

A Pastor's Heart

Encouragement from Pastor McGill

Beware of Distance Killers

Acts 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

Every believer must be aware of what I call **distance killers**. A distance killer is anything or anyone that will discourage you from going the distance in your faith. We have all been called by God to finish. It stands to reason that there will be forces standing in our way to prevent us from finishing what God has called us to do. Mature believers will be aware of the distance killers that come to thwart God's plan for their lives.

In the text, Paul is speaking to the elders of the church from Ephesus. He gives them a wonderful account of his life and ministry and the perils that still stand in his way to finish his course. Paul stated something that we should always remember to practice. **“None of these things move me”** How many times have we been moved? How many times have we allowed anxiety, fear or procrastination to stop us? It's happened to me more times than I care to remember.

Today, I will deal with two specific distance killers. The first is anxiety. The origin of the word comes from the Greek word, *Mirimna*. *Mirimna* is defined as an abnormal or overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear marked by physiological signs (sweating, tension, increased pulse, etc); self doubt about one's capacity to cope with; rushed decision made without peace. God does not want His children to be anxious about anything. In fact, in *Philippians 4:6* we are charged to be anxious for nothing. Yet we live in a world that thrives and profits on anxiety. We are bombarded with advertisements, rushed decisions and purchases. These things are strategically placed in our paths to distract us and kill our distance. Remember what God has for you is for you and nobody can stay God's hand. We can overcome anxiety by practicing these five things:

1. Patience- We must operate in patience and wait on God's promises to manifest
2. Cast all your cares upon Christ – Practice giving your cares to the Lord and do not take them back
3. Resist the five senses - We must learn to walk by faith and by sight (things we can perceive with our natural senses)
4. Be filled with the Holy Spirit – We must be filled with the Holy Spirit everyday and be sensitive to and led by His Spirit
5. Pray fervently – We must persistent in prayer. When we really pray, our vantage point will change from how we see things to the way God sees them.

The second distance killer is Procrastination. Procrastination means to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done to the detriment of one's own well being. We all know the "I am going to get around to it Christians." Paul was a man of action and we are still benefitting from his ability to overcome procrastination. For those of us who have been attacked by this distance killer here are some practical tips on winning this battle.

1. ACT NOW - Today, at this moment, move closer to what needs to be done
2. Establish relationships with action oriented people (people of faith)
3. Recognize procrastination for what it is – a character flaw
4. Submit yourself to someone that will hold you accountable and give them permission to push you without offense.

Today don't be moved by these two distance killers. There is much that God wants to do through you. Finish your course with joy and make it a great day.

Blessings and Peace

Pastor McGill