

## **Topic: Eliminate Distractions**

**Summary:** We live day in and day out with things that come to interfere with what we initially planned to do, causing our initial plans or thoughts to be set aside, ignored or discarded. We have to be very careful what we allow to come in our life or minds to distract us from the love and purposes of God. Most of the time, distractions come to take our minds off the promises of God and the only and Living God, who comes to give us life and life more abundantly. Distractions are thieves—as John 10:10 states the thief comes to rob still and destroy.

**If the enemy can keep us distracted, pre-occupied or deceived believing that we can change situations, people or things, then, the Devil has us where he wants us ...he has caused us to take our eyes off**

**God and now the attention is on whatever has attracted us away from God's nature..**

**What attracts you can also distract you**

**.....**

**Definition of Distraction; American Heritage dictionary defines distraction as the following: to cause to turn away from the original focus of attention or interest to pull in conflicting emotional direction.**

**Damon Young, a religious philosopher defined distraction is an inability to identify, attend to or attain what is valuable.**

**Distractions are thoughts that carry out attention away .**

**Let's take a look at some things that distract us.**

**Relationships---**particularly with the opposite sex---wanting a male or female in your life ( God says not to be unequally yoke ...better make sure that person can pray you through the tough times. Either you serve mammon or God

**Children-** children on drugs, in jail, involved with gangs, or having children one after another

**Losses:** job ( don't define yourself by your job), spouse, family member( your children are own loan to you

**Technology:** internet, iphones, texting, facebook- pornography and increasing social awkwardness in our children ( children do not know how to socialize)

**Ministry, job-** spending more time with these than with family and God. Promotion and success comes from God.

**Health Issues-** stop having a pity party and speak the Word over your life. I will live and not die but declare the works of the Lord.

**Food**—when is the last time you fasted

**Other Christians**—hurt people hurt people---jealousy and selfishness are two main culprits

**Material Things-** the lack of may lead to jealousy, envy, bitterness

## **B. Results of Distractions**

**Ineffectiveness-** dulls your ability to discern and hear God's still voice

**Loss of focus**—drunken person driving a car

**Unproductive**

**Agitated and discouragement sets in**

**Feeling Inadequate---**because you have not to show at the end of the day that you accomplished

**Your destiny** is held hostage

**Your dreams can be delayed or even aborted**

**C. Background about Nehemiah ( an Israelite) who serves as the Persian king's royal cup bearer, The name Nehemiah means " Comforted by God." He lacked nothing and was serving in an honored position but had not lost sight that his people were in distress and needed help.**

**Nehemiah wept and mourned for days, and he continued fasting and praying for the God of heaven.**

Chapter 1

**<sup>4</sup> When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. NLT**

**Step #1 ---Nehemiah prayed to have confidence to approach the king Neh 1:1-4. We see hear that communion with God will best prepare us for our dealings with men. The bible sayst the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avail much. How often do we forget step 1 because we are distracted by what we see and not holy leaning on Jesus Christ the Solid Rock. When we have intrusted our concerns to God, the mind is set at liberty; we feel satisfaction and composure, and difficulties vanish. We know that if God is for us ---then no one can be against us.**

**Nehemiah's sadness is noticed by the king and he inquires what was wrong.**

**Chapter 2**

**<sup>1</sup> Early the following spring, in the month of Nisan,<sup>[c]</sup> during the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes' reign, I was serving the king his wine. I had never before appeared sad in his presence. <sup>2</sup> So the king asked me, "Why are you looking so sad? You don't look sick to me. You must be deeply troubled." <sup>4</sup> The king asked, "Well, how can I help you?"**

**With a prayer to the God of heaven, <sup>5</sup> I replied, "If it please the king, and if you are pleased with me, your servant, send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried."**

**In chapter 3 the work was divided among the people. The work was divided, so that every one might know what he had to do,**

**and do it, with a desire to excel; yet without contention, or separate interests. No strife appears among them. Every Israelite lent a hand toward the building up of Jerusalem. Even some females helped forward the work.**

**In today's churches, we have problems getting everyone to follow through on commitments to church activities**

## **Nehemiah 6**

### **New Living Translation (NLT)**

#### **Continued Opposition to Rebuilding**

**Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies found out that I had finished rebuilding the wall and that no gaps remained—though we had not yet set up the doors in the gates.<sup>2</sup> So Sanballat and Geshem sent a message**

**asking me to meet them at one of the villages<sup>[a]</sup> in the plain of Ono.**

**But I realized they were plotting to harm me,<sup>3</sup> so I replied by sending this message to them: “I am engaged in a great work, so I can’t come. Why should I stop working to come and meet with you?”**

