

Overcoming Distraction Addiction

by Ian Robson

This sermon addresses the addiction of distraction, emphasizing the need to focus on God amidst the overwhelming distractions in today's culture. It highlights the importance of choosing the one necessary thing, setting our minds on God's interests, and seeking clarity and focus to fulfill God's purpose in our lives.

Scripture: Isaiah 50:4, Philipians 3:7, 1 Peter 1:13, Psalms 139:23, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Overcoming Distraction", "Focusing on God's Purpose"

Description

This sermon addresses the addiction of distraction, emphasizing the need to focus on God amidst the overwhelming distractions in today's culture. It highlights the importance of choosing the one necessary thing, setting our minds on God's interests, and seeking clarity and focus to fulfill God's purpose in our lives.

Transcript

I want to share something with you, some thoughts that has come to my own heart in this past week. And that is about an addiction. Now get your minds working there.

I hope you are paying attention. The addiction of distraction. Somebody has called it the distraction addiction.

Even to get my thoughts together, there have been so many things that have happened in the last few days, and particularly yesterday, to distract me from what God is primarily saying to me. So what I am sharing with you is what God has been speaking to me about distraction. And somebody has said in the magazine Christianity Today, that the issue of ministering to an overwhelmed and distracted culture is one of the greatest challenges of today's Christian church.

You got that? The issue of ministering, and that's not just speaking from the pulpit, but even in our personal relationship with one another. To an overwhelmed and distracted culture is one of the greatest challenges for today's church. I would add to that, therefore, what Peter says, we need the prophetic word, made more sure as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Where the morning star, where Christ takes over completely my mind, my attention, that I have the mind of Christ. And the message Bible puts that word very well, 2 Peter 1, verse 19. The prophetic word was

confirmed to us.

You'll do well to keep focusing on it. It's the one light you have in a dark time. I like that.

It's the one light you have in a dark time as you wait for daybreak, and the rising of the morning star in your hearts. Christ in you, the hope of glory, that is the morning star. So therefore, what has come to me, we have to take up this fight against addiction.

It's worse than drugs, worse than alcohol, worse than pornography. When you really think about it, distraction. We get so easily distracted, and the Bible is literally full of incidents where God could not accomplish his purpose, because his people or his servants allowed the devil to distract them.

And I think that even as I'm speaking now, some of you are distracted. You're thinking of things that have happened yesterday, last week, and things that may happen in the future. And that is why when we hear the word in the church, it doesn't bear fruit in our lives.

Or if it does, it's probably very less, even less than 30%. But I hope that the Holy Spirit will get your attention this morning, because it's spoken to my heart, and I want to work on it. I look at it as weeds that come up in the garden, that we don't pluck them out by the root in the beginning, they begin to spread, until the whole garden gets taken over by weeds, and that's our mind.

That's exactly what can happen to us if we don't deal with this addiction, the addiction of distraction. And like I said, the Bible is full of incidents where God could not accomplish his purpose, because his people or his servants chose or allowed themselves to be distracted. That's why Jesus spoke about Mary to Martha.

Only one thing is necessary, and Mary has chosen it. Martha, you're distracted about many things. I wonder whether the Lord has to say that to you and me this morning.

Put your name there. I know you said that to me. You're distracted about many things.

Only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen it. It's a choice, my brothers and sisters.

It's not positive thinking. It's a choice, and it's a daily choice, it's a moment-by-moment choice. I choose not to allow the devil to distract me, to shift my focus of what God has for me in this one life on earth.

And Paul was so burdened that he wrote 1 Corinthians 7, many things there about marriage, and even if you're married. And he says there in 1 Corinthians 7, verse 35, I want you to look at that word. It's a good word that we can always keep before us.

1 Corinthians 7, verse 35, he speaks about marriage and those who want to get married, and those who want to remain unmarried, and many things like that. But he says here in 1 Corinthians 7, verse 35, he says, I say this for your own benefit, not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is appropriate and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord. You see that there? Paul was gripped with that.

