

## Book Review

# Money: The Currency of Christian Hedonism

John Piper

This 26-page booklet is an excerpt from Pastor John Piper's signature book 'Desiring God', and echoes Piper's best-known quote: "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him."

### Highlights:

- Piper takes two seemingly opposite words - 'Christian' and 'Hedonism' - and puts them together to describe the pursuit of enjoying God and helping others to enjoy Him forever.
- Money is the currency of "Christian Hedonism," Piper contends, because what we do with money can make or break our joy in God forever.
- The problem, Piper explains, is not that our desires for happiness are too strong, but rather that they are so weak, and we settle for fleeting pleasures that do not satisfy the deepest longings of our souls.
- Piper paints a compelling biblical alternative, challenging readers to use money to increase their joy in God, overflowing in a wealth of liberality to a lost and needy world.
- Piper's discussion of pleasure and money is rooted in a biblical understanding of 'gain.' Gain is "rejoicing in the truth." It is a contentment and joy in the simple necessities of life, God's creation, loving relationships. Gain means we are unencumbered by non-essentials, increasing our ability to invest in what really counts.
- Piper describes a "wartime lifestyle" with an eye on eternal reward. He points out that the Bible portrays "reward" as not only a result of obedience, but also a motivation. Our reward is God Himself - now and forever.
- Piper weaves in strong warnings against the misuse of wealth, reminding us that we will stand before God with nothing except what is in our hearts. Christians must be awake and free from the consumer culture, the desire for more, and the tendency to satisfy our pride.
- God is not glorified when we keep for ourselves (no matter how thankfully) what we ought to be using to alleviate the misery of un-evangelized, un-educated, un-medicated, and un-fed millions.
- This booklet also includes 20 excellent study questions, which not only review the main points, but also help the reader think deeply about the reasoning behind the concepts.

### Potential Concerns:

- The use of the word "Hedonism" in the title might be a concern for some, as the common meaning of that word implies an unbridled pursuit of pleasure.
- The book launches into a discussion of "Christian Hedonism" without first explaining what it is. Some context from Piper's other writings (i.e. Desiring God) would have been helpful.
- Some may take exception with Piper's understanding of the biblical concept of "reward" - that "it is simply wrong to say that Jesus does not want us to pursue the reward He promises."

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