

# What's the Big Deal About Desires?

## Lesson 6

God created man in His own image. He created man with God-given desires. These desires range from sleeping and eating to survival! These are human desires. Man also has desires that are created by the sinful nature. These desires can be controlled and directed by the Christian that is Spirit filled (Gal. 5:16-21). These desires can come in the form of temptations (James 1:13-15). Let's look at the Lord Jesus Christ and how He was tempted. If Christ was tempted, so mankind will be tempted. Here are two observations from Christ's wilderness experience found in Matthew 4:1-11.

### I. When do desires come?

#### A. Condition of physical exhaustion (Matt. 4:1).

High risk times:

1. Hungry.
  - Esau with pottage (Gen. 25:30).
  - Jonathan with honey (1 Sam. 14:27).
2. Angry.
  - Moses with the Egyptian (Ex. 2:11).
  - Joseph's brothers (Gen. 45:5, Eccles. 7:9).
  - Jonah (Jon. 4:1,9).
3. Lonely.
  - David at the palace.
4. Tired.
  - Elijah under the tree (Kings 19:4).

#### B. Conclusion of spiritual experience (Matt. 3:13-17).

#### C. Commencement of spiritual endeavor (Matt. 4:18).

### II. How to handle desires (temptations)?

*"If reading the Bible can be compared to cruising the width of a clear, sparkling lake in a motorboat, studying the Bible is like slowly crossing that same lake in a glass-bottomed boat" (p.31). Ultimate study ends in refreshing memorization – meditation.*

*"Reading gives us breadth, but study gives us depth" (p.31). (John 5:39 – search the scriptures.)*

#### A. Memorize (Psalm 119:9-11).

*When Dawson Trotman, founder of the Christian organization called the Navigators, was converted to faith in Christ in 1926, he began memorizing one Bible verse every day. He was driving a truck for a lumber yard in Los Angeles at the time. While driving around town he would work on his verse for that day. During the first three years of his Christian life he memorized his first thousand verses. If he could memorize over three hundred verses a year while driving, surely we can find ways to memorize a few" (spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life, by Donal S. Whitney, p. 40-41).*

1. Memorize according to need.
  - a. Topical verses
  - b. Specific chapter or books
2. Impress it on your mind.

- a. Read the verse 25 times the first day.
    - b. Quote it aloud.
    - c. Write it down.
    - d. Visualize each thought.
    - e. Repeat the process.
  3. Set reasonable goals for the amount of memory work.
- B. Meditate (Ps. 1:2).
1. *Why does the intake of God's Word often leave us so cold, and why don't we have more success in our spiritual life? Puritan Pastor Thomas Watson has the answer, "the reason we come away so cold from reading the word is, because we do not **warm ourselves at the fire of meditation**.*
  2. *The kind of meditation encouraged in the Bible differs from other kinds of meditation in several ways. While some advocate a kind of meditation in which you do your best to empty your mind, Christian meditation involves filling your mind with God and truth. For some, meditation is an attempt to achieve complete mental passivity, **but biblical meditation requires constructive mental activity**. Worldly meditation employs visualization techniques intended to "create your own reality." And while Christian history has always had a place for the sanctified use of our God-given imagination in meditation, imagination is our servant to help us meditate on things that are true (Philippians 4:8). Furthermore, instead of "creating your own reality" through visualization, we link meditation with prayer to God and responsible, Spirit-filled human action to effect changes.*
  3. Process of meditation:
    - a. Select an appropriate passage.
    - b. Repeat it in different ways.
    - c. Rewrite it in your own words.
    - d. Look for applications of the text
    - e. Pray through the text.
    - f. Don't rush – take time.
      - The result of such meditation is stability, fruitfulness, perseverance, and prosperity. One writer said it crisply: "They usually thrive best who meditate most."