

Where Is Your Focus?

Oswald Chambers in his devotional "My Utmost for His Highest" shares the following: "If I dwell on the Cross of Christ, I do not simply become inwardly devout and solely interested in my own holiness, I become strongly focused on Jesus Christ's interests.

We must never allow anything to interfere with the consecration of our spiritual power. Consecration (being dedicated to God's service) is our part. John 17:15 - "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one." Sanctification (being set apart from sin and being made holy) is God's part. John 17:16 - "They are not of the world, even as I am not of it." We must make a deliberate determination to be interested only in what God is interested in."

As we ponder these words, we should ask ourselves this question. Is our focus (concentration) solely on pleasing God and fulfilling His interests or are we basing our relationship with Him on pleasing ourselves and our interests? I believe that as we start this New Year of 2003 that we need to be very honest with God, ourselves and others.

The world that we live in provides so many distractions and challenges, both personal and corporate, that can disrupt us from a right focus on the Lord. When these come, do we go with the flow or do we choose to focus on Him regardless of the distractions and challenges we may face in our lives?

Jesus clearly was focused on the Father at all times. John 8:28, 29 "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. ...For I always do what pleases Him." He did not allow people or His circumstances to disrupt His focus. Consequently, He was able to perform many signs and wonders.

We are told in His Word that we will do even greater things. John 14:12 "I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."

Could it be, that we are not seeing greater things accomplished in us and through us because our focus on God has been disrupted by the world that we live in? If this is so, is it any wonder we are not seeing God consistently reveal Himself on this earth in greater ways than what we see manifested today in and through the Church of Jesus Christ?

Many times these distractions come as a result of programs and activities right in our local churches. Even though they may be meaningful, they can distract us from being fully focused on the Lord and being led by His Holy Spirit. In other words, are we ensnared by man's ways or God's ways?

Many within the church have been searching for meaning and purpose in their walk with the Lord. However, their church experiences have failed to nurture that intimate, focused, dependent relationship upon the Lord that we all so desperately need.

Whenever we get caught up in man's ways of doing church, we sacrifice personal intimacy and focus on the Lord in order to fulfill our agenda. This directly limits the greater works that God desires to manifest through His Church.

I believe that the Acts 2 Church was successful because it did not allow anything to disrupt their focus on the Lord and Him alone. Acts 2:42,43,47 "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles, and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

Let's all purpose during 2003 to focus on God rather than people and our circumstances. When we do, I believe we will see the fulfillment of an Acts 2 Church in the day and time that we live in.