

Dealing With Distraction

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (Isaiah 26:3)

What does it mean to have one's mind stayed on something? Simply put, it is to be totally focused and free of distractions. Distraction is one of Satan's most powerful tools for derailing the faith of a believer. Satan understands that he cannot directly touch a child of God unless his or her focus is misdirected.

The Apostle Peter was one of two men who walked on water – the other being Jesus Himself. Now, it took some serious faith to get out of a perfectly good boat in the midst of a raging storm! We must understand that when God is calling us into his purpose, we must not only step out on faith but we must also maintain our focus.

*And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, **Come**. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. (Matthew 14: 28-30)*

Notice here that Peter was fine as long as he was focused on and pressing toward the mark of Jesus. It is only when his awareness of his circumstances waxed greater than his awareness of his purpose and assignment that he began to sink. Mind you, Jesus was there to save Peter – just as He is willing and able to save you – but the idea is to walk in faith and not be distracted by the world!

The devil will also use deception to cause distraction. He tried it on Jesus and will surely try it on you.

⁸ *Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; ⁹ And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. (Matthew 4:8-9)*

In this case, ALL the kingdoms of the world were ALREADY subject to Jesus. Satan truly had nothing to offer but, nonetheless, tried to deceive Jesus and distract Him from His divine assignment. Watch what Jesus said to him, though:

¹⁰ *Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (Matthew 4:10)*

The answer for EVERY distraction is the Word of God. Jesus' answer contained the solution – the true object of worship. When we give ourselves over to worship, God resets and re-focuses us. When we focus on Jesus and feast on His Word, when pressure comes – like how an orange yields orange juice – the Word will come out of us. Watch this – when the Word comes out of us, the SOURCE of distraction must depart AND take his baggage with him!

¹¹ *Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. (Matthew 4:11)*

We must also learn to discern between distractions and detours. A distraction derails your divine assignment. A detour simply re-routes you to either glean something from or impart something to a person, place, or situation. We see an example of this in Luke 8:

⁴¹ And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house: ⁴² For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.

Here Jesus was responding to the faith and worship of Jairus and was focused on reaching his daughter to heal her. But then an interesting thing happened, a woman who needed something from Jesus pressed her way to him:

⁴³ And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, ⁴⁴ Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchèd.

Notice it said “...*immediately her issue of blood stanchèd.*” This means she was healed INSTANTLY! But, Glory to God, Jesus had something else in store for her. He took a detour to speak something into her life. Now, she was HEALED – and this would be Good Gospel News if the story ended there, but notice how a Word from God can change everything:

⁴⁶ And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. (Luke 8:46)

Here, Jesus had to get the attention of both the woman AND the crowd. He KNEW exactly who touched Him and why. He said what He said because He was about to reveal something!

⁴⁷ And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. (Luke 8:47)

Here the woman had to plead her case. She was unclean according to the law (Leviticus 15:19, 25). Because of this, she could not be intimate with her husband, touch her children, or have any social contact. And here she was, ceremonially unclean touching a Rabbi! But Jesus had to make sure the crowd understood His authority and His grace!

⁴⁸ And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace. (Luke 8:48)

Now, the woman was already healed but Jesus made this detour to provide her healing and to declare her whole! That means everything she lost was restored in an instant! He also granted her peace; the peace that can only be granted by Jesus!

By this time, Jairus' daughter had died. Jairus could have given up when he heard the news, but he continued to his home with Jesus by his side. Jesus went on to raise Jairus' daughter from the dead. The detour not only did something for the woman with the issue of blood, but for the crowd in observance and for the folks who were mourning and lamenting the death of Jairus' daughter. In both cases Jesus

power was manifest fully to all who watched. This story also serves to illustrate how to deal with detours; once finished, continue on to the original destination!

The distractions of life will come and they are a tool of the devil to rob you of your destiny. Jesus comes that you may have life and have it more abundantly.

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