



Dear Partners,

June 2020

Are you distracted? What's been fighting for your attention? This month God has been dealing with us personally about the things that are stealing our time with the Lord. We're not perfect. The Lord has actually drawn *our* attention to the distractions we're allowing in our lives. We're all busy. We all have busy schedules, businesses and jobs, kids, homes to run, food to cook, Ministries to run and places to be. No, you're not lazy or purposely putting God on the back burner. For most of us, we need to prioritize our time better. We need to put our time with the Lord *first*, and then learn to manage the rest of our time. *But Brother John, I have three kids, a business I run from home, my husband works 10+ hours a day and I'm just exhausted by the time everyone else is in bed. I just don't **have** the time. I do my best and I think the Lord sees that.*

We all have things that need to get done in our natural, daily lives here on earth. However, the truth is that we all have the *same* amount of time in each day. We don't have any more hours in the day than you do and vice versa. It's how we manage our time that is really the key. The Lord went further into His *correction* of us. He said that He would not compete for our time. Our time with Him has to be intentional and set aside just for Him. You see, the enemy is **really** good at distracting us. He's been studying us since the day we were born. He's been studying *each one* of us, actually. Satan knows what to put in front of us to steal the attention away from God. He's good at what he does! He knows how to overwhelm us first thing in the morning when we have a lot planned for our day. He, also, wants you to be too busy for your devotion this morning or miss your prayer time with God this evening. Why? Because the Body of Christ is filled with **power** and **unity** when we spend time with Jesus!

"God is looking for our availability. How available have we made ourselves for God? In Acts chapter 1, Jesus (before His ascension) promised His disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them. He goes on to say that they would be His witnesses throughout the entire world. After Jesus ascended they went straight to the Upper Room and patiently waited for this promised Holy Spirit in *one accord* until they received that glorious power (Acts 1:8). In Acts chapter 2, we read about the disciples and other followers of Jesus receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room. These were affluent men and women who owned homes and properties (Acts 4 & 5) and quite possibly businesses. But they still **made time to seek God's face** and wait in one accord until the power of the Holy Spirit came upon them.

Why was it so important that they waited for that power? The Holy Spirit was *investing* in them. The Holy Spirit was also stirring up all the teaching they had received from Jesus so that they would be empowered to go out into all the world (Acts 1:8). That is exactly what the Holy Spirit is trying to do today. The Body of Christ is distracted, in turmoil and without peace. When we're distracted, we can have a hard time discerning right from wrong and truth from lies. Along with distraction comes confusion. When we as Christians are confused, we can easily be influenced by everything going around us. When we are not alert, it can be easy to step into the traps of the enemy without a second thought. In fact, 1 Peter 5:8 warns us about stepping into the enemy's traps:

"Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour."

The enemy's sole purpose on this earth is to steal, kill and destroy. And his main target is **YOU**. His main target is the **Body of Christ** because if he can steal our time, kill our joy and destroy our dreams, then he's accomplished his mission. But, when we spend (*purposeful or deliberate-choose one on one*) time with Jesus, we prepare our spirit and soul for the battleground. In that quiet time with Him, He's preparing us, equipping us with knowledge and discernment and filling us up with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

"You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be awake and sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet." (1 Thess. 5:5-8).

Intercession (prayer) has been important since the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit fell upon the men and women who were eager to receive it. They stayed and they interceded for those that would eventually hear the Good News preached. That's why they saw miracles. That's why their shadow healed the sick (Acts 5:5). The power of prayer through constant communion with Jesus is one of the most powerful tools that a believer possesses. When we set aside time for the Holy Spirit to fill us up and invest in our spirit-man, He will guide us into all truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit will lead us beside still waters (Ps. 23:2) where our roots go way down deep and nothing will cause us to stumble. When we make time for Jesus and His Word, we will never be confused or distracted by whatever goes on in the world around us. We will be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might (Ephesians 6:10)!

"Have your roots planted deep in Christ. Grow in Him. Get your strength from Him. Let Him make you strong in the faith as you have been taught. Your life should be full of thanks to Him." (Colossians 2:7 NLV).

Let's be diligent in our time with Jesus and put on the full of Armor of God!

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the Gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." (Ephesians 6:10-18).

In Christ,

John & Alexandra