

Session 3: Recognizing Distractions and Delays

Part of the Singleness and Discernment Series · By Ellen Fox

Not Every Good Thing Is a God Thing

If you've ever found yourself busy with meaningful things—but unsure if they're the *right* things—you're not alone. As Christian singles, many of us pack our days with ministry, growth, service, or creativity. And while those are beautiful, sometimes even good things can quietly drift us away from God's *best*.

This session invites us to slow down, breathe deep, and honestly ask: Am I walking in Spirit-led purpose, or am I unknowingly delaying something God wants to do in me?

Common Distractions for Christian Singles

These distractions may not be sinful—but they can still be spiritually costly:

- **Busyness for the sake of productivity:** It's easy to fill every moment with purpose—serving, leading, studying, creating. But busyness can become a buffer against vulnerability or a deeper calling.
 - **Social media comparisons:** Scrolling through highlight reels of other people's relationships or ministry can spark envy, distraction, or a sense of falling behind.
 - **Pursuit of perfection:** Trying to get your life, faith, or self in order *before* being open to a relationship—or to anything new God might want to do.
 - **Comfort zones disguised as calling:** Routines that once served you might now be safe places to hide. Sometimes what looks like faithfulness is really fear in disguise.
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Is This from God or Is It a Detour?

This is such a critical—and ongoing—question. Not every good thing is a *God* thing. Some activities build us up. Others slowly wear us down or keep us stuck.

To discern the difference:

- **Prayer and peace:** Time in God's presence helps expose what's misaligned. Is your heart at peace—or quietly anxious?
 - **Holy Spirit nudges:** That persistent tug in your spirit? Don't ignore it.
 - **Fruitfulness and obedience:** Look for fruit, not just feedback. Are your efforts bearing spiritual growth—in you or others?
 - **Wise counsel:** Bring your questions to people who know your heart and walk closely with God. They can help you see what you might be missing.
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A Personal Reflection

There are days I genuinely wonder: *Is this path I'm walking the one God laid out—or one I paved for myself out of habit or good intention?*

I spend hours writing, researching, and preparing studies. I don't have a theology degree—but I've walked with Jesus long enough to recognize when peace is present, and when it's not. Still, I sometimes wrestle: *Is this ministry helping others grow? Or is it subtly keeping me from something else God wants to do through me?*

That's where discernment becomes more than a concept—it becomes a lifeline. Some days, I feel like Martha—faithful but distracted. Other days, I feel like Mary—resting at His feet, listening closely. I've learned that not all detours look dangerous. Sometimes they look holy... until we realize we've been delaying something God is ready to do.

Scripture for Discernment

"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." — *Hebrews 12:1 (NIV)*

"'All things are lawful,' but not all things are helpful. 'All things are lawful,' but not all things build up." — *1 Corinthians 10:23 (ESV)*

Application & Action Steps

- Ask God to show you one area where you've been productive, but not necessarily purposeful.

- Identify a place where you may have allowed delay to feel like direction.
 - Write down 3 things that currently take most of your time. Are they bearing fruit?
 - Invite a trusted mentor or friend to speak into your season with honesty and love.
 - Set aside time this week to *be* still with God—no agenda, just presence.
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Closing Prayer

Lord, help me recognize when I'm running ahead of You—or staying behind out of fear. Teach me to discern the difference between good and best, between distraction and direction. Give me peace where You are leading, and holy discomfort where You are not. I surrender my time, talents, and attention back to You. Lead me in the way everlasting. Amen.

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