

BEWARE OF DANGEROUS DISTRACTIONS!

(Live Oak, Florida, 3/11/17, First Lady Trilby Richie; Ft. McCoy, 11/01/20, Pastor Bass)

Honor to Pastor Bass, our First Lady Jennifer Bass,

Bob and Reba Parrish (our Care Givers),

and my sweet Husband, Randy Watson

PRAY

INTRODUCTION:

There is a war on!

Battles are being fought –

through the media,

in classrooms,

in homes, &

even in personal conversations.

I have 2 cousins who happen to be my friends on FB.

One is a Republican, the other is a Democrat; and,

even though THEY are cousins, too, they are in a verbal FB battle over the up-coming election.

I showed one of their posts to Randy; and he just shook his head and walked away.

I am sure this is not the only argument going on.

It's just one more tactic of the enemy

in a life and death struggle

for the human mind;

& his weapon of choice
is distractions.

He will use anything, and I mean ANYTHING,
to bring confusion to your mind
to diminish,
and sometimes even destroy,
your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is not a new warfare tactic, in fact,
even in biblical times,
there were men & women
who were distracted
by their own needs,
or desires,
or dreams.

In Eve's case
it was a diabolical distraction that affected –
not only her family –
but the entire human race.

She walked w/Adam and God every day,
but she was distracted,
of all things,
by fruit!!

BUT, it was forbidden fruit.

THINK ABOUT -

- 2 Sarah distracted by her desire for a child
 - 3 Deborah by a desire for wealth
 - 4 Leah by her desire to please her husband
 - 5 Keturah by her desire to marry a rich man
 - 6 Lot's wife by curiosity
 - 7 Jezebel by a desire for power
 - 8 Gomer by a need to feel loved
- & that's just the tip of the ice berg!**

These things,
in and of themselves,
may not be “sinful” but,

- (1) if they PULL your attention
away from The Christ,
- (2) if they cause you to
chase after butterflies
instead of seeking God Jehovah,
- (3) if your mind dwells on
“fluff & stuff” constantly
instead of things of the Spirit –

it's quite possible
you are distracted
and you are headed for trouble.

Perhaps we should become more like

IMP: MY STRANGE & WONDERFUL FRIENDS:

June: *“Goodnight, Jesus. It’s your servant, June.
I just wanted you to know I love you.”*

Another friend, *Prayed, laying on the floor with her body
in the shame of a cross, saying, “Kill me, God.”*

Peggy and Gwen:

*Literally ate pages torn from their Bibles.
They read where Jeremiah
“ate the Scroll and it was bitter in his mouth.”*

Now I’m not saying you have to eat your Bible;
but I am saying
that you need to keep your mind
centered on the Lord.

Don’t let the distractions around you –
& BELIEVE ME
I’VE BEEN WATCHING THE NEWS
so I know that
THE VERY AIR

IS FULL OF DISTRACTIONS –
but don't allow them to
cause you to forget God and
His promises or
His provision.

***Probably the first thing we need to do is
answer the question: ****

I DEFINING DISTRACTIONS

****What is a distraction?***

A “distraction”
is something that slows,
or makes difficult, our progress.

It holds us back.
It delays,
or impedes,
or prevents action.

It is something that
scrambles the brain,
causing confusion;
and it causes you to lose
the ability to concentrate.

It draws or directs your attention
to a different object,
or in a different direction;
and,
at the same time,
it stirs up conflicting
emotions or motives.

Paul put it like this:

**“The things I want to do, I don’t do;
and the things I don’t want to do, I keep doing.”**

A There are “internal distractions” –

Processes of the mind and heart
that can invade
and dilute the spiritual life of a believer.

(1) RUNAWAY EMOTIONS

Uncontrollable feelings
about situations and people
that distract us from prayer.

- (1) Anger,
- (2) worry,

- (3) fear,
- (4) bitterness,
- (5) hate,
- (6) lust,
- (7) Doubt and unbelief

All of these are runaway emotions;
& they are deadly distractions.

(2) WANDERING THOUGHTS

A main cause
for our inattention are
the distracting thoughts
thrown by the enemy
like fiery darts
into our undisciplined minds.

**“Bring every thought captive to the
obedience of Christ”
(II Corinthians 10:5).**

Reject the enemy’s plot
by saying out loud,
“Satan, get away in the name of Jesus.”

*JERRY SWEEPING THE DEVIL
OUT OF OUR HOUSE W/A BROOM!*

Why don't you
get out your spiritual broom
and say,

“I claim the blood of Jesus over my mind.

“I will concentrate on HIS Name;
and I claim power over
all distractions!”

**“Whatsoever things are good,
lovely,
of a good report,
if there be any virtue,
if there be any praise,
think on these things”
(Philippians 4:8).**

B DISTRACTED BY THE PAST?

Sometimes Satan uses the sins
others have committed against us
to distract our hearts and minds.

