

FOCAL, FOCUS, FOCUSED, FOCUSING, SELF-FOCUSED

Jacob's wife Leah was "tender eyed". (This seems to mean her eyes were clouded or inflamed in some way. Since eyes were a **focal** point of beauty in the ancient world, people would have viewed this as a terrible defect.)

- **Genesis 29:17:** "Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured."

Joseph's continual obedience to God (in spite of all the things he suffered), and his **focus** on glorifying God eventually resulted in him gaining a position of tremendous authority. (The same will be true for faithful Christians in the world to come.)

- **Genesis 41:41:** "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."

When Manoah asked the angel for instructions about how to raise Samson, the angel talked about the restrictions his wife had to follow while she was pregnant. However, the angel said nothing about how to raise him after he was born. The angel's **focus** was exclusively on protecting the unborn Samson from anything that would break the Nazarite vow.

- **Judges 13:14:** "She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe."

Even though Sanballat kept pestering Nehemiah with requests, Nehemiah didn't give in to the temptation. He remained **focused** on the work he was doing (rebuilding the wall around Jerusalem).

- **Nehemiah 6:3-4:** "And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner."

Elihu was **focused** on defending God's righteousness, whereas Job was focused on defending his own righteousness.

- **Job 36:3:** "I will fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ascribe righteousness to my Maker."

We must remain **focused** on God's loving kindness.

- **Psalms 26:3:** "For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth."

We must remain humble. Instead of getting caught up in the cares of this world, we need to step back and see how empty the things of this world are, and remain **focused** on the things that really matter.

- **Psalms 39:6:** "Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."

We must remain **focused** on what's right, and not turn our

attention away from it.

- **Proverbs 4:24-25:** "Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee."

The reason we'll have perfect peace if we keep our mind **focused** on God is because we trust Him. (In other words, trusting in God brings peace.)

- **Isaiah 26:3:** "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream he kept the king's **focus** on God. Daniel emphasized God's greatness and power, and didn't seek to magnify himself.

- **Daniel 2:28-29:** "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass."

When Daniel was given his vision of the four beasts, he **focused** on the ten horns of the fourth beast.

- **Daniel 7:3, 7-8:** "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. ... After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the

residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."

490 years was specifically set aside for the Jews and the city of Jerusalem. This is a *Jewish* period of time, not a Gentile one. The **focus** of that period is putting and end to the sins of the Jews so that they never rebel against God again.

- **Daniel 9:24:** "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."
- **Daniel 10:14:** "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days."

God's **focus** during the Day of the Lord (the tribulation) is centered on calling Israel to repent. Although the entire world will be affected by its events, His focus is on Israel. The church isn't mentioned at all, which is more evidence that it won't be in this world at that time.

- **Joel 2:1, 13, 15:** "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand; ... And rend your heart, and not your

garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. ... Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:"

When Elijah returns (in the end times), his ministry will **focus** on the relationship between fathers and their children.

- **Malachi 4:5-6**: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

When we pray, our **focus** should be on God.

- **Matthew 6:9**: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

God wants our heart to be **focused** on Heaven, not on the things of this world.

- **Matthew 6:20-21**: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

We must **focus** on bearing fruit, not on riches or the things of this world.

- **Matthew 13:22**: "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word,

and he becometh unfruitful."

After Jesus told His disciples that He was going to Jerusalem to be betrayed and crucified, His disciples ignored that and asked Him who was going to be the greatest in His kingdom. They were **focused** on their own greatness instead of His impending betrayal and death.

- **Matthew 18:1:** "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"

When Jesus told His disciples that He was going to be killed once they reached Jerusalem, they didn't take it seriously. Instead they **focused** on their own greatness.

- **Matthew 20:20-21:** "Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom."

The reason Jesus wanted to go to other towns in Galilee was so He might preach there. His **focus** was on preaching.

- **Mark 1:38:** "And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth."

The disciples of Jesus were **focused** on their own greatness instead of on Jesus.

- **Luke 9:46:** "Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest."
- **Luke 22:24:** "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."

When Jesus and His disciples were in Samaria, the disciples were **focused** on buying food while Jesus focused on preaching to the lost and saving souls.

- **John 4:8, 34-35:** "(For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) ... Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

When a nobleman asked Jesus to go to Capernaum and heal his son, Jesus said that people would only believe if they saw signs and wonders. The **focus** of Jesus was on saving souls.

- **John 4:47-48:** "When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

The **focus** of our life shouldn't on satisfying our appetites. (Instead we should be seeking after everlasting life.)

- **John 6:27:** "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the

Father sealed."

When Jesus told the Jews that they needed to believe in Him, they were still **focused** on food. They ignored what Jesus told them about believing in Him.

- **John 6:47, 52:** "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. ... The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

When the Jews accused Jesus of being born of fornication (which was a lie), He didn't allow them to change the subject. Instead He remained **focus** on the fact that the Jews rejected both Him and God the Father.

- **John 8:41-42:** "Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

When Greek widows were being neglected, the disciples looked for people who could take care of them so they could remain **focused** on proclaiming the gospel. (In other words, the disciples didn't try to do everything themselves. There were some tasks they gave to others.)

- **Acts 6:2-3:** "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,

whom we may appoint over this business."

When Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch, they **focused** on the fact that God was saving the Gentiles and giving them faith.

- **Acts 14:27:** "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."

We must not **focus** on the wealthy and ignore the poor.

- **Romans 12:16:** "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Paul was the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. (In other words, his ministry was primarily **focused** on the Gentiles.)

- **Romans 15:16:** "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost."

