

Overcoming a One-Track Mind

My early morning routine is to read several short devotionals while savoring a cup of coffee. The goal is to get my mind focused on God's direction rather than my own list of tasks to work on that day. There are times when it doesn't work as intended. An exciting project takes "center stage," and everything else gets moved to a "back burner." Or perhaps some lingering issue or worry overshadows my good intentions and diverts my attention away from God's direction. It takes a conscious choice to focus on God.

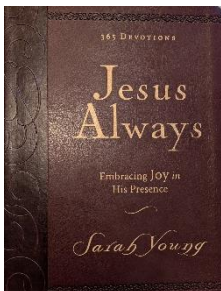
In recent weeks, I have been preoccupied with an intriguing project. It is a good one, and it is in the formative stage. The project is to research an ancestor's involvement in US history, dating back to the late 1800s and into the twentieth century. Months of research brought me to the point of being ready to organize what I learned from the extensive research. I dove headfirst into the project and let everything else take a back seat with my time, energy, and thoughts.



Here is the point: When other things dominate my thinking, it stifles what God created me to be. God wants me to look to Him for direction and let Him guide my steps. *In their hearts, humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps (Proverbs 16:9).* I don't think God wants me to put "my life on hold" to work full time on a project, ignoring opportunities He places in my path.

God spoke to me on the morning of February 25th when I read a devotion from Jesus Always. It was perfectly timed with being preoccupied with the project. Perhaps it will speak to you, too. Below is an exact quote of one paragraph from that reading:

"Staying conscious of Me when you're busy can be quite a challenge. But I have created you with an amazing mind that can function on more than one "track." Practicing My Presence involves dedicating one track to your relationship with Me. This practice has many benefits. When you are aware that I am present with you, you're less likely to do or say something that's displeasing to Me. When you're struggling with difficult circumstances or painful feelings, awareness of My Presence offers courage and comfort. I can use everything in your life for good – transforming you into My likeness with ever-increasing Glory."¹



We don't need to have only "one track" in our lives, especially a secular track that takes us away from what He created us to be. Doing so would mean that we are only concerned with what *we* want to do and oblivious to what God wants us to do. Start your day by putting God first, and other things will fall in place. Spend time with God and let Him be the defining track, and He will guide us in the other tracks of our lives.

The Bible Says: *And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith ... (Hebrews 12:2). And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).*

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord. Let us be motivated to serve others and respond to the needs all around us. You know our desires. Guide our priorities as we seek to do Your will and make a difference. Amen.

¹ Jesus Always, by Sarah Young, February 25 devotion