



SERIES: MY LIFE WITH GOD

The Danger of Distractions

Life Reference: Luke 10:38-42

Focus Verse:

“But Martha was distracted . . .” (Luke 10:40 NKJV).

The car was slightly ahead of me and one lane over. Or, rather, it was one lane over *part of the time*. The vehicle would drift over the line to the right and then back to the left. Right, left, and right again. The driver’s disregard for lane markings was unnerving to those of us nearby. Was the driver drunk, I wondered? It was still early in the day. Then I realized the more likely answer—he was distracted by his cell phone. It was endangering all of us.

A distraction is something that takes our attention away from what we’re supposed to be doing. We are not engaged in what is happening around us. It interferes with our concentration and focus. Distractions can be dangerous, like the 65-mile-per-hour weaving car that day. Some distractions are not as dangerous—like picking up a magazine to dust the end table and instead sitting down for thirty minutes to read that magazine. Admit it. We’ve all been distracted—many times.

Life Reflection:

What are some of the distractions you have noticed in your life?

Have any of your distractions placed you or others in danger?

Spiritual Distractions

If we are easily distracted in our everyday lives, isn't it also true we may be easily distracted in our walk with God? Look around some Sunday morning. Is anyone sneaking a quick look at email or sending a text message? Do we sing praises while on "automatic mode" as our mind wanders to a multitude of other things? Such distractions keep us from thinking deeply about the Word of God being preached. We are present in body but far away in thoughts and spirit. Distractions can be dangerous to our eternal souls.

Satan loves it when we are distracted. It makes his work easier. That's why we must always be on guard.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8 NKJV).

Life Reflection:

What are some of the distractions you have noticed in your spiritual life?

What are the causes of spiritual distractions?

Are there any worldly distractions that you need to repent of and lay aside?

We are not all distracted by the same things. Samson was distracted by a relationship with a Philistine woman (Judges 14:5). Demas was distracted by the culture around him (II Timothy 4:10). Martha was distracted by household tasks (Luke 10:40).

Life Response:

Not everything that distracts us is sinful. The same cell phone that keeps us from concentrating during the sermon or our prayer time also connects us with loved ones, helps in an emergency, and keeps our calendar. Hobbies can rob us of time if done to excess, but they can help us relax and unwind. Cooking and cleaning are necessary but must not crowd out time for relationships. Distractions will come, but if we are alert to them we can minimize their impact.

"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16 ESV).

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

Look at the list below to determine the distractions that most impact your spending quality time with God. How can you control these diversions?

- Media and entertainment
- Technology
- Relationships
- Recreation
- Work
- Hobbies
- Money and possessions
- Worry and fears
- Everyday routine
- Pleasing others

Ways to Overcome Distractions

We will all become distracted at times. We are only human. However, there are some things we can do to minimize distractions, especially those that interfere with our personal devotions. Here are some tips to help you lessen the distractions and enjoy your time with God.

- Minimize distractions by setting a time and place.
- Remove temptations. Leave your phone/electronics in another room.
- Ask God to help you focus.
- Write down any distractions (errands, worries, etc.) for later.
- Read and meditate on the Word first.
- Keep a prayer list or journal.
- Pray out loud.

My Prayer:

Lord, I come to you with all my busyness and the things that distract me when I'm with you. Let my focus be on You and You alone. Convict me of any sin that has taken my eyes from You. Help me to commit my problems, worries, and fears to You that I may bask in Your presence without distraction.

More Life with God References:

Proverbs 4:25-26
I Corinthians 7:35
Philippians 4:6-8
Joshua 1:8

This Bible study was adapted from an article originally published in Reflections Magazine.

