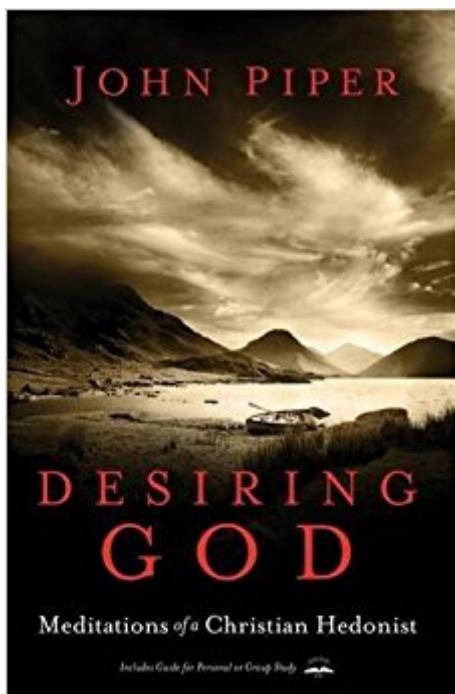


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Desiring God, Revised Edition: Meditations Of A Christian Hedonist



Synopsis

Experience the Lifelong Pleasures of Knowing God! Satisfaction→ Happiness→ Joy. According to John Piper, the pursuit of pleasure in God is not only permissible, it's essential. Desiring God is a paradigm-shattering work that dramatically alters common perspectives on relating to God. Piper reveals that there really is no need to choose between duty and delight in the Christian life. In fact, for the follower of Jesus, delight is the duty as Christ is most magnified in His people when they are most satisfied in Him. Constantly drawing on Scripture to build his case, Piper shows why pursuing maximum joy is essential to glorifying God. He discusses the implications of this for conversion, worship, love, Scripture, prayer, money, marriage, missions, and suffering. Piper beckons us to approach God with the hedonist's abandon. Finally, we are freed to enjoy Jesus—not only as our Lord and Savior, but also as our all-surpassing, soul-satisfying Treasure. Desiring God may turn your Christian world upside down. And that will be a good thing, for the glory of God, and for your deepest joy. Includes a study guide for individual and small group use.

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Customer Reviews

"Mind hammering and heart warming." → Os Guinness "A must read for every Christian and a feast for the spiritually hungry." → John MacArthur

John Piper is pastor for preaching at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He has written over forty books, including Desiring God, A Godward Life, Don't Waste Your Life,

and The Pleasures of God. John and his wife, Noel, have five children and an increasing number of grandchildren. Learn more about his ministry at DesiringGod.org.

At first, the concept of hedonism was something I was taught was not good because it was something from and for the flesh. So I was hesitant to continue reading after I was shown the bases from which the book was written but needed to look a bit further to see where I could see it from the author's perspective. After he showed the reasons and evidence that was given to him, I read further and began to see the idea as being generated by God. As I read further I was convinced that it was just like the character of God to meet our pleasure as we served Him making our service much more fulfilling as we derived pleasure from our service to Him by the indwelling Holy Spirit. I have since followed the author and found a ministry built from the formula given in the book of Desiring God. I am still reading and enjoying the book thoroughly. The reason for the four is that I could have stopped many times before I did because it could have shown many things much earlier than it did, in my opinion. I'm glad I did not give up and am so profiting from following the author currently as to maturity in Christ.

Warning: don't form your opinion of Piper's premise until you have deliberately and fairly read the whole thing. He does a remarkable job of introducing us to a concept that most of us tend to intuitively resist. Keep reading. Finish the book. If you decide you just can't get your heart around it, so be it. But at least formulate your own reasons why you disagree, and be willing to hold them loosely--at least for a while. The read is not light. But it is delightful.

Life changing stuff. I will pray that God will grant me the grace to really "own" (internalize) this perspective. I have tasted enough of the joy of His presence to be able to relate to the promise of more. I thought often of those I know who are acquainted with suffering and would wish them to discover this work. This was my introduction to Piper and his web site. My, what a wealth!

Wow! This is a great book. It is very deep and not easy to sit down and just read. I have been working on it off and on for over a month, but I am getting a lot out of it. I will probably read it again after a few months. If you're looking for something to really get you thinking about God, this is a good book for you.

