

The CHOICE
April 24, 2022
Week 7 End of Series!

DIRECTION, not Intention, leads to your Destination-
but I want to **ADD** another key word to our series Tag
Line! **ATTENTION... to your Direction.**

“As your ATTENTION goes... so goes your Life.”

Question: *What has the power to get your Attention?*

We live in a world full of DISTRACTION Overload!
There is so much vying for your attention.

- **Big Billboards**
- **Infomercials**
- **Coupon flyers**
- **YouTube commercials**

On I-95 South... your enticed to pull off at every exit.
But one business in South Carolina puts all the others
to shame. (2 PICs) *South of the Border*

If you take I-90 West... you'll be tempted by another
Roadside Attraction known as, *Wall Drug Store*
(3 PICs).

From just outside Chicago, and for the next 500
miles, it's Billboards, with most of them adding a
line for “Free Ice Water”.

By the time you get to its location on the Western side of South Dakota... *the pressure is so strong... you just HAVE to stop!*

These however, like many things that draw our ATTENTION, do not live up to the hype.

It's all about the Path, and it's Direction!

The reality is... *You are where you are... because that's the PATH you have chosen.*

It's really as simple as that!

As we close our series, I've got one more teaching point for us today. **ATTENTION provides Direction, and it's Direction that determines our Destination.**

You see, whatever we give our Attention to... will slowly begin to pull us into its Path. It's these influences that can either bring about great success, or produce grave danger to our lives.

What am I talking about?

In the arena of Distractions- when our kids learn to drive, we understand how important it is for them... not to get Distracted.

When kids first start driving, they're often more interested in adjusting the radio, than the rear-view mirror! Our job is to help them focus, and limit distractions that could prove to be fatal.

The “No Texting while Driving” pledge has gained traction, because... It’s easy to allow distractions to lead us onto the wrong Pathway.

Not that all distractions are bad. Debbie was very distracted by me while we were in college... and that turned out to be a really good thing

To challenge the things that tend to grab, or capture our attention to keep us from the right Path, we need WISDOM.

I. PAY Attention

Isn’t that an interesting phrase? Why do we associate the term Pay, with Attention? [*Pay implies Price, Cost, Giving away something of Value.*]

Does this make sense?

- Don’t Pay Attention to HEALTH when you’re young... and later down the road it’s going to cost you.**
- Don’t DISCIPLINE your child properly, and as they grow older they will pay a hard price.**
- Act foolishly with your MONEY in your younger, money-making days, and when it’s time for retirement... there’ll be nothing to live on!**

As we've seen over the past weeks, it was the DISTRACTIONS that humbled David, Solomon, and Rehoboam. However, their miscalculations did not start that trend in Israel. Sadly... that pathway was already well-worn.

As God was giving His DIRECTION to Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land... He provided this instruction to capture their ATTENTION.

Deuteronomy 7:9- Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the Faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations... of those who love him and keep his commandments... Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today.

If you PAY ATTENTION to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the LORD your God will keep his covenant of love with you... as he swore to your ancestors. He will love you and bless you and increase your numbers.

There's some truths in there for us today!

A. The Declaration of HIS Nature...

**I am God... your God
I am forever Faithful
I Love you**

God is a Covenant Keeper- He always does what He says, and He BLESSES when WE do what He commands! Cause & Effect

There's more...

B. His DECREE over OUR Nature

Israel was surrounded by pagan people! They did ungodly things. They worshipped false gods...

And WE, like THEM... the more you're around an Influence, there's an ATTRACTION to DISTRACTIONS

Here's the Caution- These distractions seem casual. Maybe almost undetectable. Most of the time...we never see it coming. It's usually a slow fade.

- **David took a Second Glance**
- **Solomon indulged his flesh so that at the end...Everything was meaningless...and that was simply the opening of the floodgate.**

To get things Right, and Consistent we use a TEMPLATE

We live in a town where there are a lot of businesses built on *exacting tolerances*. A human hair is on average 100 microns thick (1/10 of a millimeter). To some of you in the tool and die industry, that's like the Grand Canyon! *You're dealing with Tolerances in 1- 1 Thousandths*

**Question- Does anyone know what the problem is?
Small discrepancies are usually undetectable at first,
but the longer it goes, it will no longer line up with the
template!**

Good... is not good enough

Ball parking it... is not good enough

It's looks good from Caughey!

- **Your spiritual life did not implode in a day**
- **Your marriage didn't end, all of a sudden**
- **Your kids didn't turn out to be a terror when they turned 14**
- **Your retirement account didn't turn up empty One Day**
- **You didn't stop going to church all at once!**

**This is why God establishes Himself and His Ways as
the Master Template!**

- **How have we slipped ground from a decade ago?
Slowly**
- **Why isn't the church seeing the things we saw 30
years ago? We've been Distracted.**

**From Deuteronomy to Jeremiah to Jesus... Israel was
in a perpetual state of Distraction.**

Jeremiah 7:21-26

“This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves! For when I brought your ancestors out of Egypt and spoke to them, *I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices... but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in obedience to all I command you, that it may go well with you.*

But they did not listen or Pay Attention; instead, they followed the stubborn inclinations of their evil hearts. They went backward and not forward...

They did not listen to me or pay attention. They were stiff-necked and did more evil than their ancestors.’

Today’s Challenge...

II. Plan AHEAD

Today you are in the position to Choose your Destination, rather than Discovering it once you arrive... and for most of us, it will require some sort of Change.

Hebrews 2:1- We must PAY the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

You see, God is not just concerned about the *Direction of your Life*, but the *Quality of your Life* as well!

So... *You probably know!*

- **What deserves MORE of your Attention today?**
- **What really has my Affection?**
- **What changes am I resisting?**
- **Am I giving attention to something now that a year ago wasn't even on the radar?**
- **What Distraction is controlling me?**

Matt 14: 24-31 Peter walks on the water

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, (*Who has ever Seen the Wind?*) he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me!”

31 Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.