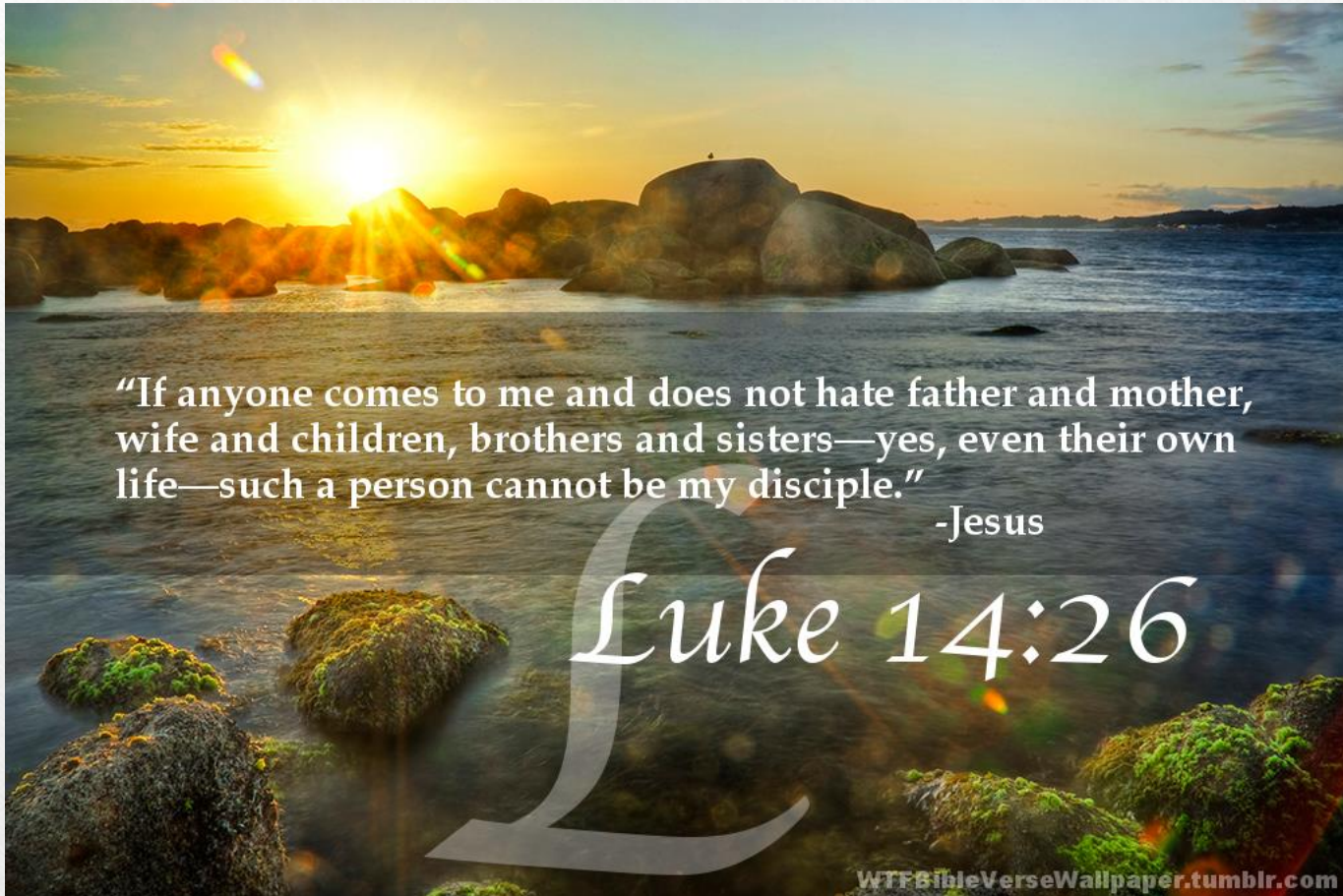




"If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother,
wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own
life—such a person cannot be my disciple."

-Jesus

Luke 14:26

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Distractions

Outline

- Definition
- Common forms of distractions
- Why are we so easily distracted?
- What are the consequences of unopposed distractions?
- Next week: The Remedy

Definition

- Drawing away from, divides the attention, or prevents concentration.
- Inability to focus on the things that actually matters
- EX: San Francisco train passengers



Definition

- EX: King Ahab
- “Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat...” (1 Kings 16:30-31)



Forms of Distractions

- Technology
 - Social media
 - Games
- News
- Endless sports
- Busyness
- Money
- People



Why are we easily distracted?

- We have an integral urge to be distracted
- Ex: Eve
- As a psychological defense mechanism to avoid moments of silence and solitude



Consequences of Unopposed Distractions

- Loss of productivity
 - Workers spend 41% of time on Facebook
 - The average college student spends 3 hours per day checking social sites and 2 hours studying.
- Loss of resources
 - Distractions by social media in the work place cost the American economy about \$650 Billion dollar per year

Consequences of Unopposed Distractions

- Loss of Self-control
 - The brain gets used to instant gratification
 - With time, it becomes increasingly hard to resist distractions
- Loss of Unity
- Loss of Life
 - Distracted driving is the #1 cause of road accidents in the US.

The Spiritual Cost

- “**Forgetting God and grasping at the world**, we become subject to unhealthy desires and addictive behaviors, driven by a continuous **preoccupation with and pursuit of nothing**. Being fixated on the superficial appearances of things, we have no awareness of their deeper meanings or mutual relatedness, but seek only that part of an object or person that can temporarily satisfy our desire for pleasure. Habitually surrendering to our irrational drives and impulses, **the mind becomes enslaved to sensations** (bodily or psychological); we splinter into **isolated fragments, leading double and triple lives**, being self-divided into numberless, unrelated acts, so that our pursuit of pleasure contributes, not to the unity of the self and the world, but to the disintegration and disorganization of both. **Divided into unrelated acts of irrational sensation, the mind receives only the fleeting impression of something finite and isolated from everything else.**” (*Orthodox Spirituality*, Fr. Dumitru Stanilaoe)

The Spiritual Cost

- How then can we expect to stand for some time in prayer?
- “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ (Lk. 13:24-27)

Summary

- Distractions
- Why are we so easily distracted?
 - We have an integral urge to be distracted
 - We try to avoid knowing our true selves
- What are the consequences of unopposed distractions?
 - Loss of productivity
 - Loss of resources
 - Loss of Self-control
 - Loss of Life
 - The Spiritual Cost
- NEXT WEEK: The Remedy: Silence and Solitude