Hurts others have inflicted on us.

Satan's strategy is to use
the wounding words
and actions of others,
or even the mistakes you made,
from your past
to distract you from God's plan for your life.

You cannot "redo" yesterday
anymore than you can
unscramble eggs.

**But what you can do is
stop being distracted
by the rear-view mirror!**

Looking back is unproductive.

Living in the past
only nullifies* your future!

(*to make of no value or consequence)

With everything that has happened to you,
you can either feel sorry for yourself,
or treat what has happened as a gift.

QUOTE: "Everything is either

an opportunity to grow
or an obstacle
to keep you from growing.
YOU get to choose. – Wayne Dyer

C DISTRACTED BY THE prosperity of the WICKED?

Psalm 73

The Psalmist was distracted and grieved
because of the prosperity of the wicked,
UNTIL he went to the house of the Lord.

D DISTRACTED BY FALSE TEACHERS

1 II Timothy 2:15-18

Hymenaeus and Philetus
got distracted
by false doctrines
about the resurrection.

They were overthrown by the enemy;
and
they took others down with them.

**In Acts 20:29-31a –
Paul, preaching at Ephesus,**

warned them,

**“False teachers are like vicious wolves,
they won’t spare anyone.**

**Some of you yourselves
will distort the truth
in order to draw a following –
i.e. split the church.
& finally he said,
“Watch out!”**

How do we keep this from happening to us?

II Timothy 2:15

“Study to show thyself approved unto God.”

The BOOK will give you
implicit instructions.

Mac McCafferty *was asked years ago
to attend a tent meeting
where the evangelist had oil
mysteriously appearing
in the palm of his hand.*

Mac said,

*“No. I’m just gonna keep going
to the Ocala COG*

*where I know the truth
is preached and that way
I won't get confused."*

E DISTRACTED BY WELL-MEANING FRIENDS

Job's friend, Eliphaz,
compared Job to an old lion who was about done.
It looked that way, too.

BUT then, we look at the fact
that Job was only 70 years old,
at the time of his trial,
and he lived to be 210;
AND HE GOT DOUBLE FOR HIS TROUBLE!

Don't let the enemy or so-called friends
distract you
with this kind of nonsense.

It's ain't over 'til God says it's over!

Isaiah 46:4

"Even to your old age I will carry you!"

ILLUSTRATION:

Randy and I were evangelizing in Virginia.
We had been married about a year
when I developed a blood clot in my left leg.

It tripled in size and turned black.
We headed for FL.
Went to my doctor in Leesburg.
He immediately hospitalized me.
The threat of amputation hung over our heads.
A preacher friend came in my room.
Talked for a few minutes and finally said,
“The reason this has happened to you
is because there is sin in your life.”
He inferred that, because of this, my ministry was over.

THAT WAS 55 YEARS AGO; &, AT 82, I’M STILL GOING!

If we are going to deal successfully
with distractions,
we need to –

II IDENTIFY THE DISTRACTOR

“Your adversary the devil

(I Peter 5:8).

*(Adversary: one that contends with,
opposes, or resists another;
causing adverse circumstances,
hostile or contrary action;
i.e. – an enemy)*

**& one of the greatest tools he has
is HIS LIES!**

According to John 8:44,
he was a liar from the beginning.

He is the father of lies –

they originate w/him!

HE BRINGS THOUGHTS LIKE:

- 1 You're stupid.
- 2 You're ugly.
You're old.
- 4 You don't deserve to be happy.
- 7 Whatever goes wrong,
it's always your fault.
- 9 Nobody cares whether you live or die.
- 10 You're a loser & you'll never change.
- 11 Life will never get better;
there's no use trying.
- 12 Nothing you do is important anyway.
- 13 God will never answer your prayers.

HEY!

Satan's trying to distract you!

All of this garbage

is a plot to get you derailed!

& he doesn't come to you

with his red face and horns;
he comes to you
disguised
in the good, the bad, and the ugly of life.

**His goal is
to damage and destroy you,
to keep you from maturing
into the person
that God intends you to become.**

Without a doubt,
Satan has a strategy
designed to accomplish
this destructive purpose:
it's called
**Distractions;
& he is the great distractor.**

Now some people think
Jesus and Satan
are about equal in power.

They think good and evil
are duking it out

in some cosmic boxing ring,
and the fate of the universe
depends on this match.

It's the 15th round,
and we're in the stands,
hoping against hope
that Jesus pulls off a victory –
but it doesn't look good.

Evil seems to be winning!

WHAT!!

Where does anybody come up with this stuff?

There's no doubt who will be the winner
in the struggle between good and evil,
because
Jesus' death and resurrection
has already dealt Satan
a fatal blow!

The devil is nothing but a toothless lion!

JUST READ THE BIBLE!

WE WIN!

Keep your eyes on the prize!

Don't look to the left or the right!

