



2011 Leadership Team Retreat
Deeper Immersion! Desiring the better!

Is it possible that you have desires . . . deep desires . . . that you are holding as idols?

Are there desires in your life that keep you from seeking more of God? Desires such as an inner need . . .

- ... for acceptance.
- ... for recognition.
- ... to be envied or have material wealth.
- ... to be loved.
- ... to win.
- ... to be the responsible party and decision maker.
- ... etc.

Or could it be an addiction in your life that you look to for your stability rather than God. Many times our desires point to addictions to . . .

- ... Food
- ... Security
- ... Approval
- ... Drugs/alcohol
- ... Television/Internet Entertainment
- ... Social Networking (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- ... etc.

Whatever it is, if we desire it more than God, then we are holding it as an idol in our lives. Many times we will tell ourselves lies and say, “I don’t hold it greater than God.” These lies are followed by convincing excuses to ourselves that we love God and show our love to Him daily. We reason with ourselves that because we are doing well in serving God in other areas of our lives, then we are doing pleasing God and placing Him above all in our lives. However, if we have desires that consume our attention, then we are not placing God first in our lives. God wants to have all of us, not just part and He wants us to discover the desires that are standing in the way of our fully surrendering to Him. So ask yourself:

Because I desire *<state desire>* more than I desire God, am I limiting,
or diminishing, the ministry of Jesus to the point that He is unable to work in my life?

Let’s face it, any desire you have that takes your focus off God is an idol in your life. This godless desire is your weakness and must be overcome by the strength of Jesus. God has probably already brought to mind a desire you need to overcome. It must be looked at as an enemy in your life and you should wage war against it with the ammunition of God.

During our preparatory work for the retreat you are asked to review six *Power Thoughts* that are accompanied with Scripture. It is suggested that you take one *Power Thought* for a day or two and meditate on its meaning and the Scripture that is provided. Cards have been provided to take with you for easy referral while you go about your day. Cover each day with prayer asking God to reveal to you what you love that is in the world. (1 John 2:15-16) Ask Him to give you the “want to” to overcome and focus more on Him.

Power Thoughts for Overcoming Godless Desires

These thoughts were taken from Lysa Terkeurst book *Made to Crave*.

She is referring to food in her book. However, we can apply the power thoughts to any of our weaknesses.

Verses are given in both NIV version and I have listed what The Message says in reference to the verse.

1. ***God has given me power over my choices. My weakness doesn't consume me. It allows His power to rest on me.***

Scripture Focus:

"But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 (NIV)

"Because of the extravagance of those revelations, and so I wouldn't get a big head, I was given the gift of a handicap to keep me in constant touch with my limitations. Satan's angel did his best to get me down; what he in fact did was push me to my knees. No danger then of walking around high and mighty! At first I didn't think of it as a gift, and begged God to remove it. Three times I did that, and then he told me,

My grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness. Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks. I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become". 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (The Message)

2. ***I was made for more than to be stuck in a vicious cycle of defeat. I will call on God to give me victory.***

Scripture Focus:

"You are my King and my God, Who decrees victories for Jacob. Through You we push back our enemies; through Your Name we trample our foes. I put no trust in my bow, my sword does not bring me victory; but You give us victory over our enemies, You put our adversaries to shame. In God we make our boast all day long, and we will praise Your Name forever." Psalm 44:4-8 (NIV)

"You're my King, O God - command victories for Jacob! With Your help we'll wipe out our enemies, in Your Name we'll stomp them to dust. I don't trust in weapons; my sword won't save me - But it's You, You who saved us from the enemy; You made those who hate us lose face. All day we parade God's praise - we thank You by Name over and over." Psalm 44:4-8 (The Message)

3. ***When I am considering a compromise, I will think past the moment and ask myself; how will I feel about this choice tomorrow morning?***

Scripture Focus:

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, Who is in you, Whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20 (NIV)

". . . didn't you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don't you see that you can't live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (The Message)

4. ***When tempted, I will either look for the way out that God has provided or remove myself from the environment that tempts me.***

Scripture Focus:

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.” 1 Corinthians 10:13-14 (NIV)

“No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it. So, my very dear friends, when you see people reducing God to something they can use or control, get out of their company as fast as you can.” 1 Corinthians 10:13-14 (The Message)

5. ***When there's a special event that brings about my temptation, I will look for the doors God has opened so that I will not ruin my efforts to overcome.***

Scripture Focus:

“I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.” Revelation 3:8 (NIV)

“I see what you've done. Now see what I've done. I've opened a door before you that no one can slam shut. You don't have much strength, I know that; you used what you had to keep my Word. You didn't deny me when times were rough.” Revelation 3:8 (The Message)

6. ***I have these boundaries in place not for restriction but rather to define the parameters of my freedom.***

Scripture Focus:

“I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death!” Romans 6:19-21 (NIV)

“I'm using this freedom language because it's easy to picture. You can readily recall, can't you, how at one time the more you did just what you felt like doing—not caring about others, not caring about God—the worse your life became and the less freedom you had? And how much different is it now as you live in God's freedom, your lives healed and expansive in holiness? As long as you did what you felt like doing, ignoring God, you didn't have to bother with right thinking or right living, or right anything for that matter. But do you call that a free life? What did you get out of it? Nothing you're proud of now. Where did it get you? A dead end.” Romans 6:19-21 (The Message)