

## Choosing What is Best - "Letting Go of Distractions"

**We all deal with mental clutter, which makes it hard to focus.**

Remember I've shared with you about cleaning my desk and the office.

It came to the place where I had to do something to get rid of the clutter on the desk and the shelves so I could see what I have and where I am and to accomplish what I need to accomplish.

Now I have a better focus on what needs to be attended to.

Appointments – Projects – Calls to make – Ministry to do.

### **Mental distractions:**

Even sitting here today in this service in the Presence of the Lord, your mind may be wandering –

- What or where are we going to eat for lunch?
- What are we going to do this afternoon?
- What about work later today or tomorrow, what do I need to do to get ready?
- It's too cold or hot in here today, where is so and so, why aren't they here today,? Why are they wearing that today, must have been a Christmas gift and they are appeasing the giver of the gift sitting next to them.

It is a fight to focus in the world we are living in, and it is increasingly more difficult with all the distractions the world and our lives are filled with.

Some of the focus we are on in the 21 days of prayer with fasting is getting rid of the distractions that are hindering us.

**DISTRACTION** from a Latin word formed in the 1590's meaning:

**"A pulling apart, separating, a drawing of the mind in different directions."**

- Your spiritual enemy & every force of hell is trying to distract you from living for the things that matter most.
- Their effort is to: "Pull apart, divide your mind, discourage your soul, disengage your faith, distract you from the things that matter most.

**THE DEVIL DOESN'T NEED TO DESTROY YOU IF HE CAN DISTRACT YOU!**

- If he can distract you, eventually he will neutralize you and end up destroying you or you disqualify yourself from all the Lord has for you.

Luke 10 gives the message from Jesus of His incredible love for us and His encouragement for us to stay focused on what matters most.

Luke 10:38 - Two sisters are hosting Jesus in their home for dinner.

“As Jesus and His disciples were on their way, He came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what He said. But Martha was **distracted** by all the preparations that had to be made. Martha came to Jesus and asked: Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

v. 41 is Jesus’ response of love to Martha: “Martha, Martha, the Lord answered, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed – or indeed only one.

**Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”**

- Jesus could have said: **“few things are important, necessary, or really matter most.”**
- Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her.

Martha had a good heart, and good intentions; but she was distracted according to Jesus.

- My phone just dinged, I’ve got another email, text, an app just posted, Messenger just sent me a message.....
- I’ve got to check my social media and see if I got responses.
- I’ve got to get the kids to practice, Oh – I’ve got to feed them before we get there, what about my shoes – how do they look, do I match; what will they think if I show up wearing this....
- Martha – Martha – Martha you are so distracted!
- But only a few things really matter – are important!
- Martha wasn’t doing anything bad or wrong; **but she wasn’t doing what was best!**

**OFTEN - THE MOST DIFFICULT CHOICES AREN’T BETWEEN GOOD AND **BAD** BUT BETWEEN GOOD AND **BEST!****

If the enemy can’t make you do bad, he’ll attempt to distract you away from using your life in the things that honor God and making an eternal difference.

**How do we [with the help of God] choose what’s BEST?**

### **1. Diminish the Distractions**

Learn to distance myself from that which tempts me from being distracted.

1 Cor. 7:35 Paul in speaking about marriage, can be applied to other areas of your life:

“I am saying this for your benefit, not to place restrictions on you. I want you **to do whatever will help you serve the Lord best, with as few distractions as possible.**”

- **BEST**- Not accepting average, mundane, normal – but what helps you serve the Lord the best, with as few distractions as possible.
- Every force in hell is out to distract you from what matters most and the enemy uses many things and many people to accomplish distraction in your life.
- There are many, but in today’s culture; there is something that resides with the Trinity: The Father, The Son and the mobile phone!
- For thousands of years, mankind has survived, existed, and accomplished much without the cell phone. Yes, there is a lot of good it has brought; but YES there is a lot of distraction it has brought into our lives.
- The average person can’t go 10 minutes without checking their phone. Most of you are not average, you can’t go 1 minute without checking it.
- If you wonder, why you’re not as productive as you used to be, or your relationships are suffering and not as intimate as they could be, you’re not as close to God as you’d like to be:

**COULD IT BE THAT YOU CAN’T DO ANYTHING MEANINGFUL WITHOUT BEING INTERRUPTED EVERY FEW MINUTES TO STARE AT THIS DEVICE?**

- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** The average person spends approximately 2 hours per day on social media.
  - If you are younger, you will spend over 7 years of your life on social media scrolling and tapping wondering why they haven’t commented on your post.

**YOUR LIFE IS TOO VALUABLE AND YOUR CALLING IS TOO GREAT AND YOUR GOD IS TOO GOOD FOR YOU TO WASTE YOUR LIFE WITH THINGS THAT DO NOT MATTER**

- God is giving gifts, callings and passions & put you, at this time of history, that you can best glorify Him and find meaningful purpose for your life.
- It’s not a bad thing, just not the BEST He has for you.

Martha – Martha, you’re distracted about so many things, but only a few things really matter.

Why not determine during this fast to become less distracted by social media, phone, other distractions that are taking you away from being intimately connected with the people that really matter and your Lord who has some amazing plans for your life in 2019 and beyond?

**TREAT WHATEVER COULD DISTRACT YOU LIKE  
IT IS A TEMPTATION TO SIN!**

We need to do what Solomon says in Proverbs 5:8 about dealing with the immoral woman:

- He doesn't say to her: "Let's go out and have a little drink together and talk and get to know each other first."
- He doesn't say: "Let's just hang out alone and at your house and see if some chemistry happens between us."

NO – he says: "STAY AWAY FROM HER! DON'T GO NEAR THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE!"

