

SG

Your *group* matters.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

Sweaters or sweatshirts, fleece or flannels to stay warm in our great MN winters? Why?

1. Quick checkup: how has your focus changed or sharpened on Jesus since we've begun this series focusing up on Him?
2. Read [Colossians 2:6-8](#). What steps are we given to sharpen our focus, and what is the expected result?
3. What are some ways you have seen false teachings of special knowledge, religious practices or spiritual experiences, and how has it affected your focus on Jesus? Use [Colossians 2:16-21](#) and [Galatians 5:1](#) to help you process this question.
4. Pastor Nate led us to the truths of [Colossians 2:9-10, 13-14](#) and how our focus needs to be on these things. How do they differ from the false teachings of the last question, and how will your experience change when you choose to focus on this truth? ([Colossians 2:15](#))
5. Wrap up by discussing Pastor Nate's closing question: "Are you persistently focused on Jesus?" If you don't like your answer... what's off; persistently, focused, or Jesus? How can we help you choose to make the necessary adjustments?

Day One: [Luke 18](#)

Day Two: [Exodus 12](#)

Day Three: [Colossians 1](#)

Day Four: [Revelation 19](#)

Day Five: [Song of Songs 8](#)

This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.

PERSONAL GUIDE



RIVERSIDE CHURCH



FOCUS UP

"UNFOCUSED"

Jan 28, 2024 Pastor Nate Sickler

MYRC.CHURCH



MESSAGE NOTES

"UNFOCUSED"

Pastor Nate Sickler

...what we're focused on impacts everything about our lives personally, internally, spiritually, emotionally, and relationally.

1. The _____ pursuit of Jesus and His way is _____ challenged by distractive and destructive ideas and practices. ([Colossians 2:6-8](#))

a. _____ - a functional belief that through our own effort we can attain salvation and spiritual growth.

b. In Colossae this legalism came in the _____ of Gnosticism, Asceticism, and Mysticism... ([Colossians 2:16-21](#))

- i. Gnosticism = special _____
- ii. Asceticism = special _____
- iii. Mysticism = special _____

c. These teachings are just as present _____ as in the 1st Century.

2. The _____ of these distractive and disruptive teachings is that they _____ free people. ([Galatians 5:1](#))

a. Like the lenses in telescopes, binoculars, and microscopes; the order of our _____ determines how effectively we focus.

3. The only effective order of our focus is to see _____ through the lens of Jesus and His life-giving work for us. ([Colossians 2:9-10, 13-14](#))

a. This is possible because Jesus has not only provided freedom, but also _____ over sin, death and the enemy! ([Colossians 2:15](#))

As we embrace the truth of God's Word we will _____ freedom instead of bondage, grace instead of condemnation, and victory instead of defeat.

Am I focused UP?

- Is your focus on practice _____ a person or a person _____ your practice?
- Are you _____ focused on Jesus?

Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey! Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital* or hard copy). *MYRC.LINK/CONNECT or text **riverside** to **94000**



SMALL GROUP
guide on the back



MESSAGE NOTES

"UNFOCUSED"

Pastor Nate Sickler

...what we're focused on impacts everything about our lives personally, internally, spiritually, emotionally, and relationally.

1. The continual pursuit of Jesus and His way is continually challenged by distractive and destructive ideas and practices. ([Colossians 2:6-8](#))

- a. Legalism - a functional belief that through our own effort we can attain salvation and spiritual growth.
- b. In Colossae this legalism came in the form of Gnosticism, Asceticism, and Mysticism... ([Colossians 2:16-21](#))
 - i. Gnosticism = special knowledge
 - ii. Asceticism = special practice
 - iii. Mysticism = special experience
- c. These teachings are just as present today as in the 1st Century.

2. The tragedy of these distractive and disruptive teachings is that they reimprison free people. ([Galatians 5:1](#))

- a. Like the lenses in telescopes, binoculars, and microscopes; the order of our spiritual lenses determines how effectively we focus.

3. The only effective order of our focus is to see everything through the lens of Jesus and His life-giving work for us. ([Colossians 2:9-10, 13-14](#))

- a. This is possible because Jesus has not only provided freedom, but also victory over sin, death and the enemy! ([Colossians 2:15](#))

As we embrace the truth of God's Word we will experience freedom instead of bondage, grace instead of condemnation, and victory instead of defeat.

Am I focused UP?

- Is your focus on practice to please a person or a person who guides your practice?
- Are you persistently focused on Jesus?

Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey! Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital* or hard copy). *[MYRC.LINK/CONNECT](#) or text **riverside** to **94000**



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