

Stolen Victory

(Distraction)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Reasons for Distraction

1. Causes loss of focus.

- a. Distractions are intended to take our eyes off of God.
 - i. Whose we are.
 - ii. How we function.
- b. Distractions are intended to take our eyes off our purpose.
 - i. Why we are here.
 - ii. Why we are doing what we are doing.
- c. Distractions are intended to take our eyes off our destination.
 - i. Where we are going.
 - ii. Where the lost are going.

2. Causes loss of freedom.

- a. Distractions are intended to bind our movement.
 - i. When you get your eyes off of the Light, you begin to stumble over things in the dark.
 - ii. God sees the things that we do not. Freedom therefore depends on letting Him go before us and direct our steps.
 - † Who is more free, the independent man who has left the trail and is now lost in the wilderness?
 - † Or the man who is trusting in a reliable guide to lead him where he wants to go?
- b. Distractions are intended to bind our spirit.

B. PASSAGE:

1. Luke 10:38-42, “And as they went, it happened that He entered into a certain village. And a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. (40) But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she came to Him and said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me. (41) And Jesus answered and said to her, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things. (42) But one thing is needful, and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

II. METHODS OF DISTRACTION

A. Busyness (Vs. 40 “...but Martha was distracted with much serving...”)

1. One of the enemy’s greatest tactics is to deceive us into spending our time on the wrong things:

- a. What is good vs. what is God
- b. What is desired vs. what is needed
- c. What is pleasing people vs. what is pleasing God
- d. What is religious vs. what is worship

2. There is always enough time to do God’s will.

- a. God has given us 24 hours a day in which to do His will. If we don't have enough time to accomplish what needs to be done, we are spending time on things that are not God's will.
 - b. Is Sunday a day of rest or a day of rush?
3. DL Moody's change:
- a. It was in 1873, in Dublin that D.L. Moody heard British evangelist Henry Varley utter those life changing words: "The world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him."

† It was after an all-night prayer meeting in Dublin, at the home of Henry Bewley.

† "As I crossed the wide Atlantic," Moody said, "the boards of the deck...were engraved with them, and when I reached Chicago, the very paving stones seemed marked with them."

† The result: Moody decided he was involved in too many ministries to be effective and therefore began to concentrate on evangelism.

B. Other's Expectations: (*Vs. 40 "...And she came to Him and said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."*)

1. What produced this statement?

- a. Expectations of culture.
 - i. What she was doing was the culturally accepted thing to do.
- b. Expectations of the other disciples
 - i. I'm sure there were disciples there who agreed with Martha.
- c. Perceived expectations of the Lord.
 - i. She was making preparations for the Lord.
 - ii. No where does Jesus ever indicate that this concerned Him.
 - iii. What concerned Jesus was Martha's lack of joy and peace.

2. What do we face?

- a. Expectations of culture.
 - i. It is culturally acceptable to work 80-90 hours per week.
- b. Expectations of family.
 - i. The best gift you can give your family is your intimacy with God.
- c. Expectations of the church.
 - i. I have known many people who have run themselves ragged because they were trying to keep up with the expectations of their church.
 - ii. I have known former pastors who might still be in the ministry if they had simply focused on what God desired of them and their families instead of what the church expected of them.
- d. Expectations of other Christians.
 - i. I know many people who are bound in how they dress, where they eat, how they worship, what they listen to. These are not their convictions; they are the convictions of other believers around them.

3. What matters?

- a. Ultimately there is only one person whose expectations matter to me – Jesus Christ.
 - i. If I seek Him – everything else will take care of itself.

C. Criticalness (*Vs. 40 "...And she came to Him and said, Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."*)

1. Begins with loss of focus on God.

a. Martha was not focusing on Jesus, she was focusing on Mary's behavior that she believed was wrong.

b. Someone who is living in the love of God does not being to find fault and criticize.

i. ***1 John 4:16***, "And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him."

• Love is what characterizes those who are right with God.

ii. ***1 Corinthians, 13:5*** "[Love]...does not act improperly; is not selfish; is not provoked; does not keep a record of wrongs; (6) finds no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices in the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

c. If Martha had spent more time at the feet of Jesus, she would not have been concerned with what Mary was or was not doing.

2. Is fed by focus centered on self.

a. Martha's concern had nothing to do with Jesus or Mary, but rather it had to do with her own perceived injustice.

i. She felt she was being wronged.

ii. She had all this work to do.

iii. She had no help from anyone.

iv. Waah, waah, waah!

b. She was frustrated because of other's expectations.

c. She was jealous of Mary's liberty.

3. Is manifested by finding fault.

a. fault finding is another way of saying, "I didn't get my way."

D. Messed up priorities: ("(38) *And as they went, it happened that He entered into a certain village. And a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.*")

1. She forgot who was there.

a. The God of the universe was in her house.

b. play this scenario out:

i. Imagine what would have happened if Martha had forgotten the food.

ii. At some point, someone would have noticed it was time to eat and there was no food.

iii. This would have put them in the same place they were in chapter 9 on the hillside with the 5000.

c. This was the same Jesus who had just fed the 5000.

i. What feast did she cheat her and her guests out of?

2. She forgot why He was there.

a. The God of the universe wanted to spend time with her.

b. His desire was for her to sit at His feet

i. to learn

ii. to worship

iii. to be transformed.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Jim Baker's wake up call:

1. After losing his ministry because of his mishandling of PTL's finances He was sent to prison.

- † One day, Jim's son, Jamie, spent the whole day with him at the prison.
- † Afterwards, Jamie hugged Jim and announced, "All I ever wanted was to have you all to myself for one whole day.
- † Today was like a dream come true for me!"
- † Jim was cut to the heart and realized the extent to which he had lost sight of what matters most.

B. APPLICATION

1. Take a minute and let God search your heart.
2. Ask Him to bring to your mind those things which have distracted you from Him.
3. Repent of them.
4. Give them to Him.
5. Ask Him to reveal and remove daily anything that would cause your love for Him to grow cold.

C. Sing: *Lord I Give You My Heart*