

Titus 3:9 — “The Things You Must Deliberately Avoid!”

“Distraction ... is shifting our attention from something of greater importance to something of lesser importance” (Jon Bloom).

“The puritan Richard Steele wrote: A Distraction is a secret wandering of the Heart from God”
(Richard Steele).

BIG PICTURE — Titus 3 summary/outline

- Verses 1-2 - how to live in pagan society
- Verses 3-7 - motivation/power to live this way
- Verse 8 - priority of preaching & responding
- Verse 9 - maintain self-discipline & avoid folly.

THESIS — Titus 3 instructs us as to how to carefully use our time & prioritize our lives in TWO CONTRASTS.

1. what to pursue
2. what to avoid

I. WHAT YOU SHOULD PURSUE! (8b)

1. The preaching of the Bible
2. The practice of good works
3. The perseverance of the saints
4. The praise of Jesus Christ

II. WHAT YOU SHOULD AVOID (9)

The main verb: “avoid” -- to flee from; NLT: “don’t get involved”

Flee, turn away, shun, avoid these 4 distractions:

1. Foolish controversies —

1 Tim 1.4; 6.4; 2 Tim 2.23; Titus 3.9

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2. Genealogies —

1 Timothy 1:4-5

3. Strife —

Romans 1:29; Galatians 5:20

4. Disputes about the law —

1 Timothy 1:7; Titus 1:14-15

The reason? These are:

1. Unprofitable
2. Worthless

*Let *eternity* determine your priorities!*

- ➔Be **Loving** (1 Tim 1.4-5)
- ➔Be **Consumed** (1 Tim 4.15-16)
- ➔Be **God-pleasing** (2 Tim 2.15; cf. 2 Tim 2.4)
- ➔Be **Progressing** (1 Tim 6.20-21)
- ➔Be **Devoted** (Titus 3.8)
- ➔Be **Intentional** (Heb 12.1-2)

Practical Principles for Fighting Distractions & Knowing What to Avoid:

1. Start your day with God & His Word, not social media & this world.
2. Consider what you write (social media) and the ramifications it may have for you, your family, your church, and your gospel-witness.
3. Think twice about posting something controversial — check your motives.
4. With all your scrolling on social media, ensure you're kneeling before God in prayer.
 - a. Remember: One of the great uses of Twitter and Facebook will be to prove at the Last Day that prayerlessness was not from lack of time (John Piper)
5. Guard what you say & **why** you say what you say.
 - a. Bear in mind Prov 20.3 - Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.
6. Wisely use your time -- every minute belongs to God. He's given it to you; you're a steward of every minute -- it belongs to God. ***So use it well, as His steward, for His glory not for fleshly quarreling.***
7. So some thoughts: (1) begin your day with God; (2) watch your time & give every hour to Him; (3) Consider your witness & Christ's testimony; (4) quarreling is easy & sinful but patience is necessary & beneficial!

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An appropriate prayer:

Whatever it takes, Lord, increase my resolve to pursue only what you call me to do, and deliver me from the fragmenting effect of fruitless distraction. (Jon Bloom)

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing;

**O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!**

God of God, Light of Light;
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created

JESUS I COME

Out of my bondage, sorrow and night,
Jesus, I come; Jesus I come.
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of my sickness into Thy health,
Out of my wanting and into Thy wealth,
Out of my sin and into Thyself,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of the fear and dread of the tomb,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the joy and light of Thy home,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of the depths of ruin untold,
Into the peace of Thy sheltering fold,
Ever Thy glorious face to behold,
Jesus, I come to Thee.

Out of my shameful failure and loss,
Jesus, I come; Jesus, I come.
Into the glorious gain of Thy cross,
Jesus, I come to Thee.
Out of earth's sorrows into Thy balm,
Out of life's storms and into Thy calm,
Out of distress into jubilant psalm,
Jesus, I come to Thee.