

How Your Focus Sets Your Future

I once dated a guy, who lived by the motto, "Keep your friends close, your enemies closer."

We were deeply immersed in the drug scene, hypnotized by a false culture of camaraderie poisoned by distrust.

Admittedly, my moral compass certainly wasn't operating with great consistency or effectiveness, but the attitude of my boyfriend disgusted me. I hated this two-faced facet of his personality and his ability to look someone in the eye whilst lying, lulling them into a false sense of security so he could screw them over before they got the chance to do it to him.

He chose to keep imminent danger and betrayal within his grasp. "Better the devil you know", he would say.

His thinking was flawed, terribly terribly flawed.

He lived a life of torment.

He died a tormented death, dead before the age of 30.

Today, far removed from the betrayal and destruction of the drug culture, I'm living a life of hope and victory, surrounded by people carrying this same hope, and yet I encounter similar thinking to my ex-boyfriend. Christians, living by the phrase "keep your enemy close ..."

This attitude and thinking saddens me. As I journey along in this life, close to my God and unraveling the mysteries He has shrouded Himself in, mysteries put in place for the sole purpose of our searching and discovery, I begin to grasp just how much more of Him there is yet to unveil.

The more acquainted I become with Him, the more I realize how

much of Him I will never understand this side of eternity. His immensity is unfathomable; the depth of His grace, the scope of His love, His presence in this universe and the way He chooses to manifest that presence are inconceivable on a complete level to our human mind. I know Him more than I did even a short year ago, and yet there's infinite revelations for me to uncover.

This life is a flash.

A wisp of smoke dissipating into the atmosphere.

A blink.

I don't have time to focus on the enemy.

I don't have time to plot his schemes and uncover his tactics.

He deserves none of my focus. He's stolen enough; I will not consciously hand him more of my precious and fleeting time.

Moving into deeper levels of intimacy with my Creator, I begin to learn the way He works. I begin to understand His thinking, His focus, His heart.

If I was approached with information about my husband and his involvement in an extramarital affair, I wouldn't give the information a second thought, I would disregard it immediately.

Why? I know my husband; he is my best friend. I am intimately familiar with the way his mind works. I know his priorities, I know his standard, his behavior, his character. I am aware of the traits that line up with his character and can easily dismiss those that don't.

It is important to know the tactics of the enemy, to know the subtlety with which he attempts to twist and influence our thoughts. But these subtleties become sounding alarms when weighed against the character of our God.

Knowing God, really truly knowing Him, studying Jesus, learning the things that compelled Him, focusing on His ministry and His mission, throwing yourself into His love and desiring to radiate that love is what will equip you against the ploys of evil.

Jesus did not spend the precious few years He had on this earth studying his enemy and its evil, seeking to eradicate all influence of it from his life. He sought out the will of His Father, He sought to reconcile man to God, He went in search of the lost and the broken, swiftly rebuking wickedness when it crossed His path but giving it no more credence than it was due.

I can't tell you how many people with whom I do prayer ministry who are shocked to discover that they've been believing lies about themselves for many, many years, lies that have shaped their thinking and behavior.

We know that Satan is a liar; he's called the Father of Lies for a reason. Yet knowing Him in greater intimacy, keeping him close, will not expose his lies; it will just lull you into a false security while he launches other tactics.

Knowing God, learning to hear His voice, tuning your ear, your heart to His voice—this is the only way you will be able to truly recognize the voices of deception.

Do not let the fear of an unknown enemy paralyze your thinking and effectiveness.

You have within your grasp an invitation to intimacy with the Creator of the universe.

You have been gifted with a limited lifetime to fulfil the purpose for which you were designed, don't waste a second of it by allowing your focus to fall into the wrong place.

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