

# ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

## **135. The Truth About Distractions and Our Purpose**

You are listening to episode 135 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast titled, "The Truth About Distractions and Our Purpose." Welcome to the podcast and thanks for joining me here today. Last month God reminded me of a truth I already knew, but I realize now I needed reminded of. I love it when He does this! But I got to thinking, maybe, just maybe, you could use this reminder, too? It's a truth about distractions and our purpose, and we're discussing this in today's episode. I encourage you to stick around with me for these next few minutes to find hope and encouragement for your real life today. Let's get to it!

I know this truth, and I even wrote about it in my book, *Right Now Matters*, but in my everyday real life, and living in today's culture, I believe it got a bit buried. But after God's reminder in my own study as I led two groups of women through the *Right Now Matters Bible Study*, I unburied it, dusted it off, and began carrying it with me once again. Somewhere along the way I let it slip out of my focus, and sadly, that's what happens when we get distracted.

### **Distractions entice us to let go of what's important for far lesser things.**

Kind of like when we're on a mission to eat healthy, but someone brings over a homemade chocolate cake with homemade fudge frosting. That distraction can entice us to let go of our intention to eat healthy.

Or when we're taking steps toward a goal, but some distraction invades our path and causes us to turn a different direction. We let go of staying on track to achieve the goal.

Or like when we're intentional about spending time with those we love, but the distraction of the unfinished job at work lures us to work late. We justify it saying that "my family will understand," or "I'll spend time with them this weekend."

Go ahead and insert your own situation or circumstance here.

It's easy to let go of what's important when we're distracted. And consequently, it's easy to lose sight of our purpose when we're distracted.

How do I know? Well, because I've lived this out in my life, and maybe you have too. You just didn't realize it as such. Or maybe you have realized it, and now God is reminding you, kind of like He recently reminded me.

### **But first, let me ask you a question: What is your purpose?**

Do you have one? Do you know it?

As I was preparing for this episode, I had to stop and think about mine. I not only asked, "What's my purpose?," but I also asked, "What's God's purpose for me?" which may be the more important question to ask.

Only when we know our purpose can we stay focused on it. It's tough to stay focused on something we don't know or understand, don't you agree?

Bible scholars and theologians teach their varying beliefs about God's purpose for our lives, and this, sadly, can add to our confusion when we're seeking or searching out our purpose. But God's Word is clear about three points that have to do with His purpose for us.

1. God desires us to have a relationship with Him (1 Timothy 2:3-4).
2. God desires us to grow in faith to be more like Jesus (Romans 8:28-29).
3. God desires us to help others know Him (Matthew 28:19-20).

If we focused on living out every day these three points, we would surely be in the center of God's will! It sounds so simple, doesn't it? But is that it? Is that all? Well yes and no. When these become our focus, our lives will have fulfillment and meaning, and we'll experience God's presence in our lives in amazing ways. I may just write these on my bathroom mirror so I can read them every morning to remind me.

**But as I just mentioned, when we're distracted, we can lose sight of our purpose.**

And we can lose sight of these three points of God's purpose for us.

We don't spend time with God when we're distracted.

We don't work at growing in our faith in Jesus when we're distracted.

And we certainly don't point others to Jesus when we're distracted.

This is exactly where our spiritual enemy wants us, especially when it comes to matters of faith. He wants us ineffective, inefficient, and unproductive. So he will do everything he can to keep us distracted. This motivates me to do all I can to stay present and live undistracted in God's will and ways!

Now, I'm not saying that every distraction we encounter on any given day is from this spiritual enemy. But I do believe he knows what will distract us the most and uses these against us. He's ruthless in his pursuit of our attention. He'll use anything to keep us from focusing on God and God's purpose for our lives.

**Yet, God continues to prompt us to keep our eyes fixed on Him.**

Because He knows that's what's best for us.

"You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you" (Isaiah 26:3 NIV)!

"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2 ESV).

"And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8 NLT).

God is the solution to living an undistracted life. He is all we need. And without Him we don't stand a chance against the never-ending, relentless, all-consuming distractions of life.

**The truth about distractions and our purpose is that distractions keep us from following God's purpose for our lives.**

But we have a say in the matter. We can choose if we will live a distracted life or an undistracted one. It all begins with our awareness and focus.

Here are three simple ways to stay present (with God's help) and live undistracted today:

1. Pay attention to what you are doing.  
Stay engaged in your daily routine. No matter if that's making breakfast, driving to your doctor's appointment, or having a conversation with your spouse. Just because it's routine, doesn't mean you need to do it mindlessly. Mindless activities invite distraction, so stay mindful, attentive, and aware. You will be less tempted to follow distractions when you do so.
2. Notice your surroundings.  
We stay present when we notice and appreciate what's around us... the sights, the smells, the tastes, the sounds, the experiences. Living fully engaged in the moment allows us to experience much more than when we just go through the motions of the day. For example, right now I'm noticing my small space in this closet of my office where I record my podcast episodes. It could use some organizing, by the way. But I enjoy this quiet space and the opportunity to record in it. I feel great joy each time I'm here in this seat. My surroundings don't have to be amazing to appreciate them but noticing them helps me be thankful for them. This brings us to number 3.
3. Bring God in and be thankful.  
We have much to be thankful for, don't we? With everything we see, everything we experience, and everything in our lives, we can thank God for. Now, some days I do this well, and others I don't. But we can invite God into every moment. He's already with us but sometimes we might forget. So let's invite Him in to every situation, every circumstance, every joy, and every sorrow. Everything! And be thankful for it all. Doing this helps us stay present and undistracted, because living in the present with God is the best way to live.

**May we choose to stay present and live undistracted today.**

What's one way you can choose to stay in the moment today?

Jesus was the master at living undistracted. He was always about living out His Father's purpose for His life. And His example is the perfect one for us to follow when it comes to distractions and our purpose. Jesus never let distractions entice Him away from His purpose. Ever. We may not be Jesus, no, but we can follow His example, and with His help, do the same.

Will you pray with me?

*Father God, we praise You and thank You for Your good plans and purposes for our lives. You continually guide us to Your perfect will, yet sometimes, Lord, we get distracted by the things of this world. We live in a world full of distractions, and many of them pull us away from You and Your purpose for our lives. We're tired of this happening. So, Lord, we ask You today to keep us focused on You. Help us to seek Your face and do Your will, and to not be enticed away to lesser things. We know we can't live undistracted on our own, so we need Your help and guidance. Help us live this day to glorify and honor You. Thank You. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

We are carrying this conversation over to our private Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook. I invite you over there to join in and have some fun regarding discussing distractions and our purpose this week. The link to this group is in the show notes.

Also, have you checked out my Free Resource library recently? It's filled with encouraging printables, lock screens, social posts, and even a few goodies from my book, *Right Now Matters*. These tools and resources are designed to help you live an encouraged and uplifted life. You can access everything at the link in the show notes.

One more thing, if you live local to me, our next quarterly women's event, Real Encouragement *LIVE!* is happening at the end of the month, Thursday, March 28 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It's titled Reflect, Realign, and Refocus. Perfect for a new season! Mark your calendars and plan to attend. Tickets are on sale now at the link in the show notes as well.

To close out today's episode, distractions will always pull us away from what's important and will entice us to focus on lesser things. Let's do all we can to come against these distractions and continue to walk out the purpose God has for us: to grow our relationship with Him, to grow in our faith to be more like Jesus, and to point others to Him. I'm glad we get to travel this road together. Stay encouraged this week, friend. God bless you!

Links in this episode:

[Isaiah 26:3](#) NIV

[Colossians 3:2](#) ESV

[Philippians 4:8](#) NLT

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