

<https://www.biblicaltraining.org/speaker/john-piper>



# Desiring God

## in Your Life

Becoming a Christian Hedonist

Psalm 119:97-104



# Hedonistic Paradox

If pleasure is the supreme good, then one will ultimately be driven into either the ditch of despair or dullness (**frustration** or **boredom**).

## Intellectual vs. Physical Pleasures

“Whoever loves money  
never has money enough”

Ecclesiastes 5:10

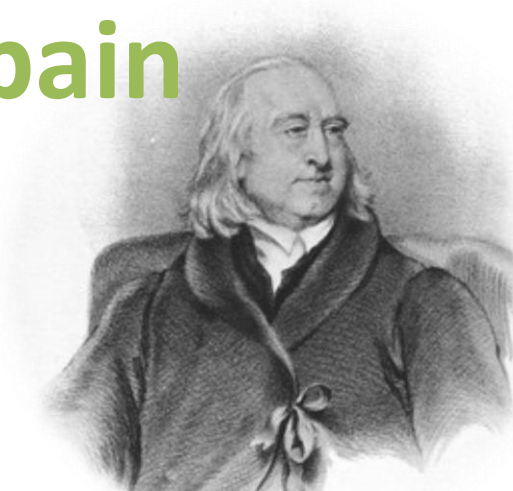


# Hedonistic Utilitarianism

By definition, utilitarianism is the moral theory that an action is morally right if and only if it results in the most utility (happiness, pleasure).

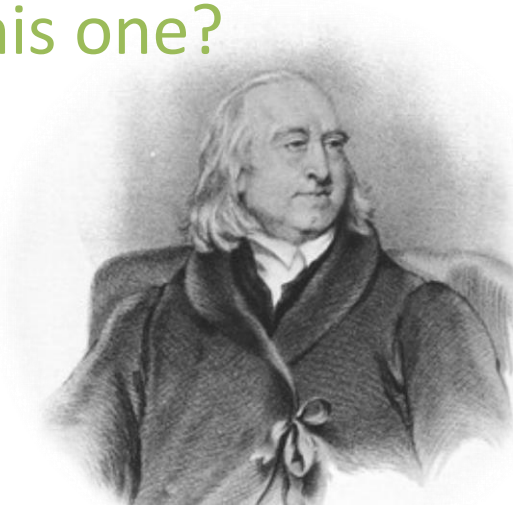
**“Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure.”**

Jeremy Bentham



# Hedonistic Calculus

- 1. Intensity:** How intense is the pleasure?
- 2. Duration:** How long does the pleasure last?
- 3. Certainty:** How certain are you that the pleasure will occur?
- 4. Proximity:** How long before the pleasure is experienced?
- 5. Fecundity:** How many more pleasures will result from this one?
- 6. Purity:** How free from pain is the pleasure?
- 7. Extent:** How many people will experience the pleasure?





# J. C. Ryle's warning:



## Christian Hedonism

“the use of uncouth and new fangled terms and phrases in teaching sanctification”





# Christian Hedonism

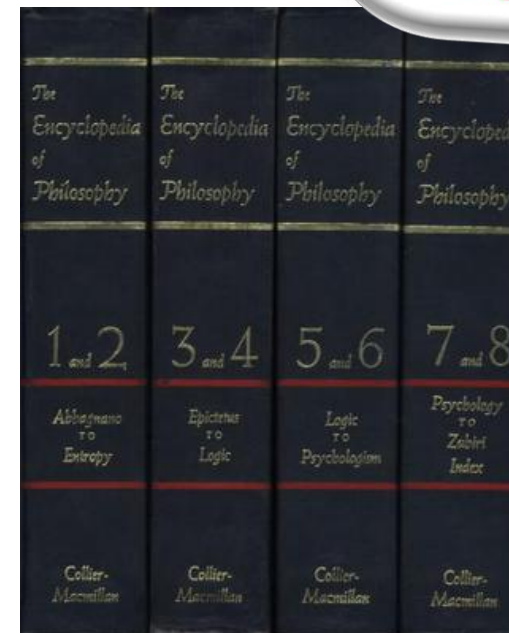
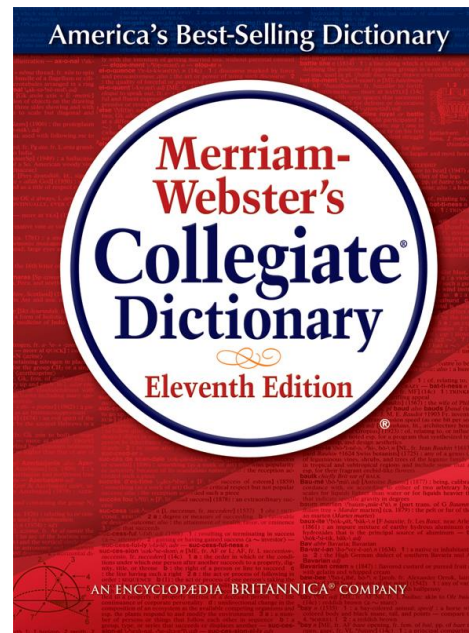


*Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*

**Hedonism** is “a living for pleasure.”

*The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

**Hedonism** is “a theory according to which a person is motivated to produce one state of affairs in preference to another if and only if he thinks it will be more pleasant, or less unpleasant for himself.”





# Christian Hedonism



*Soren Kierkegaard:* **“The Absolute Joy”**

“What indescribable joy! – joy over God the Almighty ... For this is *the absolute joy*, to adore the almighty power with which God Almighty bears all thy care and sorrow as easily as nothing.”

*Clark Pinnock*

“I have seen the gospel as making us happy and fulfilling our needs, as giving us pleasure and satisfaction. But is this right? ... Yes I think it is. ... The Christian way is not hedonism in the ordinary sense, of course. It does not make a god our of sensual pleasure. But it does involve enjoying God and His gifts, pleasure deeper than all others.”

# WESTMINSTER

## SHORTER CATECHISM

**Q. 1. What is the chief end of man?**

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God,  
~~and to enjoy~~ him forever.

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God  
**by** enjoying him forever.







# Christian Hedonism



1. A **universal human experience** is a longing to be happy.
2. We should **seek to intensify this longing** and nourish it with whatever will provide the deepest and most enduring satisfaction.
3. The deepest and **most enduring happiness** is found only in God.
4. The happiness we find in God reaches its **consummation** when it is **shared** with others in the manifold ways of love.
5. The pursuit of pleasure is a **necessary** part of all worship and virtue.



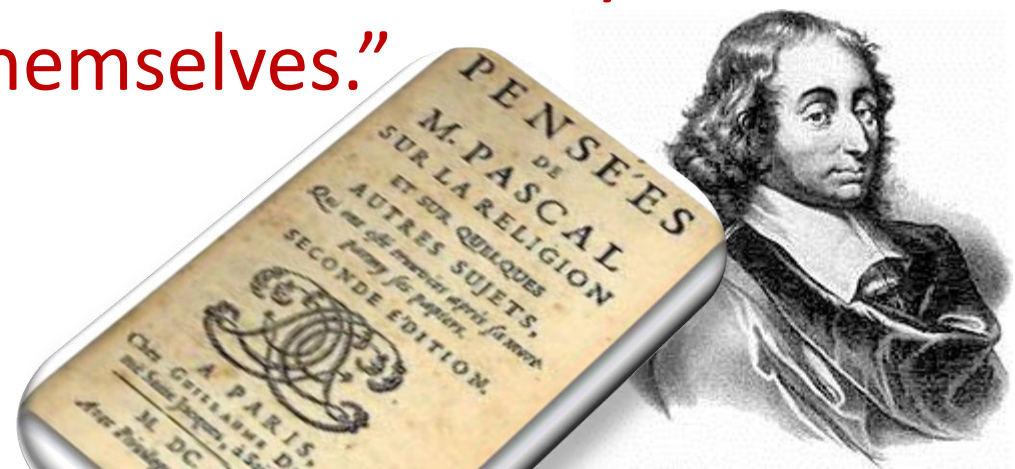
# Christian Hedonism



A universal human experience is a longing to be happy.

**“All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, is the same desire in both, attended with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves.”**

## Blaise Pascal





# Christian Hedonism



We should seek to intensify this longing and nourish it with whatever will provide the deepest and most enduring satisfaction.

“... it would seem that **Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak.** We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when *infinite joy is offered us*, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. **We are far too easily pleased.**”

**C.S. Lewis**





# Christian Hedonism



The deepest and most enduring happiness is found only in God.

