

RULING DESIRES WORKSHEET

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What we think, say and do overflows from the heart (Matthew 15:19). Within this internal control center, our intents and motives dominate (Hebrews 4:12; James 4:1). It is never enough to simply identify our behaviors as the real problem. Instead, moving to the matter of the heart, we expose the real culprit: our ruling desires (James 1:14). Even good desires can become sinful desires when we want them too much or are willing to sin to get what we want.

As you think about your own life, which one(s) of the following ruling desires of the heart might be your real struggle? Why did you choose this desire(s)?

- ① Perfection: The desire to control others, surroundings or outcomes
- ② Praise: The desire to receive recognition, respect or acceptance from others
- ③ Peace: The desire to experience conflict-free living or convenience
- ④ Preservation: The desire to please people for fear of what they may think/say/do to you
- ⑤ Pleasure: The desire to achieve prosperity, seek comfort or amass possessions
- ⑥ Privilege: The desire to claim entitlement, priority, or position

Remember: This desire has now begun to rule you. "You must have it!"

To recognize these ruling desires and to understand their true impact, read the following passages and attempt to identify that individual's ruling desire(s) from the six listed above. All references are from the Book of Genesis. That we find these heart affections in the opening chapters of the very first book confirm that ruling desires are not a new concept!

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|---------|--------------|--------|---------------|
| Eve | 3:6 | Lot | 19:4-8, 17-20 |
| Adam | 3:6 | Esau | 25:29-32 |
| Cain | 4:5 | Isaac | 26:6-7 |
| Lamech | 4:23-24 | Jacob | 27:12-14 |
| Abraham | 12:13; 20:11 | Rachel | 30:1-8 |
| Sarah | 16:1-6 | Judah | 38:1-2, 15-16 |

Challenge: Perhaps the greatest obstacle to exposing your ruling desire is PRIDE. It often blinds you from the real you.