

{4} MULTITASKING SPIRITUALITY

Are you a multitask master? You know, one of those types who can seamlessly carry on a deep conversation while tracking with American Idol, eyeing your twitter feed, enjoying your fresh iTunes playlist and doing research for your history essay?

Modern technology is constantly ushering us towards greater and greater multitasking. The newest devices brag on their abilities to increase efficiency by allowing us to get more done in less time. Google's latest innovation promises to bring multitasking to a level almost hard to comprehend.

Are we really meant to function this way? Research is revealing that we are not able to truly focus on multiple tasks at once - rather, we are simply switching our attention rapidly from one task to another. In the process we are losing our ability to focus and think deeply as our minds adapt to this continual change from one task to another.

As we function this way more and more often we also become more and more easily distracted. Typically we think of distractions as interruptions to what we are trying to do. But when we are used to doing multiple things at one time our brains get used to switching so much that we actually start seeking out distractions.

Consider for yourself - when you are trying to get your home work done, what usually grabs your attention? Are you interrupted by some unwanted interference, or is something within you seeking out distractions? And how is this affected by technology in your life? If you're anything like me, you've got multiple tabs open on your computer and your phone nearby notifying you of all kinds of stuff that can easily derail your attention.

Emerging technology offers the promise of getting more done, but the reality is we are simply bombarded with a storm of distractions.

Now consider how this may be affecting your relationship with Jesus.

Colossians 3:1-3 says

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

This passage is reminding Christians that our connection with Jesus gives us a unique perspective on life - that while we still live on this earth, we are truly citizens of heaven (Phil. 3:20). It's easy to get caught up in earthly stuff, so Paul urges us to set our hearts and minds on things above.

But we are so easily distracted, and our attention is easily pulled away from the remarkable truth that we live in connection with the living God!

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That's why it's important for us to have consistent time carved out in our lives to focus on Jesus. Life is packed full of distractions, and we need to create space to intentionally turn our attention our relationship with God.

For more thoughts on this, take a peek at the great stuff Jordan Cavanaugh is writing on Spiritual Disciplines for Truth Matters Ministries.

Our new life with Jesus is mysterious. Our true identity is hidden with Christ, and we must learn the importance of giving that deep truth our full attention. I don't want to waste my attention on YouTube and Instagram and the other things of this earth. Technology might make it easy to get distracted, but we need to see the beauty and hope of setting our hearts and minds on the things above...the things of Jesus Christ!

THE NEXT STEP

If you're anything like me, multi-tasking is probably a instinctive action that you hardly notice. If so, don't expect that making a change will be done overnight - but chance will never happen if you don't start doing things differently! Here are two suggestions for a NEXT STEP.

1. Use this week as an opportunity for uninterrupted time with God each day. It doesn't matter if you take 10 minutes or an hour, just do your best to make that time dedicated to spending time with God without any distractions.
2. Make your homework time a distraction free zone. It doesn't sound very "spiritual" but learning to apply your attention to one task at a time is a life discipline and once you get some traction with your homework time you will likely find it easier in all other areas of life.