

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

For the week of June 28-July 4, 2020

“DISTRACTIONS: THE ASSAULT ON OUR ATTENTION”

GETTING STARTED

To the facilitator: As your group begins, use this section to introduce the topic. If possible, give a brief recap of the sermon.

Share a memorable point, a spiritual lesson, a personal application, a question, or something that challenged you from the sermon last Sunday.

Are you a “TL;DR” (too long; didn’t read) person when it comes to reading something (like a book, a long article, a long devotional or bible teaching)? If you are, have you always been like that? Or you’re not, how do you focus?

GROUP DISCUSSION

1. *Share.* Read Nehemiah 1:4; 2:1-6. Try to make a list of what Nehemiah sacrificed in order to go and help his people in Jerusalem. How would the accusations been painful or unfair for him (cf. Nehemiah 6:5-7)? What did he do? How easily are you affected by what others say or accuse you of? How do you respond to accusations?
2. Read Nehemiah 6:1-16. What were the schemes of Sanballat and his friends, including Shemaiah? What do we learn about our enemy from what they did? Distractions promise that if you pay attention to them, you will definitely lose focus on the other thing you were thinking about. How have you found the enemy use distractions in your life before?
3. *Discuss.* One thing striking about Nehemiah was his discernment (cf. Nehemiah 6:2,9,12-13). How does a Christian grow in discernment?
4. The work of the rebuilding the walls were done in record time (Nehemiah 6:15). What are some reasons or pitfalls that many of us fall into that cause us to start well but finish poorly? What are some examples in your own life?
5. The psalmist differentiated between the person who was rooted in the Lord and the person who was like worthless chaff (cf Psalm 1:1-4). How does this connect with John Eldredge’s statement, “You can’t give God your attention when your attention is constantly being targeted and taken captive ... and you’re cooperating”? What are some habits or routines in your life that help or hinder you from paying attention to God?

6. Pastor Nic suggested two simple shifts: (1) To be aware of our noise and (2) to pay attention to God. Discuss some practical ways that you can apply them this week.

7. [NEXT STEPS]

This week, let us be reminded of the two simple shifts: To be aware of our distractions and to pay attention to God.

- ☐ I will be aware of the distractions in my life.
- ☐ I will limit, “unplug” or give up the distractions that are detrimental to me.
- ☐ I will pay attention to God.
- ☐ I will say “no” to the lesser and “yes” to the greater.
- ☐ I will seek the Lord for his will in my life.

Don’t forget to:

- ☐ Go through the devotionals everyday this week.
- ☐ Have a regular daily time of prayer and reading of God’s Word.
- ☐ Commit 30 minutes a day for God’s intervention in this fight against the COVID virus.

CLOSING THE SESSION.

Close the session by taking the time to pray for one another. Consider the following as you pray:

- Pray for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and the distractions that are destructive in your life.
- Pray for a closer walk with Jesus.
- Take the time to pray for our nation, for peace and for the gospel to prosper during this time of the pandemic.
- Pray for those who are hurting, going through fear, worry and anxiety in the group.
- Pray for your unsaved family, friends and loved ones.