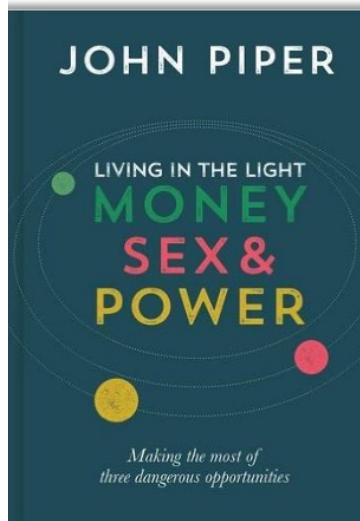


book of the month | August 2024

Living in the Light: Money, Sex, and Power - John Piper

"God did not conceive and create money, sex, and power simply to be a temptation. He had good purposes in mind," Piper writes. Money, sex, and power are wonderful gifts, but they make horrible gods. This reality deeply informed my recent Theology of Fun EH series that has affected many in this body. "The way you think and feel and act about money, sex, and power puts your heart's treasure on display—either God or something He made."

John Piper does an amazing job in this short book of helping to unmask idolatrous relationships to God's gifts while also masterfully helping us to enjoy these gifts rightly.



God gives us good gifts not to distract us from Him but as a means to glorify Him. Yet, the sinful human condition is one of exchanging the truth about God and the glory of God for the worship of created things that can never satisfy. Money, sex, and power are three of these greatest gifts of God. When these three are viewed properly in relation to the One who created them, we can see how money, sex, and power are, at their core, great gifts designed to magnify God, not things to avoid.

At the heart of our sin problem is a problem of seeing the surpassing value of God and ordering our lives accordingly. Piper gives very practical helps in the fight against sin and the pursuit of glorifying God by calling our attention away from these lesser pleasures toward God, our Greatest Pleasure, and the proper Source and Object of all God-glorifying enjoyment.

If you or I are relating to God's gifts wrong, we do not need a slight change of direction, rather, our fight against sin needs a radical reorienting of our heart in relationship to God. We must "wake up to the all-satisfying glory of God. If that could happen—if the blazing beauty of the sun could be restored to the center of the solar system of our lives—then money, sex, and power would gradually, or suddenly, come back into their God-glorifying orbits, and we would discover what we were made for. We would escape the broken solar system we made when we exchanged God for something else." When this happens, items that we abused for sin, become enjoyed more fully with increased pleasure because they have been restored to their proper place.

I cannot commend this book more highly. It is easily read in one month; however, the going might be tough. These are weighty truths that must not merely be understood. You must not merely know that God is all satisfying, but rather find your satisfaction in Him and reorder your relationships to lesser pleasures. I recommend you get a reading partner and go through this book together, speaking regularly about what you are learning and resolving Your pastor-elder, *Jacob Hanilla*.

Suggested One-Month Plan (4 pages per day)

Week 1: Monday July 29th - Sunday August 4th

Introduction, pages 9-11

1. Definitions and Foundations, pages 13-30
2. The Pleasure-Destroying Dangers of Sex, pages 31-39

Week 2: Monday August 5th - Sunday August 11th

2. The Pleasure-Destroying Dangers of Sex, pages 39-57

3. The Wealth-Destroying Dangers of Money, pages 59-67

Week 3: Monday August 12th - Sunday August 18th

3. The Wealth-Destroying Dangers of Money, pages 67-81

4. The Self-Destroying Dangers of Power, pages 83-97

Week 4: Monday August 19th - Sunday August 25th

4. The Self-Destroying Dangers of Power, pages 97-100

5. Deliverance: The Return of the Sun to the Center, pages 101-119
6. Deployment: The New Orbits For Money, Sex, and Power, pages 121-125

Week 5: Monday August 26th - Sunday September 1st

6. Deployment: The New Orbits For Money, Sex, and Power, pages 125-145

Conclusion, pages 147-152