

Escaping Diversion

SUBSTANCE

Proverbs 30:28



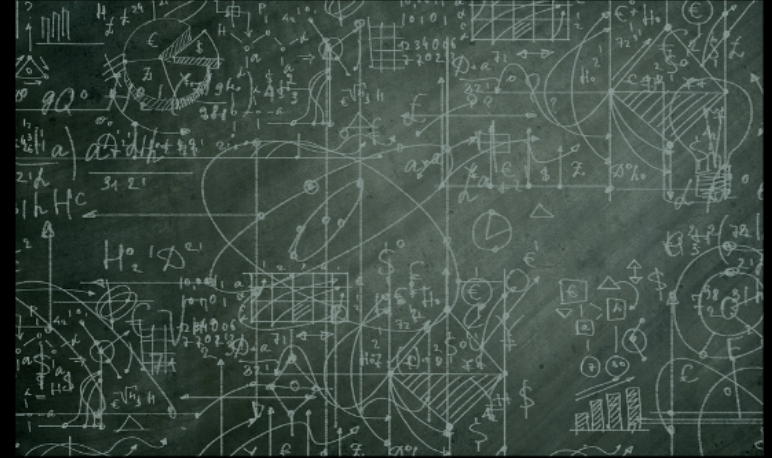
A lizard can be caught
with the hand,
yet it is found in kings' palaces.

Jim Stigler Math Experiment:

(Impossible problem, how long till you give up?)

American Kids: ~ 30 Seconds

Japanese Kids: ~ 1 Hour



C.S. Lewis - We fortify ourselves against our least likely temptation

Diversion drains our God-given capacity for grit and focus

**There is no route to spiritual freedom and
substance without escaping diversion.**

**God's kingdom and
righteousness can't be
pursued by diversion.**

(Nor his peace or joy)

1. Diversion is bad.

(see it and flee it)

diversion is a characteristic of humanity, but has become an epidemic in modernity.

3 levels of Diversion:

1. Obvious fact
2. Longing wound (Pascal)
3. Modernity's epidemic

Result: **BIDA**

“Boredom induced distraction addiction”

Could also be:

Anxiety IDA

Responsibility IDA

Diversion's 7 threats to spiritual substance:

1. always present – no pursuit
2. immediate service – quick "hit" deadening pleasure
3. infinite "variety" – variety without originality
4. massively engrossing – accessing our most visceral senses
5. anesthetizes and distract from 'soul misery'
6. attention (focus) and discipline (grit) depleting effect
7. conscience deluding – "spy effect"

2. Discernment is good.

learn to see the difference between rest, leisure,
fun—and diversion.

Telling the difference:

Leisure – that which you have licensed to do; some thing that is free and available, for which you have time that is free and available

Diversion – pursuit diverting you from some duty or state (roles, responsibilities, repetitions).

"I want _____, because I don't want (to) _____."
(usually we are escaping boredom, anxiety or responsibility)

Telling the difference

when it isn't obvious:

Conscience – you have to know it's voice and know yourself
(as human and your habits and wounds)

Community – do those who love you and have the mind of
Christ on this think it is a diversion?

Biblical criteria for the mind of Christ in questionable matters: ("questionable" can be relative)

Bible Passage: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20,10:23-11:1

4 Biblical Criteria: (Emphasis on #4)

1. Is it beneficial? (for your true good)
2. Is it constructive? (for the true good of others)
3. Will it master you?
4. Does it align with who you are in Christ?

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (Ex: Theology of the Body)

"Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything. "Food for the **stomach** and the **stomach** for food"—but God will destroy them both. The **body** is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the **body**. By his power God **raised** the Lord **from the dead**, and he will **raise** us also. Do you not know that your **bodies** are **members** of Christ himself? Shall I then take the **members** of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in **body**? For it is said, "The two will become **one flesh.**" But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his **body**, but he who sins sexually sins against his own **body**. Do you not know that your **body** is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your **body**.

Examples:

1. Dating relationship
2. Talking to fun people
3. Video games vs. fishing
4. Tinkering in basement
5. Shopping
6. Work
7. Active parenting
8. Hobbies
9. Going to the gym
10. Social/political activism
11. One more degree...

Think/talk it through:

1. Is it beneficial to you?
2. Is it constructive for them?
3. Will it master you?
4. Is it who you are in Christ?

***None of these principles decide
most decisions for you.***

**We have to become virtuous enough for freedom
(back to 2 Peter 1:3-11)**

Have you ever tried to catch something without hurting it?

(real slime, shape and muscles)



It's constantly slipping out of your hands—
but if you spear it down you kill it.

2 principles for the use of freedom:

1. God doesn't want us to waste our lives

Romans 2:7, Galatians 5:6, 6:9, 1 Peter 2:15, etc.

2. God is not a slave owner

See the book of Exodus and 4th commandment

ESV 1 Timothy 6:17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, **who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.**

Tactics for fighting diversion:


- 1. Seek the Mind of Christ on diversion:** what is it really? A thief, a parasite and a spy
- 2. Ask:** do I return to my roles and responsibilities more refreshed and more engaged? (Or am I still thinking about _____.)

3. Use wisdom to help—*not legalism*

(Structure that helps, not rules that separate and justify)

Examples: Pre-decision rules, accountability software, Delete the app...

4. Replace the diversions that have to be cut

TV  family game, sport, reading, story telling, wrestling, small group, etc.

5. Real accountability

real humiliation, not fellow wallowers and snugglers

6. Use manners to direct your limits

should I be talking to a human that is right here?

7. Make a new "home" for your mind

Colossians 3 + John 17, Matthew 16:23, Romans 8, 12:1-2

Gracious striving

Battling diversion *IS* battling the Flesh, World, and Hell



Jesus already perfectly defeated diversion on your behalf

IT is an awkward, flopping, slippery, bloody, limp-creating, concussion inducing, struggle of constant failure—***in the right direction***