

## Overcoming Distractions!

**Matt.16:21-23**

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One of my favorite scenes in the movie Rush hour is when Inspector Lee meet detective Johnson. Johnson was practicing defusing a bomb as the clock was ticking and she needed to make a decision and had only 15 seconds. She then gets distracted by Carter and ended up cutting the wrong wire and boom ***“I have bad news Johnson, we’re all dead. “I was distracted sir” “Distractions are going to occur in the field, this is why we call this practice. If you can’t handle pressure, then quit.”***

*Distraction is going to happen in any field, in any area of your life.* While you are driving, at work, at school, gym, church, etc. In every stage of our lives, we will experience pressure to be distracted. Even people who made year’s resolutions will have to battle against them in order to succeed at what they would like to accomplish.

As followers of Jesus, we will always face distractions in ministries, in our own spiritual journeys. ***Our trying to grow in Christ will not be without disturbances or interruptions.*** They will always be things which would hinder our walk with the Lord; things that would pull us away from the straight and narrow road. Things that will distract us from being the kind of people God desires us to be.

**The good news is that you can be victorious over distraction.** Jesus had to battle against the same things we battle against; He too was tempted to be distracted from his goal; there were things which tried to hinder him from his mission. Let’s take a look at some instances in his life and see how he won the battle against distractions; Furthermore, let’s see what we can learn so that we too remain focused on our mission.

**Three events in his life:**

### **1) Before his earthly ministry (Matt.4)**

Right after Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River; he had not started to preach yet nor did he have any followers. ***This is right before he started his earthly ministry.*** We read that Satan came to Jesus to tempt him. **Matt.4 (the temptation to take a different road)**

*-Don’t be hungry, turn those stones into bread if you are the Son of God (v.3)*

*-Prove that you are God’s son by throwing yourself down (v.6)*

*-All the kingdoms of the world are yours if you worship me (.8-9)*

Jesus overcame these temptations by not submitting himself to the demands of the Devil. Satan was trying to keep Jesus from fulfilling his mission before he even started.

**2) During his ministry: (The Crowd)** After he fed more than 5000 people. Jesus made the disciples get in a boat quickly. Matthew doesn't tell us why the urgency of leaving the crowd behind. John tells us that Jesus knew that the crowd wanted to force him be the king they expected. The people wanted to make him king right away after they witnessed the miraculous power of Jesus. *(John 6:15)// Matt.14:22) Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself. (ESV)* Jesus left the crowd behind. He knew their intention. They wanted Jesus to fulfill for them the long-awaited dream; they wanted him to be the messiah they expected.

***There is nothing wrong with being famous; being liked by the crowd, applauded.*** There are people who live for that. ***Nevertheless, these things have the potential to drive you away from God.*** Sometimes something called "good" can take you away from God's intention and purpose in you. *Jesus removed himself from the crowd because at this time, they would not help him fulfill his mission; rather, they would completely hinder him from accomplishing it.*

**3)At the end of his ministry** (Jesus had spent about three years with his followers, the apostles. He finally told his friends what was going to happen in Jerusalem. **Matt.16:21-23**

*His suffering and death and resurrection.* This was bad news to these men, whose dream of the Messiah was never to die, but to reign. They felt saddened and their dreams and expectations shattered by when they heard Jesus say. This is why Peter rebuked Jesus saying: ***"This should never happen to you"***

It is here that Jesus told Peter. ***"Get behind me Satan, you are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*** *(v,23 ESV) (Right at this moment Peter stopped being a kingdom man)*

Jesus recognized Satan's offer even through the words of one of his trusted friends. Jesus would not give in to their demands, to their tears. He knew he had a mission to accomplish and would not let even his own family keep him from fulfilling it.

Three instances I can see where Jesus could have been distracted, but he overcame and didn't let himself be derailed from his course.

**How did he do it? *What can we learn from Jesus, so we can stay focus and not be distracted by anything from accomplishing God's purpose?***

**Prepare yourself for them (Know they can happen)** *Distraction are going to occur in the field.* Before Jesus was led by the Spirit to be tempted and tested by Satan he spent 40 days and nights fasting, communing with the Father. Preparing himself for the task ahead. During his ministry, he would leave the crowd behind and would go by himself to pray, to connect with the Father.

Jesus fasted and prayed. ***Prayer, fasting and the constant study of the Bible will keep you focused and train you to battle against temptations and distractions.***

There are Christians who are truly oblivious to the spiritual warfare within themselves and outside. They have forgotten that becoming a Christian means to enter a battlefield. They soon become casualties of war. They cannot overcome distractions because they have not prepared for them. Soldiers are trained before they go to war, so they would learn to fight, win and come back home.

***Preparing yourself means being aware that distractions exist:*** anything could become a distraction if you let it. *Even something good can lead you away from God. A good job, good phone, computer, well deserved vacation, etc.*

**How are you preparing yourself to overcome distractions in your life?**

**Know your mission:** Jesus knew exactly what he came to do. He said my food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. ***John 4:34***

*When you truly know your mission, you can recognize any attempt to pull you away from it.* Jesus recognized Satan's strategy through the voice of Peter. This is why he had to say: "**get behind me Satan**" to his best friend.

To accomplish God's mission was Jesus' priority and he didn't let anything distract him from it.

**Is God's mission on earth your priority? Is his kingdom a priority to you?**

Jesus made his priority to accomplish the mission he was given. He came to do the will of the Father; to die for the salvation of human race. It wasn't to put on a show for Satan or to march in a parade as the crowd would hail him king; It wasn't even to fulfill the expectations of his close friends. **His mission was the cross.**

*Like Jesus, you and I have been given a mission to fulfill on this earth and we will battle against things that could hinder us from accomplishing it.* **What is distracting you from being a kingdom person?**

To experience victory over distractions of this world remember to prepare yourself by always connecting with God through prayer and fasting; being aware that anything has the potential to pull us away from God. Remember to know and prioritize God's mission so you don't allow anything to keep you from it.