4 Challenges to Spiritual Focus

Jesse LaRue · 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

INTRODUCTION

- Come, my Lord, and do not tarry. Do we mean that? Are we ready for the Lord to return?
- When our spiritual lives get out of focus, it can result in severe consequences that affect our relationship with God.
- Let's be frank this evening and admit that it is difficult to keep our focus on the spiritual.

1 Sin Often Blinds Us

1 John 2:11; Matthew 7:3–5; Galatians 5:16–17

- Satan wants us to focus on things other than God's word. He wants us to focus on things other than our goal of heaven.
- But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.
- First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will clearly see to take the speck out of your brother's eye.
- Satan uses sin to keep us in sin. The more we are mired in it, the harder it is to get out.
- We cannot walk by the spirit and by the flesh. We cannot be spiritual and carnal. It must be one or the other.

2 Clouded by the Cares of the World

Matthew 13:22–23; 2 Corinthians 4:16–18; Philippians 3:12–14

- Just trying to make it in this world can consume our time and our effort and our energies to the point that we fail to see beyond the world's smog.
- But the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.
- If we're honest with ourselves, we're the thorny soil. We're letting the cares of this world choke us out and cause us to be unfruitful.
- As we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient.
- Our goal has to be heaven. But then we ought to be motivated to get to heaven.
- I press on towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

3 Emotional Distractions: Worry and Fear

Matthew 6:25–34; Luke 12:32

- Worry is a distraction. Worry stops our energy. It weakens our resolve. It dims our focus.

- Fear is useless. It keeps us from focusing. Fear makes the thing that we fear bigger than it really is.
- Do not fear, little flock. For it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
- How can we fear in this world when we have the God of heaven as our loving Father?

4 Distracted by Discouragement

- Discouragement has probably got to be the devil's favorite tool.
- We've got to quit looking on the physical, on the outward things, and focus on the inward things, on the unseen.
- It gets us thinking about ourselves instead of about God. And instead of about others. Discouragement often leads to selfishness.

THE CHALLENGE

Let us focus, brethren, this week, on God, on his word, on others that we can serve, and ultimately on the goal.

MY NOTES