



WHERE IS YOUR FOCUS?
Derek Beauchamp, Midtown Lead Pastor
October 3, 2021

The Crossing Church
Las Vegas, Nevada

OPENING

This week our new Midtown Lead Pastor, Derek Beauchamp, is speaking to us about focusing on God, our families, doing a good job, serving our church and community, etc. He is helping us determine what is distracting us and how we can learn to focus on Jesus. He is excited to build on the great foundation that has already been laid at Midtown.

SCRIPTURE¹

Hebrews 12:1-2 (ESV) Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every **weight** and **sin** which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the **race** that is set before us, **looking to Jesus**, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame and is **seated at the right hand of the throne of God**.

OBSERVATION

The unknown author of Hebrews points out that we come from a long line of faithful people, i.e., Moses, David, Abraham, who had to endure the craziness of their world and stay focused on God. He encourages us to lay aside every weight and sin that clings to us. The definition of **weight** in this context is something that slows us down and steals our focus. **Sin** is defined as something that keeps us from living the life God has designed for us. It keeps us from God's best.

QUESTION: Who are other such Biblical witnesses can you name? What does their lives tell you about God's love and protection?

APPLICATION

God has a plan for each of our lives. He has ways He wants to use us. He has meaningful work for us to do and the race is set before us. A race takes something from us: Time, energy, commitment, and gives us pain in return, but perseverance through that pain is a valued virtue in God's Kingdom. Every other place outside of Jesus that we look or place our focus will let us down. When we obsess over money, fame, status, family or achievement – which we turn into idols – we think they will satisfy, but just the opposite happens – we continue to yearn for more. Tim Keller said, "The human heart is an idol factory that takes good things like a successful career, love, material possessions, even family, and turns them into ultimate things. Our hearts deify them as the center of our lives because we think they can give us significance and security, safety and fulfillment, if we attain them. But only when we focus on Jesus will everything come into perspective." Only then are we freed

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture referenced here is NIV .

to enjoy our work and see meaning in it, but not identity; we are freed to love our families and not obsess over their imperfections; we are freed to love and forgive others, not needing them to be perfect.

QUESTION: Where is your focus today?

QUESTION: What is your idol factory of a heart still harboring?

QUESTION: In what areas of your life do you feel unsafe or insecure?

QUESTION: What sin is clinging closely to you?

QUESTION: Whose imperfections are you continuing to focus on today? How are they affecting your relationship with this person?

God has a better plan for our lives than we do. He wants to use us to serve others, do meaningful work, love our families and so much more. We like to hear this, but it is not always easy. Christianity is not a spectator sport. It is a race that requires perseverance and our total focus and commitment.

QUESTION: What does the race you are running look like? What is impeding your ability to persevere?

QUESTION: Tell us about a time when you thought you couldn't go any further yet persevered and won the race set before you.

So, here is what we want to focus on – the Good News of Jesus' Gospel. This does not mean everything in our lives is perfect, but it does mean we have perspective when things don't go as planned. – that's when we need to look for "Godwinks", those small touches of His love or circumstances that tell us He is nearby and has not abandoned us. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the throne of God and that means He is in control even when everything else fails. If life feels lacking, out of control or empty – put aside weights and sins and focus on Jesus.

QUESTION: What "Godwinks" have you experienced recently? How did they encourage you?

Our previous series called **Life on Mission** gives us five areas on which we can focus: **1) Gather Purposefully.** Making the choice to focus on being part of the rhythm of our church, being inspired, and motivated for the work God has for us; **2) Connect Deeply.** Getting into community with other people headed in the same direction as we are; **3) Serve Selflessly.** Finding areas where we can step in and serve with our unique gifts, talents and passions; **4) Give Generously.** Not just giving resources, but trusting that God will use those resources to accelerate ministry around the world; **5) Influence Daily.** Using our unique space in life that we occupy to live out our faith and model Jesus to the world.

QUESTION: Since our study about Life on Mission, what has changed in your life? How are you modeling Jesus to others?

Let's challenge ourselves to a personal vision: If we want more peace in our lives, more purpose, more joy, let's set aside weights and sins and focus on our Savior and all He taught us through His thirty-three years among us and what His Holy Spirit is teaching us daily.

QUESTION: What do you know about The Crossing Midtown? Why not visit sometime, meet Pastor Derek and experience all that is taking place to serve God in that community? Is it possible that God is calling you to minister to the population living there?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, it is an amazing realization to know You take joy in us. What are we that through Your incomprehensible mercy and grace You would feel joy in the meager offerings we raise up to You? We praise You in gratitude for all of Your blessings to us in this life and the next. In Jesus' name, Amen.

QUESTIONS

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