

## KEYS TO SPIRITUAL DRIFTING

(Ephesians 4:14)

### I. Schedule too busy.

- a. I honestly don't remember my parents being as busy as Jincy and I are.
  - i. Most weeknights would involve a meal together at home and watching TV together.
  - ii. This would occur, especially when I was younger, at least 3-5 nights out of the week.
- b. I don't know about your family, but that is rare for mine.
- c. There are some weeks where the only night we are at home together is Sunday night after services.
  - i. It's not like that all year round, but a good bit of it.
  - ii. We, and many other families I know of, are just very busy.
- d. One of Satan's greatest weapons is to get us caught up doing many things.
  - i. None of the things we do are inherently sinful I don't believe.
  - ii. But, we can easily get caught up sacrificing the needful for things that are just decent.
- e. I don't believe this is a new phenomenon.
  - i. I believe Jesus addressed this in connection with Martha.
  - ii. Luke 10:38-42.
  - iii. Jesus didn't condemn Martha for serving and waiting on others.
  - iv. He just told her that Mary was focused on what was more important.
- f. If we desire to stay close to God, we have to make time for Him.
- g. We need to look at our calendar and realize that many of us are doing too much decent and missing out on the good.
  - i. How much time do we spend in prayer and Bible reading?
  - ii. Is it as much time as we spend on social media or keeping up with the news?
  - iii. What about all the social or athletic events we attend or work for?
  - iv. Are we making time for God as much as we do those things?
  - v. This is aimed at me as well as you.
- h. Not only time wise is this important but also with being so tired from other things, that when we might have time for evangelism, prayer, or study, we are too exhausted.
- i. We must make time for God and trim away those things that are decent to make sure we are seeking that good part like Mary.

### II. Misplaced affections.

- a. 1 John 2:15.
- b. This often manifests itself on our schedules.
- c. We get tied up doing things and they become more important to us than God.

- i. We might not ever admit that.
  - ii. But the things on which we spend our money and our time show our affections.
- d. We fall in love with things that are not eternal in nature and it draws us away from God.
  - i. I've known of people who get into a hobby so much that they have drifted away from God.
  - ii. Some have let their children's athletic pursuits cause them to quit pursuing God.
  - iii. Others have let work get in the way of time with God.
- e. We would never say we love whatever it is more than God but we really do.

### **III. Discouragement.**

- a. Physical, emotional, and spiritual problems can cause us to become discouraged.
- b. Some have allowed discouragement to take away their drive for godly living or even worship.
- c. God's people in the past have faced this tool of Satan.
  - i. Job, Moses, Elijah, and even Peter faced it.
  - ii. Job was discouraged with those close to him, Moses was discouraged by God's people, Elijah was discouraged with circumstances, and Peter was discouraged with himself.
- d. This can often cause us to take our eyes off the goal of heaven and when we do that, we tend to drift away.
- e. Much like Peter walking on the water, when he took his eyes away from the Lord, then he began to sink.
- f. We don't have to let discouragement lead us away from God.
  - i. We need to be honest about what we feel and why we feel that way.
    - 1. Having some negative feelings is not sinful.
    - 2. What we allow those negative feelings to control can lead to sin if we aren't careful.
  - ii. If it is a physical problem, we need to take care of ourselves.
    - 1. If the body isn't working right, there is an effect on the mind and the emotions.
    - 2. God took care of Elijah's physical needs then his emotional ones.
  - iii. We must give great attention to how we think about things.
    - 1. Remember that a lot of what Elijah was thinking was not how it really was.
    - 2. When Jeremiah was discouraged because of the destruction of Jerusalem, he nearly lost hope.
    - 3. Listen to Lamentations 3.
    - 4. Now listen to Lamentations 3:21-22.
    - 5. He was thinking one way and then had to correct his thinking.

iv. We've got to draw closer to God, not further from Him (Nahum 1:7).

#### IV. Wealth.

- a. Our prosperity sometimes allows us to drift away from God.
- b. We have so much materially in this country that there is a lot of attraction to stuff.
  - i. The new TV leads to more time watching it.
  - ii. The newer, bigger vehicle leads to more time in it.
- c. The jobs that pay us well leads to being able to afford things we once couldn't.
- d. Or, the credit card leads us to be able to obtain things we really can't afford.
- e. This is not new.
  - i. How many times did Moses and Joshua warn the Israelites that once they got in the land and begin to obtain wealth that there would be a great temptation to leave God?
  - ii. The book of Judges showed this cycle occurring over and over.
- f. When we prosper, we often choose things that keep us from God and even worship instead of remembering the fact that God is the one from whom the prosperity came.
- g. This is the key to maintaining a proper understanding of our prosperity.
  - i. God is the giver of every good gift.
  - ii. Our prosperity should be a good gift.
  - iii. We must remember it's from Him and we must be thankful to Him for it.

#### V. Sins that easily beset us.

- a. Hebrews 12:1.
- b. How many people have drifted away because they got drawn back to their favorite sin?
- c. These sins are like parasites, sucking out of us all that is needed and necessary, keeping us from a right relationship with God.
- d. We all have pet sins, things that are more alluring to us than others.
  - i. That which is alluring to me may have no effect on you.
  - ii. Same goes for what allures you.
- e. Those must be laid aside as the Hebrews writer tells us.
- f. The only way to do that is to confess them to God and repent of them, turning away from them.
- g. These things cause us to be reluctant to pray because we feel God won't hear us.
- h. They cause us to be reluctant to study because we know we have these in our lives and we aren't changing.
- i. They cause us to be reluctant to come to worship because we don't want to be hypocrites.
- j. Only through confession and repentance can these things be laid aside.

Sermon outline from an unknown source.