In this book, John Piper literally cuts to the chase. That is, what are you really chasing after? If it is

anything less than the greatest possible joy in God, it is a miserable substitute and sin. Piper shows, by a preponderance of scriptural evidence, that we are to be earnestly pursuing our own pleasure by being enthralled with obeying God and bringing others to the same condition. I would recommend this book to all, whether they think they need it or not.

This is a paradigm altering book. I don't say that about many books. But I'm going to start this review by saying exactly that: this book will change your view of the Christian life and faith. It certainly has mine. Now, I know this sounds rather cheesy-alarming, even. I, too, tend to stay away from descriptions like "revolutionary" and "life changing" because they sound rather gimmicky. But I hope you understand, then, the height of the regard in which I hold this book. What does one do with verses such as "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!" (Ps. 34:8a) and "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice" (Phil. 4:4)? Surely, having been commanded these things, we ought to do them. But what do these commands really mean? What is it to "rejoice" in the Lord, to take joy and pleasure in Him? These are the kinds of questions John Piper tackles in this book. And if, as Piper claims, "[t]he chief end of man is to glorify God by enjoying Him forever" (18), then every Christian ought also to know the answer to these questions. To understand these answers is to glorify God on a whole new level, and to live the Christian life in a different-satisfying-manner. In his introduction to the book, Piper talks about how he became a Christian hedonist, giving readers the same verses and convictions that led him to his current beliefs. In the first chapter, he sets forth the principle that "[t]he chief end of God is to glorify God and enjoy Himself forever" (31). He shows that "God is absolutely sovereign over the world, that He can therefore do anything He pleases, and that He is therefore not a frustrated God, but a deeply happy God, rejoicing in all His works (Psalm 104:31) when He considers them in relation to redemptive history" (41). And then, because God's very essence demands that God value Himself, He does. God loves Himself to the utmost and seeks to glorify Himself. Can you see it? Oh, the beauty! If God always acts for His glory's sake, then He will seek to glorify Himself in us. And if God loves us, then He will give us that which is best for us, that which we will enjoy most—that is, Himself. He gives us Himself to enjoy as part of a boundless display of His glory and worth. The gift of God of Himself and our enjoyment of God intersects—better to say that it completely overlaps—with His glory! As Piper states, "In view of God's infinite power and wisdom and beauty, what would His love for a human being involve? Or to put it another way: What could God give us to enjoy that would prove Him most loving? There is only one possible answer: Himself!" (47-48). As we enjoy Him and praise Him for giving us this most incredible gift, He is glorified! There are ten chapters to the revised edition: the first is about the

"foundation for Christian Hedonism," the second is on conversion and "the creation of a Christian Hedonist," and the eight chapters that follow discuss worship, love, Scripture, prayer, money, marriage, missions, and suffering. Each of the eight body chapters centers the topic in question around Christian Hedonism, how our pursuit or use of the subject matter will satisfy us and glorify God. John Piper wants you to know that this book is grounded in, and takes its cues from, the truths of Scripture. This book is replete with quotations from the Word, but also from an incredible array of theologians. He quotes Scripture in abundance. When necessary, he defines the original Greek to clarify the meaning. He also quotes from Jonathan Edwards, C.S. Lewis, Hudson Taylor, and so many more. One cannot fault John Piper with having groundless claims. One cannot accuse John Piper of not drawing his beliefs from Scripture. As much as this is a helpful and enlightening work, it is also a scholarly work, with all its ideas properly attributed, ultimately for the exposition of Scripture and the glory of God. This book has been unbelievably helpful in showing me why and how to center my life on God. Since my conversion, He has never merely been an addition to my life; indeed, my pursuit has been to bring His influence into every sphere of my life. "Desiring God" has been indispensable in that regard. Piper has clearly shown how taking joy in God is necessary, is God-glorifying, and inevitably touches every area of life. God has been exalted and made deeply personal. This book has helped me fight sin by showing me the greater pleasures found in God. This book has given me a renewed hunger for God, a desire for undiminishable joy, all to see Him glorified.

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