**<sup>4</sup> Four times they sent the same message, and each time I gave the same reply. <sup>5</sup> The fifth time, Sanballat’s servant came with an open letter in his hand,<sup>6</sup> and this is what it said:**

**“There is a rumor among the surrounding nations, and Geshem<sup>[b]</sup> tells me it is true, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel and that is why you are building the wall. According to his reports, you plan to be their king.<sup>7</sup> He also reports that you have appointed prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, ‘Look! There is a king in Judah!’**

**“You can be very sure that this report will get back to the king, so I suggest that you come and talk it over with me.”**

**<sup>8</sup> I replied, “There is no truth in any part of your story. You are making up the whole thing.”**

**<sup>9</sup> They were just trying to intimidate us, imagining that they could discourage us and stop the work. So I continued the work with even greater determination. <sup>[c]</sup>**

**<sup>10</sup> Later I went to visit Shemaiah son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel, who was confined to his home. He said, “Let us meet together inside the Temple of God and bolt the doors shut. Your enemies are coming to kill you tonight.”**

**<sup>11</sup> But I replied, “Should someone in my position run from danger? Should someone in my position enter the Temple to save his life? No, I won’t do it!” <sup>12</sup> I realized that God had not spoken to him,**

**but that he had uttered this prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. <sup>13</sup> They were hoping to intimidate me and make me sin. Then they would be able to accuse and discredit me.**

**<sup>14</sup> Remember, O my God, all the evil things that Tobiah and Sanballat have done. And remember Noadiah the prophet and all the prophets like her who have tried to intimidate me.**

### **The Builders Complete the Wall**

**<sup>15</sup> So on October 2<sup>[d]</sup> the wall was finished—just fifty-two days after we had begun. <sup>16</sup> When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God.**

**<sup>17</sup> During those fifty-two days, many letters went back and forth between Tobiah and the nobles of Judah. <sup>18</sup> For many in Judah had sworn allegiance to him because his father-in-law was Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan was married to the daughter of Meshullam son of Berekiah. <sup>19</sup> They kept telling me about Tobiah's good deeds, and then they told him everything I said. And Tobiah kept sending threatening letters to intimidate me.**

**Sanballat(Moabite) name means “may sin give him the life of the goddess (referring to the Moon God)**

**Tobiah(Ammonite) married to a Hebrew woman - He used his relationship to create dissension among the Jews and Nehemiah. To the point that the Jews did not support Nehemiah in rebuilding the wall. Tobiah and Sanballan wanted to see Nehemiah fail in**

**rebuilding the temple. They hired a false prophetess, Noadiah to tempt Nehemiah into sin and to compromise his reputation.**

**What did we just read?**

- 1. God used a man named Nehemiah to correct or resolve a 100 year old problem in 52 days ( less than 2 months) .**
- 2. Nehemiah prayed for 4 months but the work itself took less than 2 month .  
VS 9 But now, O God strengthen thou my hand. This was an impromptu prayer indicating Nehemiah reliance upon God in order to accomplish his objectives.**
- 3. Nehemiah was able to complete the wall in 52 days because he had people around with the same kind of heart.**

- 4.They slandered Nehemiah – but he didn’t defend himself. He spoke the truth and trusted Gods**
- 5.He was offered a way out----go into the temple. However, only priest were allowed in the temple. But Nehemiah realized that this would break the Mosiac injunction against entering the temple. Nehemiah remained focused.**
- 6.Nehemiah was equipped with discernment. Discernment is the ability to judge matters according to Go’s view of the them and not according to their outward appearance. I Sam 16.7 states “ For the Lord does not see as man see, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.**
- 7.Nehemiah was persistent in his discernment. The request cam 4x’s and each time Nehemiah stood fast and did not fall for it. Discernment gave Nehemiah focus. He knew what**

**God want him to be doing and he did it.**

**8.Nehemiah's enemies were dishearten because the wall was finished and because the finger prints of God was on it.**

### **C. How do you develop Discernment**

- **Get to Know His Word**
- **Discernment can be given as a gift from the Holy Spirit. I Cor 12:10 (discerning of Spirit. ( Seek Him for it)**
- **Prayer - spending time communing with the father.**

Saint's Satan's chief strategy to defeat us is distraction and discouragement. We gotta stay on the wall. We got too much work to do . We have to work while it is day. We

gotta hold on....the enemy desires to conquer and destroy. But greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. We have to keep on pressing on.

#### D. The effects of Distraction

1. a person who is results oriented and likes to check things off a list may feel unfilled because he or she did not complete the tasks intended.

2. someone who has a learning disability may feel confused or hopeless if given a task that they can not accomplished because of the effects of their disability

3. recklessness- such as when you are driving a care

4. To summarize, distractions are things that come to take priority over the things that should be first priority in our life.