- **Don't get close to that which will distract you.**
- I know some of you think you are super Christian and have been liberated and think you can hang with those who do immoral things and live on the edge; but if you do – you are more tempted to compromise and most likely will end up falling into sin and destroying your testimony and forfeiting your intimacy with the Lord.
- **IS IT WORTH IT?**

1 John 2:15-17 "Don't love this evil world or the things in it. If you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. This is all there is in the world:

- wanting to please our sinful selves,
- wanting the sinful thing we see,
- being too proud of what we have.

But none of these comes from the Father. They come from the world. **The world is passing away, and all the things that people want in the world are passing away. But whoever does what God wants will live forever.**"

Abstain from all **appearance** of evil – 1 Thess. 5:22. "fashion, shape, sight." What ever looks or hints of evil, stay away from it. It is seductive.

Avoid fornication – 1 Cor. 7:2

Avoid foolish questions and genealogies, which gender strife – 2 Tim. 2:23

Practical suggestions to Diminish Distractions:

- Delete distracting apps, websites. If it's an idol you, get diminish it.

- Turn off notifications.
- We love all people, but there may be some to “Un-Hook from”
- Prov. 13:20 “He that walks with the wise shall be wise; but a companion of fools will be destroyed.”
- 1 Cor. 15:33 “Be not deceived, evil communications – communion and friendships corrupt good manners/morals and habits.

**YOU CANNOT LIVE THE RIGHT LIFE WHEN YOU  
HANG WITH THE WRONG FRIENDS!**

- **You may be dating a distraction!**
  - Distracting you from fully walking with the Lord because you are un-equally yoked – 2 Cor. 6:14.
  - You need to press **DELETE** and let God upgrade who is in your life.

**IT IS A FIGHT TO FOCUS – BUT IT IS WORTH THE FIGHT!**

**2. Focus on the Important**

Prov. 4:25-26      “Set your gaze on the path before you. **With fixed purpose, looking straight ahead, ignore life’s distractions.**” TPT

Heb. 12:2      “We look away from the natural realm and we fasten our gaze onto Jesus who birthed faith within us and who leads us forward into faith’s perfection. His example is this: because His heart was focused on the joy of knowing that you would be His, He endured the agony of the cross and conquered its humiliation, and now sits exalted at the right hand of the Throne of God!” TPT

**We must focus and have our gaze fixed on the purpose of what’s most important:**

- As long as the disciple Peter had his focus fixed on Jesus who was walking on the water, Peter also walked on the water.
- But when Peter took his focus off Jesus and looked at the waves and wind around him [the circumstances] he began to sink. Matt 14:26-30

**Some of you are sinking, you always feel overwhelmed, you are always behind – less than – always believing there is something more.**

**Why is it that you are always sinking?**

- Could it be that you are always looking at the wind & waves – distracted from focusing on what the Lord has for you?
- Watching what others are doing and not focusing on what the Lord has for you?

The only way you can truly serve God is when you seek Him FIRST:

Matt. 6:33 “Seek **first** the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...”

The FIRST thing of the day is:

- NOT - Instagram, emails, texts, news, weather.
- Jesus – Jesus, I love you and dedicate my life to YOU today and forever. Have Your will in and through me today for Your glory.

The FIRST day of the week:

- We gather and corporately worship and fellowship with Him and each other.
- We are aligning our week to seek God first.

The FIRST Fruit of our Harvest:

- We **BRING** our tithe and offerings to honor the Lord by giving to Him the First fruits of our increase.

The First of the Year:

- We set aside time to fast and honor the Lord by giving Him our full focus at the first of the year.
- This is His year, His time – we are seeking His will for this year.
- We deny ourselves physical nutrition so He can fill us with His spiritual strength so we can focus on His will and purpose.

**YOU NEVER WANDER INTO RIGHTEOUSNESS  
YOU NEVER STUMBLE INTO EFFECTIVENESS  
YOU NEVER FALL INTO BRINGING GLORY TO GOD  
BUT YOU CAN DO IT WITH “FIXED PURPOSE”**

**IT’S NOT ACCIDENTAL – ITS INTENTIONAL**

Every demonic force is trying to distract us.

Martha, you are so stressed out and distracted by so many things that really don’t matter that much.

**So Distance the Distractions and Focus on What’s Important &**

**Choosing What is Best - “Letting Go of Distractions”**

### **3. Listen to the Voice of God**

Isa. 30:21 “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying: This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.”

- The Holy Spirit will whisper to you to “go this way, don’t go that way, yes – do that or you probably shouldn’t do that, it won’t be best for you.
- You can choose something so much better – let’s walk this way.”

When you seek God first, you will hear Him.

- He is the God who listens and speaks to His creation.
- He’s speaking to you through **His Word** – the Bible and it will never lead you wrong.
- He will speak to you through the **voice of His Spirit** if you have ears to hear.
- He can speak to your through **people, a magazine, a book, a song, a sign, circumstances.**

If you are open and ask, He will be behind you speaking do this or don’t do that, go this way or stay away from that way.

Be a blessing to that person/take a moment and listen to that person/take a moment and pray.

**YOUR LIFE IS TOO VALUABLE, YOUR CALLING IS TOO GREAT, AND  
YOUR GOD IS TOO GOOD FOR YOU TO BE DISTRACTED  
BY THINGS THAT DO NOT LAST.**

In 2019, during this season of the fast, determine to listen with a new heart to God’s direction for your life.

You and only you have the ability to choose what you will do with the opportunities that are before you right now!

**What** and **How** will you choose?

- 1. To Diminish the Distractions**
- 2. To Focus on the Important**
- 3. To Listen to the Voice of God**

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