

Godly Goals vs Godly Desires

(Inspired by "Becoming A Disciple Making Church" chapter 5, by Neil Anderson)

Many of us have spent much time pursuing hopes, dreams and desires that are good and godly.

There is nothing wrong with that. I believe it is good to focus our lives on the pursuit of good things for ourselves and others that glorify and honor God.

Why then do we find ourselves anxious, depressed or resentful at times?

This lesson explores an important reason this may occur.

• Godly goals for ourselves: Things that God places in our hearts that He wants to accomplish in our lives that are **not** dependent on people or conditions beyond our right or ability to control.

- Nothing is impossible with God if He wants something done (Luke 1:37).
- I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13).
- Nothing, and no one can keep us from being the person God created us to be, except OURSELVES!
- Only God has the right to determine who we are and the things He has prepared for us to do "in advance" (Ephesians 2:10), and by His power, not ours (Ephesians 3:20).

• Godly desires for ourselves: Things that depend on the choices and cooperation of others that we have no right or ability to control.

- We should **never** base our identity, our sense of worth or value, on our desires no matter how good and godly they are because we cannot control their fulfillment.
- Even God desires people to repent but many will not (Ezekiel 18:30-32).
- God desires that we do not sin (1 John 2:1), and in His sovereign will, He gives us free will to sin or not. That is why He sent His Son to make a way to Him in our sin (John 14:6) by believing in Jesus (John 3:16) and through confession, to forgive us and make us clean (1 John 1:9).
- God wants all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4), but not all will.
- God's plan however was to give us a choice and not to force His love on us (Joshua 24:15).

Examples:

One's desire may be to have a wonderful, happy, loving Christian marriage and family. I may desire a church where everyone loves Jesus, loves one another and treats each other as they want to be treated. Who can block those desires? Everyone in the family and church!

One's goal may be to become a good godly husband, father and friend. Only I can block that from happening. If I trust God and obey Him, it will be done.

Key lessons:

- 1) No person, demon or Satan himself has the power to keep us from becoming the person God created us to be.
- 2) No person, demon or Satan himself has the power to take the love, joy, peace, hope, meaning and purpose that only come from God alone, unless we allow them to do so!
- 3) "We should never try to control and manipulate people in order to accomplish our desires, nor should we get angry, anxious, or depressed if our desires are not met — though we may feel disappointed."
- 4) "Life is full of disappointments, but they are likely God's appointments to greater maturity in Christ."

The Serenity Prayer

**God grant me the SERENITY to accept the things
I cannot change,
The COURAGE to change the things I can,
And the WISDOM to know the difference.**