

**DESIRE** a book written by **John Eldridge**  
*The journey we must take to find the life that God offers us.*

*The Sea Lion was not the only creature in those barren lands, for it was there he met the tortoise. Now the tortoise was an ancient creature, so weather beaten that the sea lion first thought he was a rock. He told the tortoise of his plight in the hope he may help him find the sea again. "Perhaps" the tortoise mused "this is the sea. You must learn to be happy here for it is unlikely you will ever find this sea of yours." Deep in his old shrivelled heart, the tortoise envied the sea lion and his sea. "But I belong to the sea" said the sea lion "we are made for each other." "Come closer" beckoned the tortoise "and I will tell you a secret. I am not a tortoise but a sea turtle." He squinted at the sea lion, to gauge his reaction. The tortoise's eyes had become just two slits. "I left the sea many years ago, in search of better things" he said "if you stay with me I will tell you stories of my adventures." The stories told by the ancient tortoise were enchanting and soon cast their spell on the sea lion. As the weeks passed into months, his memory of the sea faded. "The desert" whispered the tortoise "is all that is, or was, or ever will be." When the dry winds cracked his flippers and filled his eyes with dust, the sea lion would retreat to the water hole. And so he remained, living out his days between the water hole and the tree. The sea no longer filled his dreams.*

### **5. Mocking our Desire'.**

*"We have sailed to close to shore; having fallen in love with life, we have lost our thirst for the waters of life." Sir Francis Drake*

In life we have three main arenas that mock us, distract us, and pose as 'the real thing' drawing us away from God. They are the arenas of love, adventure and pleasure. In everyone of these we are bombarded day in day out with seductive advertisements, both verbal and visual, telling us we can have it now, it can be done, life is within our grasp, and we don't have to wait until paradise is restored. Think of all the movies like *Titanic* that tell us the 'golden' person, the love of our life, is out there waiting for us. And so we continue the search for our 'Jack' or our 'Rose'. Our hunger for adventure, especially for men, is not far behind. The next trip with the guys doing or going wherever (with all the right gear of course). Then we are all subject to the narcotic of pleasure. It is said 'when the going gets tough, the tough go shopping or fishing or out to dinner.' They're all imposters-everyone of them. There is no end to the enticements, and not one of us is exempt. We are all under its enchanting influence. No one stops to think about it, but pleasure isn't nearly so much about true enjoyment as it is about anaesthetising ourselves. Think about the relief your idols provide. But is your desire truly satisfied?, or does your relief come more from the temporary *absence* of desire? So, unable to get out of our dilemma of desire, we've found a new powerful drug called - distraction. Our idols become the distractions by which we forget who we truly are and where we really come from.

Do not be fooled by the apparent innocence of the object, or objects, you've chosen. What is their function? Most of our idols have a perfectly legitimate place in our lives and we have given them their legitimacy. That's their cover, and that is how we get away with our infidelity. If we took time to think about and had a hard look at what we really are doing, then we might see the lie and the imposters would be exposed.

There is a continual assault against our desire. The battle is not only within us, or even between us, but also against us. Our desire is good, for it's that which takes us to God. But our desire is not hard-wired to God. Think about how, from the time we get up to the time we go

to bed, there is this constant assault, we are inundated with one underlying message: *it can be done, you can have it.*” The life you are longing for “*can be achieved.*” If you only buy this product, drive this car, take this vacation, join the gym etc. The only disagreement is over the means, but everyone agrees in the end: we can find life now and not have to wait. You see, the evil one has a plan: if he cannot get us to kill our true desire, then he is delighted to seduce us into his trap. and once we have given over our desire for life to any other object other than God, we have become ensnared.

Our addictions our our own worst enemies, and addiction makes idolators of us all. Like the story of the rich young ruler we cannot give up our treasured possessions; material or otherwise. If you think this story is not your own, then you are out of touch with yourself. And if you think you’re not an addict then take the challenge and give it up! It does not have to be chocolate or alcohol, it could be an addiction to cleaning, tidying, always being on time, watching your favourite TV programme. John tells us his story of the time he was fly fishing. The timing for fishing was perfect, the fish were jumping, evening was approaching. He was about to cast and God said “Put down the rod, I want to talk to you.” John was irritated “You want to talk to me now? Can’t it wait till later.” Good grief. What an addict I have become he thought. The God of the universe wants to talk to me and I want to fly fish! Thus the father of lies turns our most precious treasure - our longing for God and for his Kingdom - into our worst enemy. It is truly diabolical.

Although our desire may take us to many other lovers, we must not make the fatal error and try one more time to get rid of it. We must not revert to killing our hearts. Instead, we must accept the first lesson the the journey of desire: *ecstasy is not an option. We must have life.* The only problem is in our refusal to wait and comprehend that we have got the timing wrong. That is why God must rescue us from the very things we thought would save us.

## **For Reflection**

Q1. What impostors are operating in your life and how embedded are they?

Q2. When the going gets tough, where or what do you turn to for relief?

Q3. Are you willing to own up to a couple of your addictions?

Q4. What are the evil one's two basic ploys to kill our desires?

Q5. What is the evil one trying to get you to do with your desires these days? Is he winning?

Q6. Can you understand more clearly now how the imposters in your life operate and pose as the real thing?

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