

What Are We Looking At? (Turning On Focus Mode pt. 2)

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Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream
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{All scriptures are NIV84 unless stated}

Happy New Year!

Today's Title:

What Are We Looking At? (Turning On Focus Mode pt. 2)

Last week we talked about turning on Focus mode.

Focus mode being the thing that makes us stay pointed to the goal for this year.

We mentioned last week how God had been faithful to us.

How God brought us through some of the hardest times we've seen before as a people.

How even if we lost all hope, God was faithful to us.

Remember the "footprints" story?

The time when there was only one set of footprints...

That's when he carried us.

And because he carried us through some of our darkest times...

We know he can carry us through other times also.

And since we know God can carry us...

We Need To Re-Focus In 2022

We discussed how when you set a goal...

Distractions show up.

When you decide to save money.

- everything goes on sale.
- things begin to break.
- your children need school supplies

- your car needs new tires
- your refrigerator breaks down
- your heating system stops working.

All of these things seem to pop up WHEN you decide to do something.

Some things may be important...some not.

But what about the goal?

You will never get a goal accomplished if you continue to focus on the distractions.

Don't Let Distractions Become More Important Than The Goal!

The same thing happens when you try to accomplish something God has for you.

We spent last YEAR talking about how God has a purpose for us.

God has a plan for us.

We aren't just living here.

Our life has meaning.

It was designed for us before we got here.

Many of us tried to figure out what that meant.

We set a goal to find God's will for us.

Trying to REBUILD from the pandemic...

trying to live.

Other things became the priority.

Now that we're in 2022.

Let's refocus!

When we refocus...

We Have To Learn To Separate The Goal From The Distractions!

There are many things that can distract us from our goals...

But we need to FOCUS on our goals.

Matthew 4:1

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted.

Who:	Jesus
What:	Was Led
By Who:	The Spirit
Why:	To Be Tempted
By Who:	By the Devil

The goal was to be tempted by the devil.

AMP - “tempted, tested and tried.”

But not JUST to be tempted/tested.

The Goal Was To Pass The Test

Matthew 4:2-3

2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

Jesus went into the desert to be tested AND pass.

He fasted for 40 days and nights...he was there more than a month.

No food...

He was hungry.

You go 40 days without eating...

You’re supposed to be hungry.

The tempter showed him stones.

“If you are the Son of God, turn these stones to bread.”

Look at this!

“You need to eat!”

“Let me show you the answer you need!”

What Was Wrong With Turning The Stones To Bread?

If Jesus was hungry, what's wrong with eating?

He's looking at stones.

Stones that can become bread.

Why not?

He's turned water to wine.

He's multiplied fish and bread.

He could do this!

But it went against to goal.

The GOAL is to pass the test!

Jesus is LOOKING at a distraction.

He needs to eat, but the GOAL is to pass the test!

So he rejects the distraction.

Matthew 4:4

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Jesus was keeping his focus on what the goal was.

Matthew 4:5-6

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: " 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

This time the devil took him to the Temple in the Holy City.

He was at the top of the Holiest Place in the Holy City.

The devil attempts to use reason to distract Jesus.

You say you are holy.

You are in a holy place.

You can see so much from here.

Throw yourself off.

The bible says the word will protect you.

These people don't believe you for real.

Prove who you are!

Jump off and fly around so everyone will know you're the son of God!

Many people didn't believe Jesus was the Son of God.

Even today people don't believe that.

Maybe if he flew around like Superman...maybe people would.

Yet the GOAL is to pass the test.

Matthew 4:7-11

7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." 10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" 11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

The devil took him to the highest place...

He showed him everything.

In all cases, the devil gave him more and more things to see.

From standing on the ground - stones.

From the high point on the Temple - the surrounding area.

From the very high mountain - all the things one could see.

Yet the goal was to pass the test.

The devil was trying to get Jesus to fail through his eyes.

If You Want To Avoid Distractions, Be Careful Of What You Are Looking At!

We have to be mindful of where we look.

From last week:

Proverbs 4:25

25 Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you.

Keep your eyes on where you're going.

Fix our gaze...

Focus your attention...

LOOK straight ahead.

It's something about our eyes.

Many people talk about the dangers of Social Media.

Many apps now will scroll video after video.

picture after picture.

As long as you're willing to look at it...

It will continue to show you something.

It will continue to distract you, until YOU decide to look at something else.

Social Media becomes dangerous because not everyone is good at "turning off" the distraction.

We could spend hours LOOKING at distractions.

This is why our phones now have "focus mode."

This is why our phones can tell us the amount of hours we spend on our screens.

What are we looking at?

What You Focus On Can Either Help Or Distract You From The Goal!

Genesis 2:8-9

8 Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord made all kinds of trees.

Trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.

- Things you SEE.
- Pleasing to eye comes from seeing.

Look at what good things God is doing!

Genesis 2:16

16 And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

What Did God Say?

You are FREE to eat from any tree...

- any of these good looking trees.

But don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- you will die.

Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden’?” 2 The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”

What Did God Say?

You are FREE to eat from any tree...

But don't eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The serpent was testing her.

Verse 4

4 “You will not surely die,” the serpent said to the woman. 5 “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

When Did They Break The Rule?

When the woman SAW:

the fruit was good for food.

it was pleasing to the eye.

But they KNEW they would die when they ate it.

They KNEW they would be disrupting God's plan for them.

But their EYES caused them to lose focus on what God wanted.

It was a distraction!

Eating wasn't bad.

- having wisdom wasn't bad.

But they were a distraction from what God wanted.

Distractions Cause Us To Lose Focus From God's Plan For Us!

If we are after God's goals for us.

Our focus has to be on him.

We can be distracted by what we look at.

Matthew 14:28-31

28 "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." 29 "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

Peter was given an opportunity from Jesus

Walk on water towards him.

Peter was focused on that goal.

Verse 30

30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

When he SAW the wind...

When he allows his FOCUS to be taken.

He was distracted and feared for his safety.

Verse 31

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

Jesus caught him.

Jesus asked him why did he doubt?

Peter allowed what he SAW to distract him from what Jesus told him.

Don't Allow What You See To Distract You From God's Plan!

There are many other examples we'll talk about with this.

But if we want to go after God's plan for 2022.

We have to focus more for 2022.

We have to Turn On Focus Mode.

Since our eyes can distract us,

we have to ask the question:

What Are We Looking At?

Affirmation:

"Today I Will Spend More Time Focused On The Things To Help Me Accomplish My Goals!"

If You Want More In 2022, You Have To Do More Than You Did In 2021!