

Missing The Point

Joe Slater

As creatures of the flesh, we focus easily on matters we can perceive with the five senses while missing any spiritual import. Jesus' disciples heard Him teach about God's love and concern for sinners and how they should deal with sins committed against them. Peter then asked, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" (Matthew 18:21).

Yes, give me a number! Seven seems like quite a few. If it's more, how many more? I need a number!

But Peter was missing the point! Jesus wasn't talking about keeping a ledger. His concern wasn't with numbers but with attitudes and relationships! Brothers being united outranked keeping a scorecard.

The same lack of spiritual discernment plagues us today. "How often do I have to attend services? Is one hour on Sunday sufficient? After all, the Bible doesn't command a second meeting Sunday evening or Bible classes Sunday morning or Wednesday night. If I come only three Sundays a month, can I still go to heaven?"

If you have to ask, you've missed the point! Do you also ask, "How many meals do I have to eat to stay alive?"

Here's another one: "How much do I have to give?" That generally calls for a dollar amount or a percentage of income. Then we debate about gross as opposed to net income. But once again, if you have to ask, you've missed the point!

How about this: "How much Bible reading must I do? Is a chapter per day enough? Once through the Bible in a year? Give me a number!" You see the pattern, don't you?

Let's open our spiritual eyes and see the point!

Watch Your Step!

Tim Malone was just strolling through the Skateland parking lot where he works, browsing through his phone. As he neared the front entrance, he failed to see the 4-foot-long snake directly ahead of him. With his eyes fixed on his phone, he stepped on the snake, which immediately sunk its teeth into Malone's leg. Feeling the pain, Tim jumped away in horror. Luckily, the serpent was only a non-venomous bull snake. While Malone left with a couple of marks on his leg, he was able to escape without serious harm.

It is important to watch our step. Becoming distracted and focusing on the wrong things can end in disaster. Scripture gives us a great deal of guidance about the way we should walk spiritually. We are told to walk...

*In love (Romans 14:15; Ephesians 5:2).

*By the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 22-25).

*In a matter worthy of the calling and of the Lord (Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12).

*In the light (Ephesians 5:8; 1 John 1:7)

*As wise men (Ephesians 5:15).

*With Christ (Colossians 2:6).

*In truth (2 John 6; 3 John 3-4).

It is vital to carefully walk according to Scripture. Of course, we also need to make sure we do not step out in danger. Scripture instructs us to keep from walking...

*According to the flesh (Romans 8:4; 2 Corinthians 10:2-3).

*According to the world (Ephesians 2:2).

*In futility of mind (Ephesians 5:2).

*In darkness (1 John 1:6; 2:11).

When we get distracted by the worldly things of this life, we are the most vulnerable to that old crafty serpent. As we move towards the Lord, let us be sure to watch our step and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus (Hebrews 12:2).

--Via Mt. Carmel Church of Christ, Athens, AL

I Want To Be A Worker

Every employer in the world would love to have employees that Want To Work! Jesus pointed out that now is the time to work, for "the night is coming when no man can work" (John 9:4).

We sing, "I want to be a worker for the Lord." The first thing a worker for the Lord must do is to love the Lord's instructions! "*Be doers of the word, and not hearers only*" (James 1:22). Jesus said if we love Him we will obey Him (John 14:15).

Working for the Lord will make a difference on the Day of Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46). We serve one another because we love one another (Galatians 5:13). We are to serve as we have opportunity (Galatians 6:10).

We sing, "I want to be a worker every day." Do we really mean Every Day? How many can sing with meaning, "I want to be a worker **every day**"? Desire is what is lacking in so many lives! Desire comes from a heart that appreciates what Jesus has done.

The grave is coming to all of us, and we have no idea when it will take away our opportunities to work. The wise Solomon wrote, "*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going*" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

With all of this in mind, let us be workers for the Lord every day!

--Joe Dale Wilson (via *Old Paths*) adapted

Look In Your Bible And Fill In The Blank:

"And now why are you waiting? Arise and _____ and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16)

Option #1: Recite the Sinner's Prayer

Option #2: Be baptized