“There once was in man a true happiness of which now remain to him only the mark and empty trace, which he in vain tries to fill from all his surroundings, seeking from things absent the help he does not obtain in things present. But these are all inadequate, because **the infinite abyss can only be filled by an infinite and immutable object, that is to say, only by God Himself.**”

**Blaise Pascal**





# Christian Hedonism



The happiness we find in God reaches its consummation when it is shared with others in the manifold ways of love.

“... we delight to praise what we enjoy because the **praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment**; it is its appointed consummation.”

**C.S. Lewis**





# Christian Hedonism



The pursuit of pleasure is a necessary part of all worship and virtue.

The God of the Psalm is the **“all-satisfying Object.”**

**C.S. Lewis**





# Christian Hedonism



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**Ps. 16:11**

**Ps. 36:8**

**Ps. 27:4**

**Ps 37:4**

**Ps. 34:8**

**Ps. 42:1-2**

**Ps. 43:4**

**Ps. 103:5**

**Ps. 63:1**

**Ps. 119:103**

**Ps. 73:25**

**Job 22:25**

# Key Themes in

# Deuteronomy

“If ... you seek the LORD ...  
you will find him.”

Deuteronomy 4:29

“The LORD your God will  
raise up for you a prophet.”

Deuteronomy 18:15

## Out Line:

- |                  |            |
|------------------|------------|
| I. Historical    | 1:1-4:43   |
| II. Legal        | 4:44-26:19 |
| III. Prophetical | 27:1-34:12 |

“Love the LORD your God  
with all your heart ... soul ...  
strength.”

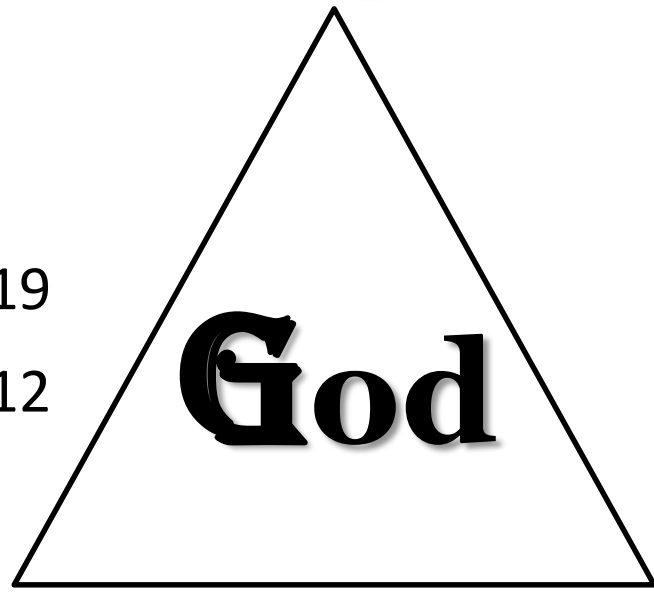
Deuteronomy 6:4-8

**Law**

**God**

**Sanctuary**

**People**





# Suzerain-Vassal Treaty



## Elements of a covenant:

### 1. Preamble

identifies the sovereign.

### 2. Historical prologue

rehearses the history of the relationship between the parties.

### 3. Stipulations

outline the terms of the covenant.

### 4. Oaths/Vows

the promises that bind the parties to the terms.

### 5. Sanctions

the blessings and curses to be enacted for keeping or breaking the covenant.

### 6. Ratification

the sealing of the covenant by blood, i.e., animal sacrifice or the death of Christ.

Genesis 15

Exodus 20

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Luke 22:20

Hebrews 8

Hebrews 13:20-21

# Deuteronomy 28

## Covenantal Blessings (1-14)

Conditional Blessing (1-2)

Actual Blessing (3-6)

Sermonic Elaboration (7-14)

### Comprehensive Coverage:

Victory

Prosperity

Purity

Respect

Abundance

Dominance

**“God threatens terrible things,  
if we will not be happy!”**

Jeremy Taylor

## Covenantal Curses (15-68)

Conditional Curse (15)

Actual Curse (16-19)

Sermonic Elaboration (20-68)

“Because you did not **serve the Lord your God with joyfulness and gladness of heart**, because of the abundance of all things, therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the Lord will send against you, in hunger and thirst, in nakedness, and lacking everything. And he will put a yoke of iron on your neck until he has destroyed you.”

Deuteronomy 28:47-48