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## Wishing

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## Wishing

In some ways, wishing is like fishing without a hook, bait or net. We might see that there really are fish in the water, but no fish do we catch; our only accomplishment is that of exercising our imaginations. Sitting near the water with a pole, we are left with nothing that will remain after we stop wishing.

We might engage in wishing, even frequently, as a kind of entertainment, like reading a fantasy novel or watching a story on film or TV that has very little connection with the realities of life as we experience it. But we might also mistake wishing for desiring. Desiring is a radically different exercise of our interior powers when we strive for fulfillment as a person. Wishes are ours alone, completely. They begin and end within us. Desires also are within us, but they always put us into direct contact with reality and almost always connect us with others. In addition, desires are often experienced as spiritual, as inspired, and are not only for our personal benefit, but for the sake of others as well.

Wishing is so close to desiring that if we do not attend closely to the effects upon us, we can easily slip into wishing rather than desiring. Wishing is wholly within our control, which makes it attractive for a time, whereas desiring arises within us as not entirely of our creation, and requires a kind of cooperation which leads us to making choices that end in abiding satisfaction. We use our imaginations in wishing and in desiring, but in desiring, we also attend to the interior reality of something more than our immediate interests.

Wishing and desiring can be distinguished by reflecting on their different consequences within us. While we are wishing, we can rather easily note the entertaining nature of our thoughts, as with any game, program, story, or other amusement. All that remains afterwards is perhaps a brief period of appreciation, but no follow-through comes to mind, no real action to take. With desires, we often find ourselves energized to make specific decisions, even as we recognize that we might have to wait for the right time or circumstances before we speak or act. We also might realize that an abiding sense of direction remains within us after we have become aware of our desires, and that we are moving towards commitments that will have consequences for us, and often for others.

If one of us wishes rather than desires to make new friends, and imagines being sought-after and well-known, nothing actually happens. When we desire to relate with people, and give our desire consideration, the depth and power of our aspirations leads and empowers us to recognize opportunities when they arise, so that we are prepared to take initiatives.

Even if we do not immediately become friends with someone, we experience personal growth and some measure of fulfillment in honoring our interior movements.

Our heart's desires are spiritual in origin and bring us closer to God. If we wish to encounter God, we had best attend to our desires.