Paul himself knew. But I tell you that we have two wonderful examples in Jesus and Paul. They refused not to let themselves get distracted from what God had for their life on earth.

And I want that we really take it seriously, my brothers and sisters, to deal, first of all, acknowledge it's an addiction. I have acknowledged before God, Lord, I am addicted. Like I said, worse than any other addiction.

And we need to be cured. Otherwise, we'll be destroyed. We'll miss God's purpose that God has for us in this one life.

In verse 32 of that 1 Corinthians 7, he says, I want you to be free from concern. I want you to be free from concern. I want to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord.

And he was afraid, you know, what would happen to the church in Corinth. He says in 2 Corinthians, you can turn to that word, 2 Corinthians in chapter 11, a word that we have heard very often here. He says there in verse 2, he says, I'm jealous for you with a godly jealousy.

For I betrothed you to one husband so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I'm afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. Your minds will be led astray.

You know, when you're led astray, it's gradual. You don't notice it. That's what distraction is.

It's gradual. It slowly moves us away and shifts our focus to other things. And usually it's things of the earth.

And we lose out on what God wants to do in our lives. So he says here, he says, I'm afraid as a serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray. Eve was led astray.

She allowed the devil to distract her and deceive her by his craftiness. Did God say? He aimed for her mind. Did God really say you should not eat from every tree of the garden? And that's where she began to go astray.

She entered into a conversation with Satan. And that's how it is, my brothers and sisters. And that's how the devil can distract you and me and shift our focus every day.

And we don't notice it. The children of Israel, they got distracted when they saw the giants. Two men were focused, Joshua and Caleb.

The rest, the majority allowed themselves to be distracted. And literally blinded them. They missed God's purpose for their life.

They perished. They died in the wilderness. Only Joshua and Caleb made it through.

It's always a minority. The devil used Peter to try and distract Jesus from going the way of the cross. Because his mind was set on man's interest and not on God's interest.

And so Jesus had to say to him, get behind me, Satan. Because your mind is set on man's interest and not on God's interest. Remember that, my brothers and sisters.

If my mind is set on God's interest, then the devil has a hold. And he can easily move me away and steer me away from the purpose and path that God has for your life and mine. When we set our mind on man's interest.

We have to do our jobs. We go to work. Your sisters have to do work in the home.

Send your children to school and many things. Keep home and look after your husband, your children. Many things all of us have to do.

Like we heard Brother Zach say. Should be like a rubber band. We do it, we're back again.

In focus. But I'm sorry to say that rubber band becomes slack. Like rubber bands.

After a period of time they become slack. So they don't go back. That's what happens with most of us.

And the devil succeeds in distracting us. From whatever it is, it's daily things. You know you can decide, no I must write that email.

And so many other things. You open the internet. And your attention is taken up here, taken up there.

Something interesting comes up. You got all these things popping up. You decide to go and maybe help somebody who is discouraged.

But you put it off. There are other things, other things that occupy attention. All the time, every day.

24 by 7. This is the battle we are fighting. It's an addiction. If I acknowledge it's an addiction.

And I have to deal with it. And I have to be cured of this addiction. Then there is hope.

Demas, he was distracted. He loved the present world, Paul says. And he deserted Paul.

He missed God's purpose altogether. Somebody has said, who has written a book on distraction addiction. He says, one of the devil's greatest tools is distraction.

It's a devastating weapon. The devil may smile every time we disobey God blatantly. But he is just as pleased when he lures us into meaningless distraction.

And he says, distraction is the enemy of focus and clarity. Two components necessary to lead a spiritual life or to lead a godly life. Distraction is the enemy of focus and clarity.

Clarity means you see things clearly. To be focused. Distraction is the enemy of both these two components, he says.

Necessary to live a godly life. And he goes on to say, is there, I wonder, any great thing that can be done when you are constantly distracted. Can distracted people change the world? Write the great American novel.

