

“Focus? What Focus?”



By Mrs. Sojourner

So, in Deuteronomy 6:5 we are admonished to “Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Jesus even reiterated this in the book of Matthew “. . .³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it” ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.” Matt. 22:38-40 (NIV)

Our Heavenly Father has made it clear to us in both the Old and New Testaments that our focus is to love him first above all else and when we do this our priorities for everything else in life will fall into line.

A question to ponder today is, “What is your focus.”

If the response to this question is, “Who has time to ponder focus, I have to worry about this or that...” Clearly this person’s focus is not on the Lord because when we keep our focus on him fear flees. (Remember perfect love casts out fear^[a] and God is love^[b]).

“But, but, but, I cannot focus on God for 30 minutes let

alone all the time, I have a very responsible position at work. I must focus on what I do.” I understand it is important to excel at our occupations because this is a good witness, but please remember that as we keep our Heavenly Father, his will and ways as our focus he will show us things to do and say that will help us with our work.

Most if not all arguments against keeping God as our main focus boil down to the matter of who we trust most. Many times I’ve heard The Sojourner wonder why people will trust God in the hereafter, but not for the here and now.

Let me encourage you today to trust God enough with the good and bad that you face by making sure he is your focus. Be ready, then, to record and tell the testimonies of God’s glory working through you.

Notes:
[a] 1
Jn. 4:18
[b] 1
Jn. 4:16

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...with The Sojourner

“The Rebel” (Teaching Sketch)
Luke 10:16-22 (NIV)



Most people, I think, have a concept of what a rebel^[a] is and probably do not see themselves as rebels.

Adolescents are a group of people I have often heard referred to as “rebels.” This is usually said because some adolescents have taken exception to the rules established by their parents or adults they are expected to obey.

Figuring Things Out

It is basically understood that adolescents are close to being independent adults. Adolescents, however, have not arrived at adulthood. It is recognized that adolescents, while near independence, are still in need of being dependent on their parents. This is especially true when it comes to economics. Sociologists have noted that in highly developed societies adolescence is often extended to members in their late 20’s. This is because people often continue to support their children until they com-

Notes:
[a]
rebel—
Pronunciation: \ˈre-bəl
Function:
adjective
from Old Latin
duellum
Date: 14th
century
1 a : op-
posing or
taking
arms
against a
govern-
ment or
ruler b : of
or relating
to rebels
<the rebel
camp>

Source:
www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rebel

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plete their higher education. Children in less developed cultures, say hunter-gather or nomadic, tend to be seen as adult much earlier. Many of these cultures have rights-of-passage which signify when a person has reached the independence of adulthood.

I’ll Do, I’ll Choose

When people perceive they are able to manage and govern their own lives they may be unwilling to receive much guidance or regulation. It is certainly true people need to reach adulthood and independence with the ability to decide the course their lives would take. Unless people hear and understand the Gospel they are to never understand the great gift given to them through the work of Jesus the Christ. Jesus sets a person free from the kingdom of deception governed by Satan, who is the one Jesus said he, “saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.” Satan then was found on

Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

Scripture: Luke 10:16-22 (NIV)

(NIV is employed here to allow English speakers around the world understanding of the words used)

¹⁶He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

Notes: heaven."

[a]
Or single cubit to his height

²¹At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

¹⁷The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

¹⁸He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in

²²All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Just so you'll know:

Our service is informal. We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
 - Testimonies are often a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise & Worship** ([Offerings are placed in the basket at this time.](#))
- **Words of Prophecy or Knowledge** if they have been given during "Praise & Worship" (other times as the Spirit moves).
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Prayer Requests**
 - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

"The Rebel" (Teaching Sketch)

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earth encountered Adam and Eve sometime later and sin entered into the world. Sin entered through deception and remains to this day bringing a rebellious^[b] state which is often not recognized. Deception by its very nature is something of which the deceived is not aware.

Jesus As Savior

When Jesus came he brought salvation with him and paid the price for all who would accept what he had done for them. He paid the price for the whole field! ^{Matt. 13:44}

That sure does sound good, free from hell and the threat of my going to hell. Many say, "Alright, I'll take that!" You see we now live in a consumer-driven society that believes the recipient is king. This is not the case in God's Kingdom. With God's Kingdom come responsibilities—one being the responsibility of thankfulness. God's Kingdom is the Kingdom of The Blessing! If all a person does is take the gift but never assemble it by understanding saved means (Gr. Soso), saved, healed, delivered, and preserved within this life they will never understand how to

Notes:

[b]
re-bel-lious
Pronunciation: \-yəs\
Function: adjective
Date: 15th century
1 a : given to or engaged in rebellion
<rebellious troops> b : of, relating to, or characteristic of a rebel or rebellion
<a rebellious speech>
2 : resisting treatment or management : refractory — re-bel-lious-ly ad-verb — re-bel-lious-ness noun

Source:
www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rebellious

live within this new freedom they possess because they will continue to function in the world's ways trying to be good in their deeds with a philosophy of being good rather than being empowered to do good deeds.

Jesus As Lord

Jesus as Lord must be developed in practice as well as in words. I talk with people every day and I mean EVERY DAY who want something from God! What I find so very disappointing is they talk to me as if I am the customer service manager at a local store and they want satisfaction and they want it NOW! It is rare when I hear a person say, "I want to truly serve my Lord and my God and I want to do it His way!" When I do hear the desire to serve God it is usually akin to, "I want to bless God and I want God to bless my service to him as I do it my way for which he should be so pleased." You know that sounds more self-serving to me than God-serving! Who is lord and who is servant in that kind of relationship? I have seen whole congregations miss the fact that JESUS IS LORD! Don't be a rebel!