**Be vigilant/watchful
in your walk with God;
& remember,
your adversary is
not afraid of you;
but he's afraid of
GOD IN YOU!**

If he can distract you
with stinkin' thinkin'
the battle will turn in his favor!

**Why does the enemy
try so desperately to distract us?**

Because –

- 1 from our knees**
- 2 we shake hell;**
- 3 we open up the windows of heaven;**
- 4 we wage war against the enemy;**
- 5 we wrestle souls from sin's bondage;**
- 6 we pull down strongholds!**

**& it's all "BY MY SPIRIT,"
SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS!
(Zechariah 4:6)**

YOU ASK:

**How can I overcome distractions?
I'm so glad you asked!**

III OVERCOMING DISTRACTIONS

A STAY CLOSE TO GOD

Exodus 33:22

**"Then the Lord said,
'There is a place near me.'"**

Make it
the passion of your life
to find that place
and then live in it

B STOP LISTENING TO THE ENEMY!

Joshua 3:9

**"Come closer and listen
to the words of the Lord your God!"**

C STAY IN CHURCH

“Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is”
(Hebrews 10:25).

D GET UP IN THE MORNING –

- 1 start your day in
the POWER OF PRAYER
- 2 brush your teeth
with TRIUMPH
- 3 shower yourself
with the WATER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
- 4 wash yourself
with THE WORD
- 5 dry yourself
with the towel of MERCY
- 6 Splash on the perfume of JOY
- 7 Put on the garments of PRAISE
- 8 Ride to work
in the vehicle of FAITH,
fueled by the HOLY SPIRIT

9 work all day in LOVE
10 then go home in PEACE

E CLEANSE YOUR MIND –

not only from sin
but from distractions!

I Peter 1:13 KJ

“Gird up the loins of your mind”

Messenger:

**“Roll up your sleeves,
put your mind in gear**”

F In Romans 12:2,

the apostle reminds us that we are to

**“be transformed
by the renewing of your mind.”**

He says,

So here’s what I want you to do,

God helping you:

**Take your everyday,
ordinary life –**

**your sleeping,
eating,
going-to-work,**

and walking-around life –
and place it before God as an offering.

Don't become so well-adjusted
to your culture
that you fit into it
without even thinking.

It is
always dragging you down
to its level of immaturity,

God brings the best out of you &
develops well-formed maturity in you.

DON'T GET DISTRACTED!

Keep your attention
fixed on God &
you'll be changed from the inside out.

THE REWARD?

Isaiah 26:3

**“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose
mind is stayed on thee ...”**

FINALLY:

The Scripture emphatically states:

“Let this mind be in you

(Philippians 2:5)

& w/that thought in mind,

would you please repeat this after me?

I CHOOSE –

- 1 To live by choice, /being led by the Holy Spirit;
- 2 To make changes /in my life/ when necessary;
- 3 To be motivated by my love /and obedience to God’s Word;
- 4 To be useful /to my fellow man;
- 5 To excel /in all that God allows me to do.
- 6 I choose self-esteem /over pity.
- 7 I choose to listen /
to the inner voice of the Spirit,/
- not the random opinion
of others.

In any situation, Jehovah God

is always available to help you

overcome distractions

and keep your focus on the Risen Christ!

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OVERCOMING DANGEROUS DISTRACTIONS

November 1, 2020

I INTRODUCTION

II DEFINING DISTRACTIONS

“A distraction is anything that slows or makes one’s progress difficult; anything that holds one back; anything that delays, or impedes, or prevents action.”

Paul said: “The things I want to do, I don’t do; and the things I don’t want to do, these are the things I do” _____

A There are Internal Distractions

1 Runaway Emotions

2 Wandering Thoughts

B Distracted by the Past

“You cannot ‘redo’ yesterday any more than you can unscramble eggs.”

- Dr. Diane Mann

“Everything is either an opportunity to grow or an obstacle to keep you from growing. YOU get to choose.” - Wayne Dyer

C Distracted by the Prosperity of the Wicked (See Psalm 73)

D Distracted by False Teachers (See Acts 20:29-31a)

E Distracted by Well-Meaning Friends

III IDENTIFYING THE DISTRACTOR

“Your adversary the devil” _____

IV OVERCOMING DISTRACTIONS

A Stay close to God

B Stop listening to the enemy

C Stay in church

D Cleanse your mind

V IN CONCLUSION

The Scripture emphatically states: “Let this mind be in you which was also In Christ Jesus” _____; and, with that thought in mind,

Would you please repeat the following with me?

I CHOOSE to live by choice, not by chance;
to make changes, not excuses;
to be motivated, not manipulated;
to be useful, not used;
to excel, not to compete.

I CHOOSE self-esteem, not pity.

I CHOOSE to listen to the inner voice of the Spirit,
Not the random opinion of others.

IN JESUS NAME.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____