Solve big problems. Deepen their faith. I think not.

Which is one reason I wrote the book. Distraction. Addiction.

The battle is for our minds, my brothers and sisters. Let's recognize that. The devil is not so much interested in leading you into some gross sin like adultery.

Or pornography, if you are not indulging in it. He is not all the time trying to get you there, even though you may go to the internet. The devil's greatest tool, which he uses very successfully, is distraction.

I have come to recognize it. But like I said, I have begun to see it as weeds. Which have to be plucked out root by root.

Otherwise they grow again. And I have been crying out to God, Lord help me. David in Psalm 50 says, I am solely distracted.

Because he faced a problem with his enemies there. And is that the case with some of us? We are solely distracted. Things that have happened, things that we think are going to happen.

We think about our children. We think about what the future is going to be. And so many things we worry about.

And we don't take worry and anxiety seriously. And so we get distracted. This man who wrote this book, Alex Bang, says, Connection is inevitable.

Distraction is a choice. Connection is inevitable. Apply it to anything, not only to the internet.

Connection is inevitable. But distraction is a choice. And in everyday, everything, we connect with people, we connect different things.

It's inevitable, we get connected. But distraction is a choice. I make that choice.

And I have to choose. I am not going to allow the devil to distract me. The memory verse that God has begun a good work in you and me.

And he will complete it. But God can be hindered because I am distracted. Do you know that? I can't just hold on to that word and say that God has begun a good work in me and he will perfect it, he will not leave it incomplete.

God will say to me on that day, I wanted to complete the work in you. But you were so distracted. You were so distracted about many things.

I couldn't complete what I started in you. Do you recognize that, my brothers and sisters? Let's not deceive ourselves. We can have virtual reality.

We are in an illusion. God has promised, he has begun a good work in me, he will complete it. He will not let me drown.

He will not leave it unfinished. But the Lord will say to me on that day, I wanted to complete that work in you. But you were so distracted.

May it not be, my brothers and sisters. We have the scriptures to guide us, to get us focused. And Jesus is the best example.

I want you to look at this. I want you to think of two scriptures. Isaiah 50.

Jesus as an example of focus. Not getting distracted. And Philippians 3. Paul.

Two excellent examples. And here is what the Holy Spirit says about Jesus in Isaiah 50. Listen to it.

We have heard it many times, this word. But now think of it in time. In context of what we are talking about.

Of being distracted. You will see it here. So verse 4. Isaiah 50 verse 4. The Lord God has given me the tongue of disciples.

That I may know how to sustain the weary one with the word. He awakens me morning by morning. He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple.

The Lord God has opened my ear and I was not disobedient. Nor did I turn back. I gave my back to those who strike me.

And my cheeks to those who pluck out the beard. This is Jesus. I did not cover my face from humiliation and spitting.

For the Lord God helps me. Therefore, I am not disgraced. Therefore, and this is the word I want to underline for us.

Therefore, I have set my face like flint. And I know I will not be ashamed. He who vindicates me is near who will contend with me.

Let us stand up to each other who has a case against me. And Isaiah is prophesying about Jesus. I have set my face as a flint.

We read in the gospels. I can't remember the reference. That the disciples were so scared when they saw Jesus so focused.

Set to go to Jerusalem. He set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem. And that's what Isaiah prophesied about him.

I have set my face like a flint. Flint is a stone. A sharp stone.

So sharp. You can cut. They made knives in the stone age with flint stone.

I have set my face as a flint. I know I will not be ashamed. That's how it must be with you and me.

I will not be ashamed. I will be focused. I have set my face as a flint.

Paul, like I said, is another excellent example. Look at Philippians 3. When you get time, I would encourage you to meditate on these two passages of scripture. I really believe it will help us to pluck out the weeds.

To get focused. Philippians 3, verses 7 to 14. Paul says there, Whatever things were gained to me, Those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

More than that, I count all things to be loss. In view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, For whom I have suffered the loss of all things. Notice that there.

All things as loss. And not just in his mind, he counted everything as loss. He said, I have suffered the loss of all things.

It's one thing to think about these things and to preach about it. But it's another thing when we face the reality to suffer the loss of all things. And he says, count them but rubbish, but dogs dung.

So that I may gain Christ. May be found in him not having a righteousness of my own derived from the law. But that is which is through faith in Christ.

The righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith. That I may know him and the power of his resurrection. And the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death.

In order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it. Or have already become perfect.

But I press on. You know, he is focused. I press on so that I may lay hold of that which also I was laid hold of by Christ.

Not an illusion, it's not a mirage. It's real. I press on because Christ has laid hold of me for something.

So I press on. He says, brethren, I don't regret myself as having laid hold of it yet. But one thing I do.

Forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. What a man.

I hope we are challenged. What we read in Isaiah 50 and what we read in Philippians 3. About Jesus and about Paul. Men who were focused.

Never allowed the devil to distract them. Paul was willing to lose all his co-workers. And I thank God that we have our brother now, Mitch, as an example.

Not just Jesus and Paul, but brother Zach. I've seen it. Focused.

Not easy to find men like that, my brothers and sisters. And we don't value them when they live among us. Men who are focused.

Who are willing to suffer the loss of all things. Not just willing, but we've seen it. And like Paul, Paul was willing to lose even if he had to stand alone.

He says, the Lord stood by me and strengthened me. That's how focused we must be. And it's not just Jesus and Paul and brother Zach.

It's you and me. Do we think it's only for such ones? God wants to raise up many more among us. For this next generation.

Young men and young women who are focused. Will not allow the devil to distract them. Who are so full of the Holy Spirit.

God has spoken powerfully to my heart. And I tell you, it was a challenge putting my thoughts together. I was so distracted.

I cried to the Lord. Lord, I'm distracted. I know you're saying something to me.

And I want to share it with my brothers and sisters. There are so many things that are distracting me. Please help me.

And I believe, He will help me. And He will help you. A lot of things that distract you, my brothers and sisters.

A lot of things that happen in your home. In your life. Things with your family, with your wife, with your children.

And you're distracted. Like Jesus said, You're so distracted about many things. One thing.

Only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen it. Will you make that choice, my brothers and sisters? I've made mine.

And God helping me, I want to keep it. To listen. That's what He said.

To Martha, You're distracted about many things. Only one thing is necessary. Can we put that before us all the time? Only one thing is necessary.

Mary has chosen it. So how do we fight distraction? Here we have examples. And thank God we have some examples in our midst.

Let's follow them. Let's pray and ask the Lord to give us the Holy Spirit in all His fullness. Like in the beginning.

It drives me to tears. To say, Lord, we are drifting. It's not like it was in the beginning.

It really breaks my heart when I see, Lord, where are we heading as a church? We're just gathering people who are distracted about many things. Who are not gripped like it was in the beginning. With a few of us.

May the Lord bring a revival, my brothers and sisters. May God touch your heart and touch your spirit and mind. Revive us.

We are drifting. The devil is leading us astray from simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. Recognize it.

Our minds are being led astray. He's not leading us into some gross sins. I tell you, it is something that he wants to do in CFC.

Is to lead our minds astray from simple, pure devotion to Christ. Getting us occupied with many other things. So, firstly, it has to do with our minds.

The four things I want to share with you, quickly. It has to do with our minds. We have to set our minds on God's interests and not man's.

We have to do what the Holy Spirit tells us to do. We have to not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. That's the only way.

It's not positive thinking. It's not hearing a message and hearing things like this. And I'm going to decide, I'm going to set my mind on God's interests.

I tell you, my brothers and sisters, you walk out of the door, you'll fail. I recognize that the only way is to let the Holy Spirit come upon me. Like he did in the beginning.

And continue changing me like he did in the beginning. Changing my mind, renewing my mind. Helping me not to let the world squeeze me into its mold.

