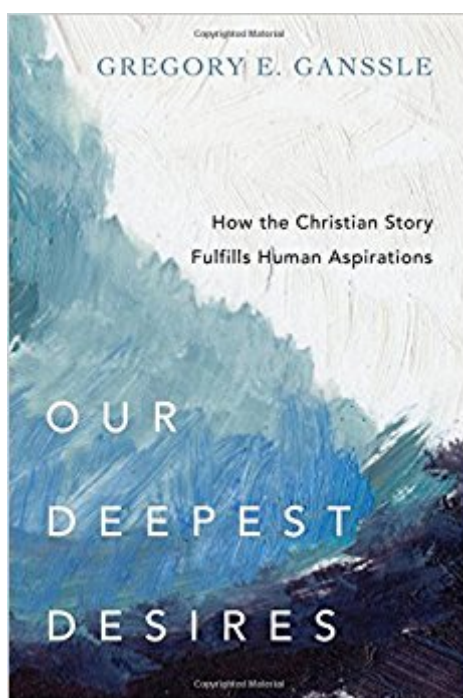


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Our Deepest Desires: How The Christian Story Fulfills Human Aspirations



Synopsis

As human beings, we are created with desires. We all long for meaningful relationships, lives that reflect goodness, engagements with beauty, and the freedom to pursue our lives with integrity. But where can our restless hearts find fulfillment for these universal longings? Philosopher and apologist Greg Ganssle argues that our widely shared human aspirations are best understood and explained in the light of the Christian story. With grace and insight, Ganssle explains how the good news of Jesus Christ makes sense of—and fulfills—our deepest desires. It is only in the particular claims of the Christian faith, he argues, that our universal human aspirations can find fulfillment and our restless hearts will be at peace.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Christian philosophers and apologists have spilled much ink defending the truth of Christianity—rightly so, given the rise of New Atheism and other movements that call into question Christianity's plausibility. What has been widely neglected, however, is showing the desirability of Jesus and the gospel. In this brilliantly written book, Gregory Ganssle shows how the Christian story makes sense of our deepest longings—for love, beauty, truth, goodness, and freedom. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in finding a story that is both true to the way things are and true to the way things ought to be." (Paul M. Gould, assistant professor of philosophy and Christian apologetics, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas)"We live in a time in the West when Christianity is implausible to many because it doesn't seem to be good. While frequently and unwittingly still assuming intuitions that echo our Christian past, late moderns

have ironically come to see Christianity as a threat to human flourishing. Nonbelievers don't just think Christianity is wrong, they find it distasteful. This calls for an apologetic that appeals not only to the head but also to the heart. The need is to help unbelievers see that Christianity is not only true, it is beautiful. This is where Gregory Ganssle's book comes in—drawing on rich Christian resources of the past and winsomely dialoguing with competing secular stories. With both clarity and grace, *Our Deepest Desires* points to how the Christian story offers more explanatory power than its chief rivals." (Joshua D. Chatraw, executive director, Center for Apologetics and Cultural Engagement, Liberty University)"Who I truly am—what Gregory Ganssle calls my 'core identity'—is a function of who and what I love the most. In this engaging and accessible book, Ganssle offers a compelling account of our deepest desires—the ones we cannot escape and would not if we could. Ganssle finds in the wisdom of the Christian tradition compelling support for his vision of how to get and stay on the right track in life. Believers and nonbelievers alike have much to gain from his warm and wise engagement with the question. Only a great teacher could have written a book like this." (Anthony Kronman, Sterling Professor of Law, Yale University)

Greg Ganssle (PhD, Syracuse) is professor of philosophy at Talbot School of Theology at Biola University. He is the author of several books, including *A Reasonable God: Engaging the New Face of Atheism* and *Thinking About God*, and he is the editor of *God and Time*.

Christianity is good news. But how is it good news for us? Philosopher Gregory Ganssle says the Christian Story is the answer to our deepest desires. In *Our Deepest Desires: How the Christian Story Fulfills Human Aspirations*, Ganssle describes how the good news of Jesus Christ makes sense of our longings and fulfills our common, human desires. Ganssle (Ph.D., Syracuse) is professor of philosophy at Talbot School of Theology and Biola University and the author of several books of theistic philosophy and apologetics. In part 1, Ganssle describes what the Christian story has to teach us about personhood, our purpose and meaning, and our capacity for relationships. In part 2, Ganssle claims that Christianity answers our deep expectation for moral goodness. Part 3 explores how beauty points us toward God. In Part 4, Ganssle delves into what the Christian Story has to offer us by way of freedom (and how it relates to Christian truth and hope). As Ganssle explores each of these longings, in turn, he contrasts how the Christian story describes reality, with atheistic and materialistic stories and ways they answer these questions of desire. He differentiates the Christian faith from materialistic Darwinism, existentialism, utilitarianism, and thinkers like Bertrand Russell, Fredrick Nietzsche, the New Atheists, etc. Ganssle does this all, with an accessible

conversational tone, full of personal anecdotes and pop-cultural references. IVP Academic classified this book as "RELIGION/Christian Theology/Apologetics"(back cover). I think the ordering of these is essentially correct. Ganssle offers thoughts about the value of Christianity which I think will be instructive and beneficial, primarily for Christians as we think through a Christian understanding of reality, and what difference this makes for our lives. Ganssle explores more the 'why Christians believe,' than the 'what' Christians believe. This doesn't mean what Ganssle says is solely subjective, but his emphasis is on the lived benefits of the Christianity "how it gives us meaning and a purpose and the ways it illuminates the true, the good and the beautiful and brings us hope and freedom. This emphasis on the 'why' more than the 'what,' characterizes how Ganssle handles the Christian story. Ganssle uses 'the Christian Story' as shorthand for what Christians believe about the nature of reality. Ganssle doesn't explore the narrative of scripture in great detail, though he does note along the way: creation, the fall, redemption, and consummation. Most of Ganssle's Scriptural references are drawn from the New Testament (though he does reference Genesis 1-3, and, Psalm 19:3). Missing from his Christian Story is both the story of Israel and the Church's story. However, he is not telling us all of the what, but why the Christian Story answers our deep desires. As an apologetic, Ganssle doesn't offer any 'knock-down arguments,' but his contrasting of worldviews highlights the ways in which Christianity speaks meaningfully to human longing. Ganssle notes in his introduction "If you recognize your own deep values in what I discuss, you may see that, indeed, Christianity makes a good deal of sense" (13). Seekers who are interested and exploring what the Christian story has to offer may find Ganssle's answers compelling. The committed atheist will not find these brief reflections as persuasive. But I think one of the most valuable things about apologetic works, is that they show clear thinking and a rational basis for faith for those who are drawn into the Christian story or are staring back from the other side of conversion and wonder if they thought stuff through the issues well enough. To that end, Ganssle describes cogently how the gospel is good news, fulfills our deepest longings. That is pretty valuable. I would recommend this book for believers and seeking-unbelievers who are exploring, or at least open to, Christianity and are curious as to what the Christian faith has to offer. I give this book four stars. ... Notice of material connection, I received a copy of this book from IVP Academic in exchange for my honest review.

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