It's carnal to claim that we follow a specific preacher. The Lord Jesus Christ alone must be our **focus**.

- **1 Corinthians 3:4-5:** "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"

We must remain **focused** on God, who causes the seeds of the gospel to sprout in our life. We must not take our eyes off of our Savior.

- **1 Corinthians 3:7:** "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

The reason it's a great blessing to remain unmarried is because those who are single can **focus** solely on the Lord.

- **1 Corinthians 7:32:** "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord:"
- **1 Corinthians 7:34:** "There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband."

Those who are married are unable to **focus** solely on the Lord. They have many distractions in their life that unmarried people don't have to worry about.

- **1 Corinthians 7:33:** "But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife."
- **1 Corinthians 7:34:** "There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband."

We must not be self-centered and **focus** only on our own needs and desires. (Instead we must care about other people, and seek their welfare.)

- **1 Corinthians 10:24:** "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."

Our **focus** must be on the glory of God. We must seek to glorify Him in all things, including what we eat and drink.

- **1 Corinthians 10:31:** "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Paul's teachings to the Corinthian church were **focused** and sincere. They didn't waver and weren't double-minded.

- **2 Corinthians 1:18:** "But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay."

Paul didn't **focus** on "building his brand". Instead of boasting about himself he remained focused on the gospel.

- **2 Corinthians 3:1:** "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?"

Paul viewed his suffering from a perspective of how it impacted the spread of the gospel. That was his **focus**.

- **2 Corinthians 4:10:** "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus

might be made manifest in our body."

We must live by faith. This means looking toward the things which are still to come, instead of **focusing** on the things of this world (which are going to be destroyed).

- **2 Corinthians 4:18:** "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

It wasn't wrong for an apostle to **focus** on preaching the gospel to one group of people, at the expense of another group of people. (Paul focused on preaching to the Gentiles while Peter focused on preaching to the Jews.)

- **Galatians 2:7:** "But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter;"

When we sing psalms or hymns or spiritual songs, our **focus** should be on God.

- **Ephesians 5:19:** "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;"

Paul didn't say the church should be striving for the gospel and other causes as well. Instead its **focus** was to be on the gospel.

- **Philippians 1:27:** "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and

see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

Christians must not ignore what's going on in the church. We're not allowed to **focus** on our own problems and ignore what's going on in the lives of others.

- **Philippians 2:4:** "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

Paul didn't want to give any attention to his old life. Instead he wanted to **focus** on the race that was still ahead of him.

- **Philippians 3:13:** "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,"

Our **focus** should be on Heaven, not on the things of this world.

- **Philippians 3:20:** "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:"

We must remain **focused** on Christ.

- **Colossians 2:8:** "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

The church must remain **focused** on Christ.

- **Colossians 2:17:** "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

When Paul wrote his letter to the Colossian church he didn't emphasize his problems or make the letter all about him. Although he did mention his own needs, he **focused** on the needs of the Colossian church.

- **Colossians 4:3:** "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."

Paul wanted the Thessalonian church to **focus** on faithfulness and pleasing God. He didn't suggest that the church could sacrifice those goals in order to attract new members.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:1:** "Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

Paul taught it was important for the persecuted Thessalonian church to know about the coming resurrection of the dead and **focus** on it. He thought the doctrines of end times were both important and relevant for them.

- **1 Thessalonians 4:14:** "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Paul repeatedly refers to the rapture in his letters. He keeps

bringing it up as something that was relevant and important for churches to **focus** on.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:23:** "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul didn't tell churches to ignore prophecy and **focus** on other things. Instead he expected them to understand it (so they wouldn't be deceived or fall into fear).

- **2 Thessalonians 2:2:** "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."

Christians should **focus** on things that edify the church.

- **1 Timothy 1:4:** "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."

Paul didn't say that churches should focus on both physical exercise and pursuing godliness. Instead he said the **focus** should be on godliness, because that benefits both this life and the life to come.

- **1 Timothy 4:8-9:** "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance."

Paul didn't teach that it's fine to **focus** on the major doctrines

of the Bible and neglect the rest. Instead he said we must strive to be spotless, blameless, and faithful in *all* things (not just the big things).

- **1 Timothy 6:14:** "That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:"

Paul compared the Christian walk to a soldier who's completely **focused** on gaining victory on the battlefield, and has cast off everything that might distract him from that goal.

- **2 Timothy 2:4:** "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

We must remain **focused** on Jesus.

- **Hebrews 12:2:** "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

James didn't say that Christians should **focus** on the most important doctrines and leave the rest alone. Instead he said we must be free from error. James didn't allow any level of error (in any matter) that was acceptable.

- **James 1:16:** "Do not err, my beloved brethren."

We should **focus** on the things of God (which are eternal) instead of the things of this world (which will one day be destroyed).

- **1 Peter 1:24-25:** "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- **2 Peter 3:10-11:** "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,"

Even when Peter was facing imminent martyrdom, he was still **focused** on virtue and godliness.

- **2 Peter 1:3:** "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:"

Christians should be **focused** on the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It should motivate us in our daily lives.

- **1 John 3:2-3:** "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Heaven is **focused** on the glory, honor, and praise of God.

- **Revelation 4:9-11:** "And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."
- **Revelation 7:11-12:** "And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."
- **Revelation 19:1:** "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:"

The devil's **focus** in the second half of the tribulation will be getting people to worship the antichrist.

- **Revelation 13:12:** "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."

The **focus** of the saints throughout the eternal state (after the final day of judgment) is going to be serving God.

- **Revelation 22:3:** "And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his

servants shall serve him:"