



Focus

Find perfect double-peace.

It takes focus to meet a writing deadline. And yet this morning? My testimony:

Me: Hey self, you really should be working on those eight crazy-pressing, freaky-close, time-to-panic deadlines.

My brain: Yeah, but how 'bout we put up a weird status on Facebook and have a snack instead?

Me: OK, well I guess you know best.

So yes, it's true that focus isn't my best thing. I found a piece of bread in the toaster this morning. I put it in there yesterday. At least I hope it was yesterday. Now that I think about it, that almost-toast looked like the raisin bread I never bought. Focus isn't my best thing and also toast isn't my best thing. What? I couldn't even focus long enough to press down a lever?

Our focus can determine so much about a day. As I can obviously testify. If not toastify. Constantly focusing on negatives, for instance, can leave us burned out in the worst ways

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— completely over-toasted. Focusing on what we don't have or can't do, focusing on our failures and fears, or focusing on every difficulty in a day can leave us feeling overwhelmed and undone.

Yet what happens as we focus on our all-powerful, all-knowing, magnificently merciful and loving God? It's almost surprising how instantly peace pops up.

Not just peace. More like double-peace. Isaiah 26:3-4 says, "You will keep the mind that is dependent on you in perfect peace, for it is trusting in you. Trust in the LORD forever, because in the LORD, the LORD himself, is an everlasting rock!"

The "perfect peace" is described here in the Hebrew as "peace, peace." Both sides. Every side, actually. Fully cooked. Nothing lacking.

Want to know how to test your focus? Take a look at the peace you're experiencing. Or not experiencing. The passage in Isaiah promises the Father's perfect double-peace for the mind that is "dependent" on Him. It's a mind so focused, thoughts of this trustworthy God are the brain's default.

Our natural default apart from Christ is self-focus. The more we focus on self, the more stressed out and dissatisfied we are with life. As a matter of fact, focusing on self will take us further and further from what we're meant to be.

Yet placing our life-focus on the Lord brings peace into our lives even in difficult, stressful, or eight-deadline circumstances. They can't toast our peace when our minds are truly focused on the trustworthy God who is our peace.

We're often shaped by our focus. Concentrate on the negative or tests or just our selfish selves and that's the shape our character and life will take on. The more we focus on the Lord and His truths, the more His Spirit shapes us to look like Him. He can even shape life to look exactly like perfect double-peace.

By the way, I've decided I'll never change the world through toast. I think I've passed the test and made peace there too. Though you might be impressed to find that I did finally push down the lever and made that toast. And then I posted it on Facebook. Because I've been told it's not just about the toasting, it's also about the posting. ