

Believe Series

“Single - Mindedness”

How do I keep my focus on Jesus amidst distractions?

I am the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.

“You must not have any other god but me.

Exodus 20:2-3 (NLT)

We focus on God **and his priorities for my life.**

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Matthew 6:33 (NLT)

Feed your focus.

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

Meanwhile, the disciples were in trouble far away from land, for a strong wind had risen, and they were fighting heavy waves. About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water. When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, “It’s a ghost!”

But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!”

Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.”

“Yes, come,” Jesus said.

So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. “Save me, Lord!” he shouted.

Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. “You have so little faith,” Jesus said. “Why did you doubt me?”

When they climbed back into the boat, the wind stopped. Then the disciples worshiped him. “You really are the Son of God!” they exclaimed.

Matthew 14:22-33 (NLT)

What do you look at when you are sinking?

Jesus or the waves?

O our God, won’t you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help.”

2 Chronicles 20:12 (NLT)

Starve your distractions.

“That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life - whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

“And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

“So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Matthew 6:25-34 (NLT)

*Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you your heart’s desires*

Psalms 37:4 (NLT)

SO WHAT?

How to fix your focus:

Set your sights on heaven.

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

Colossians 3:1-2 (NLT)

Set your thoughts on what is true.

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)

Set your eyes on Jesus.

... And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.

Hebrews 12:1b-2a (NLT)

What will you do?

Growth Group Questions

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

Read Believe Chapter 14: Single-Mindedness.

1. What tasks in your life require intense focus?

How do you stay focused in the middle of those tasks?

2. What are the distractions in life that seem to always steal your focus?

How do you deal with those distractions?

3. What are some of the distractions that keep you from putting God first in your life?

Can you eliminate them?

Or do you just need to re-prioritize? How?

4. Re-read Matthew 14:22-33. When you are in a crisis do you tend to naturally focus on Jesus or the waves? Why?

5. Re-read Matthew 6:25-34. What do you worry about the most?

What do you tend not to worry about?

6. Re-read Philippians 4:8. How can you refocus your thoughts when you are being drawn into worry or negativity?

7. What one tangible thing can you do this week to become more single-minded towards God?