Not be conformed to the world but to be transformed by the renewing of my mind. That I may, like it says in Romans 12 too, that's what I'm quoting. Improve what the acceptable will of God is, that which is good and perfect.

Acceptable, good and perfect. Only the Holy Spirit can do that. And if I let the Lord begin today, I will get focused again.

I'll be gripped again like it was in the beginning. And I want to do that at least in my life. I don't know how much time I have left.

But Lord, I said, I want to come back. Come back to that first love, come back to that place where nothing else mattered. We just wanted to live for you and serve your purpose.

Jesus at 12 years said, I must be about my father's business. He told his parents at 12 years. I must be about my father's business.

See how early he got focused. You young people. Some of you, I think they're going to Sunday school.

Maybe they're still there. Sunday school children are here. You 12 year olds, you can get focused.

Jesus at your age, if you're 12, said, I must be about my father's business. Do you not know that I must be about my father's business? It challenges me. That's how he grew up.

You teenagers, will you let the Holy Spirit take hold of your mind? Don't just wait to get into that tank. But before you get into the tank, say, Lord Jesus, baptize me in the Holy Spirit and fire. Change me.

I don't need to get into that tank. You can do it before I get into that tank and be baptized. It's good to obey the Lord in the waters of baptism.

But Lord, I need the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Desperately. I want to say to you, those of you who are planning to be baptized.

Otherwise, you're just going to add to this number. You will just add to the whole lot of number of people who are distracted. I want to tell you, I really believe that most of us, very few among us, have really taken it seriously to fight distraction, to fight this addiction.

And if you've never seen it as addiction, I hope you'll see it this morning. An addiction that you need to overcome, that you need to be free from. Worse than any other addiction that you can think about.

I have no doubt about it. Since I've got light on this. And since God has been speaking to me.

It's the devil's greatest tool. That he's using very successfully among God's people. I'm not talking about all the nominal Christians.

I'm talking about God's people. God's family. Who is Jesus speaking to? A family.

To Martha, who are disciples. You are distracted about many things. Only one thing is necessary.

That's the second thing. Choose the only one thing necessary. It's a choice.

It's not something that I decide, yes, I think that I will do that. I have to make a choice. And I tell you, my brothers and sisters, it's not just in this meeting.

When you walk out through that door, there are choices that you're going to have to make. To choose the one thing necessary. You cannot do anything about yesterday.

You made wrong choices. You cannot do anything about last year. You failed, you messed up.

You can do something about today. You can't do anything about tomorrow. But today is the day of salvation.

Today, if you hear my voice, God says, don't harden your heart. Today, when God speaks to me as I go out from church today, that's not necessary. You can do that some other time.

I want you to listen to me. I tell you, my brothers and sisters, if we really take that seriously, God can do work in a very short time in your life and mine. We can contribute.

We can stem, if I were to use the word stem, the decay and corruption that is entering CHC. We can stem it. If we are willing to choose the one thing necessary.

In our use of the internet, these social websites, you hear God speak to you? Messaging, whatsapp messages, back and forth, back and forth. And good morning, you get a message. Something nice, some verses of scripture.

I have to tell one sister, please, I don't have time to read those. Stop sending it to me and wake me up at two o'clock in the morning, because she is in some other country. And we think we are serving God, we are fulfilling God's purpose.

Sending these messages, these texts, wasting time, meaningless. You know, this is what this man said in Christianity today. He says, he discusses another problem, minor distractions, constant tweeting, text messages, calendar reminders, anxiety laced news, take us away from the stillness needed to seek God.

You realize that? You think, yeah, I am sending something scriptural, I am sending a promise. God says, I want to speak to you. Will you choose the one thing necessary? You can send that afterwards.

I have something to say to you. Jesus said to Simon, I have something to say to you. Quick to judge that woman.

Simon, I have something to say to you. God says to you and me, I have something to say to you. Just stop for a moment.

Don't get distracted. Choose the one thing necessary, my brothers and sisters. To listen.

