



DEALING WITH DISTRACTIONS: FOCUS ON JESUS

The window in my office overlooks 38th Street through some trees. Often, while I am working at my desk, I will look up and out of the window and see a car drive by, or someone walking their dog down the street, or someone at a neighbor’s house, or a squirrel jumping from branch to branch, or a bird nibbling on a piece of bread it picked up from the sidewalk, or... well, you get the point.

Once distracted, I may get up to get coffee, check my phone for messages, open a letter, etc., and spend the next 15 or 20 minutes doing something that could have waited for later. The distraction diverted my attention away from the important matter that I was working on to something usually less important. As a result of my time, which I generally do not have, and my attention being taken away from what I was working on, I must borrow time, which I still do not have, and attention from something else to compensate for the time that I wasted.

The devil is very aware that he cannot stop us from accomplishing God’s purpose and plan for us. However, the devil is also very aware of the power of distractions. Distractions divert our attention away from the more or most important things. Even worse, the devil will use distractions to divert our

attention away from God (the most important thing) to something else less important thereby altering and adjusting our outcomes.

In Matthew 14:22-33, after feeding the large crowd, Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The mission for the disciples was clear: Get in the boat, and go ahead of Jesus to the other side. Inherent in the statement of the mission is the acknowledgment that they would make it to the other side. As they journeyed to the other side, the boat began to be tossed by the waves because the wind was contrary (that is, opposing them and working against them).

We can imagine the fear and anxiety that began to set in. We can envision the attempts they made to control the boat and keep it afloat. We can perceive their cries of despair as they considered arriving at the shore now unattainable and the realistic prospects of them succumbing to the storm and being buried in a watery grave. In the midst of their dilemma, Jesus approaches them walking on the water. Conquering what was overwhelming them.

Peter asked, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” Jesus answered, “Come.” Peter exited the boat and walked on the water to Jesus. Unfortunately, Peter saw the boisterous wind, he became fearful and began to sink. The strong wind and waves distracted Peter and drew his focus away from Jesus.

Please identify the “strong winds” of distraction in your life right now that are drawing your focus away from Jesus – causing you to sink

WHY EDUCATION AND THE ACCURATE TEACHING OF OUR HISTORY MATTERS

Following is a small selection of books that have been banned in the identified counties of Florida and books identified by the ACLU of Massachusetts that are banned.

We understand that some fear that these books will actually be read by someone. Even more, they fear that these books, and others like them, will open the eyes of young Black and White school students and assist them in waking up to the realities of what has happened in our past and empower them to work for a different outcome for our future.

Therefore, since they have determined that these books, and others like them, are dangerous to the fulfilling of their agenda, I encourage you to read these books, get them for your children and grandchildren to read, buy them as gifts for your colleagues and peers to read.

Think about it, if these books posed no threat to them and the fulfilling of their agenda, they would not ban them.

Broward County, FL

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

Clay County, FL

The Fire Next Time by James Baldwin

Woke: A Young Poets Call to Justice by Mahogany L. Browne

Escambia County, FL

Beloved by Toni Morrison

Palm Beach County, FL

Anne Frank's Diary: the Graphic Adaptation by Ari Folman

Letter from the Birmingham Jail by Martin Luther King Jr.

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry by Mildred D. Taylor

The 1619 Project: Born on the Water by Nikole Hannah-Jones

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

The ACLU of Massachusetts has chosen to highlight a few pivotal, Black-authored books that have been targeted — recently or historically — for censorship.

The Hate U Give, Angie Thomas (2017)

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou (1969)

The Color Purple, Alice Walker (1982)

The Bluest Eye, Toni Morrison (1970)

Beloved, Toni Morrison (1982)

The New Kid, Jerry Craft (2019)

Class Act, Jerry Craft (2020)

The 1619 Project, Nikole Hannah-Jones (2019)

Native Son, Richard Wright (1940)

Black Boy, Richard Wright (1945)

Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neal Hurston (1937)

Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison (1952)



PILGRIM REST

MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Teaching, Preaching and Reaching for
Transformation and Liberation**

The Pilgrim Rest Oasis

Sharing the Faith · Securing the Future

Through faith God has given us the space to be an **oasis** in the middle of the city.

An **oasis** is a fertile spot in the desert where refuge, relief, and refreshment is found.

Be part of God's plan for Pilgrim Rest and this community.

Start contributing to the **Oasis** today!
Let's continue to make progress!



Thank you for your continued support of God's plan for us.

Beginning



Current



Your contribution can be dedicated to a specific activity or the Oasis, in general.

	Educational Enrichment	Technology Literacy	Athletics & Recreation	Performing Arts	Facility Innovation
\$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 Subject books for elementary (math, literature, history, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 basketballs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 art sets for aspiring artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External security lighting to keep the street well-lit and safe
\$1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Summer Bridge books to help students retain learning during breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 "learn how to code" kits for elementary students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 tennis rackets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 beginner saxophones or 8 beginner violins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Camera security system to keep everyone safe
\$2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 students can be challenged to excel using interactive problem-solving programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 computer for graphic design and website creation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 sets of golf clubs for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Play Scripts with performance/licensing fee and cast instructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wireless PA system to easily communicate at the school
\$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 smartboard to help teachers engage students in learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 STEM lab cart of materials for a classroom with multiple activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3-day Speed and Agility workshop for 15 young aspiring track stars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 pairs of tap shoes for aspiring dancers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Battery operated floor scrubber to keep the building looking its best
\$10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 trip for 15 students to visit 1 HBCU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Robotic kits to reinforce studies in STEAM subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open gym for 20 young people 1 X a week throughout the winter in a safe place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 tickets to see Alvin Ailey Dance Company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LED light fixtures throughout the school to promote learning and natural light

WORK FOR THE WEEK

NOVEMBER MEMORY VERSE

¹⁰ This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

1 Timothy 4:10

NOVEMBER MEDITATION QUOTE

"Those of us who refuse to live under oppression and the threat to our existence are dangerous to this society because we become symbols of hope to our brothers and sisters, inspiring them to follow our example."

George Jackson – Soledad Brother

TODAY'S STUDY QUESTIONS AND MEDITATION:

Name some things that are distracting you right now (ex. people, technology, social media, money, worries, "stuff")? _____

FOR THE YOUTH

Name some things that are distracting you right now (ex. people, technology, social media, money, worries, "stuff")? _____
