



Distractions

Jim Mickells

While sitting in my office this morning trying to get some work done, there is a constant noise of nail guns and roofers putting shingles on our house. A few weeks ago, the wind blew off a shingle and it became apparent the roof needed replacing. It is extremely hard to focus on the task at hand with all these sounds just above my head. Yet you put forth the effort, concentrate and work can be accomplished. This reminds me of the life we are to live as Christians, a lot of distractions to hinder our efforts to serve the Lord, yet if we remain dedicated and focused, certainly we can succeed.

One of the great distractions all face as disciples of Christ is the “noise” of the world. It certainly has its attraction. Paul tells us “And do not be conformed to this world” (Rom.12:2); John says we must “not love the world or the things in the world” (1 Jn. 2:15-17); James reveals “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God” (James 4:4) and that we are to remain “unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). In the Parable of the Seed or the Sower which Jesus revealed, some seed fell among the thorns. Notice why this seed did not produce. “Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful” (Matt. 13:22). It does not have to be sinful things like adultery, fornication, stealing, drunkenness, lying, etc. Many times it is things

which are lawful but which one may place ahead of his service to the Lord.

Another is pleasure. The “noise” which it puts off can hinder one from faithfully serving their God. It is the time of the year for vacation. I think everyone looks forward to a little time away, to rest, relax, to sight see, or to participate in one of their favorite activities. Yet is it a time for one to forsake the assembling of themselves together with other Christians? Does one locate a body of God’s people so they can worship their Creator and attend all the church services? While away from home, does one fail to pray and to read their Bible? What kind of activities does one participate in? Is it something which will cause one to dress immodestly? Will it cause one to lust because of how others are dressed? There is never a time for a Christian to moderately drink, yet it seems some think so when away from home and while traveling. In Luke’s account of the Parable of the Seed, notice what Jesus said about pleasure. “Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity” (Lk. 8:14). The word “Pleasure” is defined as “Pleasure, gratification, enjoyment. In the NT, used only of physical pleasure” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament). The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament says it is “sensual pleasure.” Yet any pleasure when put ahead of God becomes sinful.

What about family, friends, or loved ones? This is a “noise” which can distract as well. Those of us who are married have responsibilities toward our spouse (Eph. 5:22-33). All are to honor their mother and father (Mat. 15:4-6; Eph. 6:1-3). Parents are to love their children, teaching and instructing them about the Lord (Eph. 6:4; Tit. 2:4). We are taught to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mat. 22:39; Rom. 13:9). Jesus even said we are to love our enemies (Mat. 5:43-45). Yet who must come first? “He who loves father



or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me” (Mat. 10:37-38). One must love the Lord supremely. Make whatever sacrifice which is necessary to be a faithful servant of Christ. He is not asking you to stop loving your spouse, mom and dad, children, best friend, etc. Yet what He does expect is obedience to His will even if others try to lead you astray or you are tempted to put them first (Jn. 14:15).

The roof is finished, the noises are gone, and now I can finish the work I started without any distractions. Yet I am still faced with those sounds coming from the world, trying to draw my attention away from faithful service to my God. It is my hope and prayer we will all consider the cost and be willing to pay the price, keep our priorities in order, and always be focused on heaven (Lk. 9:58-62). Do not let the “noises” hinder you.

A Time of Renewal

We are in full swing of the spring season! The trees, plants and flowers are green and colorful. Nature has renewed itself once again. This season can bring to one’s mind ideas of personal renewal, a time to start fresh and new. As believers we have the great blessing of renewal in times of spiritual difficulty or weakness. When we first come to Christ the scriptures say that we put off the old man (person) and are renewed in the spirit of our mind (Ephesians 4: 22-24) but it doesn’t stop there. We’ll still struggle with worldly desires and thoughts but have the continued opportunity to avoid conforming to this world but rather being transformed by the renewing of our mind (Romans 12:2). Living the life of a Christian can be overwhelming at times, especially when combined with the physical and mental stresses of everyday life. But our confidence can be found in the following verse.



GLAD TIDINGS

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day” (2 Corinthians 4:16). Just as the tree puts out new leaves, the birds build new nest and the grass grows green again, we have the great blessing of spiritual renewal!

By Jay Launius

Notice this comment on Romans 12:13

“Be careful to entertain strangers, for some in so doing have unawares entertained angels. (Heb. 13:2.) Paul, giving the qualifications that entitled a widow to be taken into the number to be supported by the church, says: "If she hath used hospitality to strangers." (1 Tim. 5:10.) To entertain the lowliest disciple of Jesus is to entertain Jesus. (Matt. 25:40.) [The Christians of the apostolic day considered one principal part of their duty to consist in showing hospitality to strangers. They were, in fact, so ready in discharging this duty that the very heathen admired them for it.]” (Gospel Advocate Commentary, Romans).

Order of Worship June 13, 2021

Song Leader—AM	Steve Frazier
Song Leader—PM	Matthew Frazier
Lord's Table	Derek Steen
Sermon—AM	Devin Barber
Sermon—PM	Devin Barber

Continue prayers for Steve Rhoden recovering from injuries from fall and those on our list, and for the free course of the gospel. *1 John 5:14*
Editor: Steve Frazier

Marietta church of Christ

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Meeting times of the church

Sunday 09:00 am Bible Classes 10:00 am Worship 05:00 pm Evening Worship

Wednesday 7:00 pm Bible classes

Evangelist: Devin Barber

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Hebrews 10:24-25