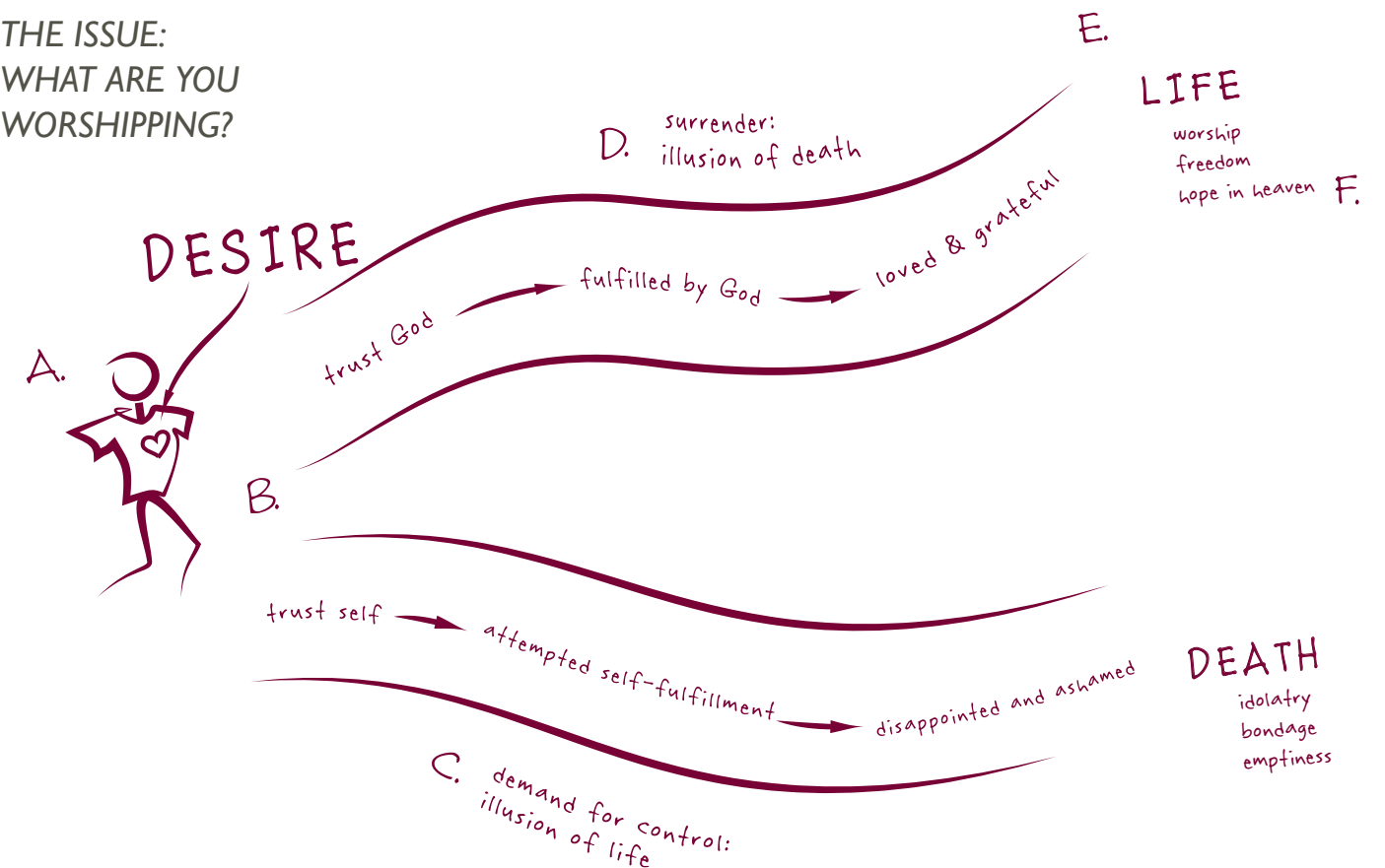
### 6. VERSE 8 SAYS THAT OUR THOUGHTS ARE DIFFERENT FROM GOD'S THOUGHTS, AND OUR WAYS ARE DIFFERENT THAN HIS WAYS.

How does this relate to our desires?

### 7. WHAT DOES THIS REVEAL TO US ABOUT GOD'S CHARACTER?

What does He promise throughout the passage?

THE ISSUE:  
WHAT ARE YOU  
WORSHIPPING?



## 4. EXAMINING THE SKETCH

A. We all have desires – God gives them to us.

B. We have a choice when it comes to what we do with our desires.

C. When we choose to handle our desires on our own, looking for what we can control in order to fulfill that longing, we end up disappointed, and sometimes embarrassed or ashamed. We are never satisfied. There's an illusion that we can obtain life through trying to get the object of our desire (more money, a boyfriend or girlfriend, approval from others, etc.). However, this cycle often ends in emptiness and an alienation from God and even from others. Even if we do obtain what we are wanting, the satisfaction is temporary, and we are settling for lesser things that will never truly fulfill us.

D. However, when we recognize desires, we can see them as an opportunity to surrender to God. God becomes the object of our desire, and our hope is in Him and not in the temporal things of this world.

E. Sometimes, God does give us what we desire – but it's no longer for us about the object of our desire but rather seeing Him as the One Who fulfills our desires. (Psalm 145:16)

F. Sometimes, though, because we live in a broken world, not all of our desires will be met this side of heaven. By surrendering our desires to God, we are choosing to believe that there will be a Day when we will experience the complete fulfillment of our heart's deepest desires. And until that Day, we can find rest in the goodness of God.

### **IMPORTANT TO NOTE**

Desire is not bad. It's more about the place you give it in your life. Because we continually have new desires, the process of surrendering them to God is an ongoing one. Our sin nature causes a bent to continually go to other things for satisfaction or comfort or affirmation. This bent is ever-present, but it doesn't have to dominate you.

**1** - How have you experienced these two outcomes in your own life?

**2** - Think of a desire present for you right now. Are you connected to true life, or are you chasing an illusion of life and control as you try to gain fulfillment away from God?

### **SUMMARY**

God created us to not only have desires, but to have them met in a way that shows us He is good and He gives us full life. However, we live in a broken world that creates tension with these desires in our lives; we must continually choose how we will respond to our desires and where we will look to have them filled.

## **5. TAKING STEPS**

**1 - RECOGNIZE** desires as they come up in your life. God has created us to desire, and that is a good thing! Be honest about your desires before God and others. God wants you to boldly come to Him and not hold anything back.

**2 - SURRENDER** your desires to God through prayer - this is an ongoing process!

**3 - ACCEPT** that not every desire will be met in this life. When you identify these desires, turn to God in prayer, asking Him to help you desire Him above all else, knowing that your deepest longings will be fulfilled in Him in eternity.

"If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." - CS Lewis