

# Youth Group Meeting

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- Theme:** Distractions
- Scripture:** Matthew 8:23-27
- Objective:** Discuss the fact that there can be so many things happening that it distracts us from our relationship with God.
- Preparation:** For the meeting you'll need 1) a TV with DVD, sound system, popcorn popper or microwave popcorn, games, etc. for beginning, 2) larger place to set up an obstacle course, and blindfolds, and 3) Bibles.

## The Meeting

Start the meeting with distractions everywhere. A video playing on a TV. Music Playing on a sound system. Popcorn popping. Allow those who arrive to talk and hang out. Give some people the chance to play games. Let this go on for a few minutes longer than normal. Now try to start the lesson with everything else that is going on. Introduce the topic or try to have someone read scripture or try to have someone open in prayer. You might want to give a couple of these things a try. Once you try to start, then turn off the TV, music, stop the games, etc... Say: **It's very hard to communicate or pray or start our time together when so much is going on. It's hard to do anything where there are so many distractions. And that's what we're going to be thinking about and discussing tonight.**

## Reflecting on Distraction

Have the group get into pairs. Let them know that they will be sharing together for the next several minutes. Say: **Tell each other about a time that you need to concentrate very hard but it was very difficult because of distractions around you.** Tell the pairs that each person will have a couple minutes to share. After the first person has had a chance to share for about 2 minutes have them switch. As soon as the 2<sup>nd</sup> person begins to share turn the sound system back on and play music very loud. Let this go on for the 2<sup>nd</sup> person entire time.

Have them stay in their pairs for discussion. Ask: **How was the second person's experience like or un-like the situation you were trying to describe?** Give each person a chance to share at a normal volume this time.

## Distraction Obstacle Course

Find a large space to create an obstacle course using chairs, tables, sofa cushions, whatever is readily available. The obstacle course should be challenging but not dangerous because the person navigating the course will be blind folded. Say: **One person will attempt to move through the obstacle course blindfolded. They will be guided only by the verbal commands of their partner. The rest of the group's job is to distract the blindfolded person by yelling, making noise and trying to give bad advice to them. You can't touch or impede the progress of the person. You can only try to make it hard for the person to hear the voice that is giving them the direction.**

Have each pair try to navigate the course in the shortest time possible. After everyone has a chance to try the obstacle course have each pair find another pair and make a four-some. Have each new group of four discuss the following questions...

- **Talk about your experience navigating through the obstacle course?**
- **Talk about your experience giving the instructions to your partner?**
- **How did it feel when you “hit” one of the obstacles?**
- **How did it feel when your partner could not hear you and you couldn’t get them the correct directions?**
- **How is this like your life when you are facing a lot of distractions but still trying to find your way or deal with a difficult situation?**

### **The Distracted Disciples**

Have the group come back together as one and ask a volunteer someone read Matthew 8:23-27. This is the account of Jesus and His disciples on a boat when a storm suddenly comes up.

Have them group split up into groups of 5 or 6 and discuss the following questions.

Ask: **What were the disciples distracted by in this story? Who were the disciples with? Did that seem to make a difference to them at first? Who finally “took care of” the distraction for the disciples?**

Say: **The disciples had just been with Jesus and had witnessed him healing people, calling people to follow him, commending someone’s great faith. They were just with Jesus doing great things. Miraculous things. And yet when the storm hit they thought they were going to drown. We’ve just been through a great summer. Mission Trip. Summer Camp. Family Vacation. Summer Job.** (whatever you know you’ve done together as a group or individuals have experienced this summer) **And now we’re going back to school. The potential is there to be distracted by a lot of things.**

Have them get into their pairs again. Ask: **Come up with a list of different things that might distract you from your relationship with God as we begin this new school year.** After each pair has a chance to share have several pairs share at least one idea of what could be a distraction.

Say: **These things are all potential distractions that could cause us to lose our focus of God. Let’s ask Jesus to help us to stay focused on Him. To remember the times we did have with Him this summer and to continue that into this school year.**

Have someone close in prayer. Suggest the person praying ask God to help each of us to be free from distraction but if we do get distracted to turn our focus to Jesus.