Listen as a disciple. That word we read in Isaiah 50, it says, The Lord God has opened my ear. In Psalm, that's from Psalm 40, The Lord has pierced my ear.

To listen. And you go back to an incident in the Old Testament, where a slave after he served seven years, and he could be free, said, no, I don't want to go. I love my master, I love my wife and my children, I want to stay.

And it was the Lord in that time, he's taken to the door post of his master's house, and his ear was pierced with an awl. You know what the shoemaker uses to stitch? With an awl, his ear was pierced. Now they do it with a gun.

And ladies as well as men, want to wear these things for whatever reason, I don't know. It's okay for ladies, but I don't know why men have to have it. It really perplexes me.

I don't know, left ear, right ear, left ear something, right ear something. Oh, I tell you, all kinds of things. Let's get our ears pierced by the Holy Spirit, my brothers and sisters.

I want mine pierced. So I can listen as a disciple. And be focused.

That's the third thing. Stay focused. Paul says, one thing I do.

Forget what lies behind. Reach forward, press forward to what is before. Like I said, you cannot do anything about yesterday.

Don't worry about tomorrow. Worry and anxiety are sins, that you and I have to constantly confess and repent of. That's the only way I get victory.

From worry and anxiety. You can't do anything about tomorrow by worrying. About next year, about your children's future, marriage, all these things.

Why do you worry? Like that song says, when you can pray. One thing, forget what lies behind. Be free from concern.

Press on, Paul says, toward the goal, for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. And the last thing, we must have clarity. I told you, distraction robs us of focus and clarity.

In fulfilling the purpose of God for our lives. To have clear vision. To see all things clearly.

Not men as trees walking. Lord, I want to see clearly. Touch me a second time if need be.

I want to see clearly. To have clear goals and clear priorities. And clear values.

Know who you are and where you're headed. Who you are, I'm a son and a daughter of the living God. Lord God of heaven and earth we heard.

Father I can call him, but he's Lord God of heaven and earth. I know who I am and where I'm heading. That's what it is to have clarity.

And to be like what it says of Jesus. I'm not disgraced, I've set my face like a flint. I know I will not be ashamed.

And may God really help us, my brothers and sisters. I've shared with you what God has been speaking to my heart. Because like I said, we contribute to the direction this church takes.

We have a whole lot of distracted people. We will be a distracted church like we see around us. Many other things have taken the place.

Of what Jesus wants for his church. And I will leave with you finally 1 Peter 1.13. A word that you can think of. I'll read it to you from the message Bible.

It says, so roll up your sleeves. Got it? You're getting into action. Put your mind in gear.

Be totally ready to receive the gift that's coming when Jesus arrives. Don't lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil. Doing just what you like doing.

You didn't know any better then, you do now. As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life. Shaped by God's life.

A life energetic and blazing with holiness. As God said, I am holy, you be holy. That is God's purpose for your life and mine.

Let's really seek God. To be cured of this addiction. Distraction.

Lord, begin this morning. I yield my life to you. Baptize me afresh with the Holy Spirit.

So that I can get focused. I can be like you Lord Jesus. I set my face like a flint.

So that you can fulfill, complete the work that you have begun in my life. But I will not have to say to you at the end of my days. I wanted it complete.

But you didn't let me. You were distracted about many things. You didn't choose the one thing necessary.

Will we make that choice now? Maybe we can bow our heads for a moment. And if God has spoken to your heart. Say Lord, I want to be cured of this addiction.

I have been solely distracted. Distracted about many things. But I want to get focused.

From today. I cannot do it in my own strength. Give me the Holy Spirit.

Lord pour out your Holy Spirit upon us as a church. We need a renewal. We need a baptism of fire.

I pray that you will meet with us. Meet with me. Because we have a needy world around us.

Help us to be like you. Help us to be like the examples. Of those who have accomplished your purpose.

We ask in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/wFAtc-Az0Ew.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ian-robson/overcoming-distraction-addiction/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net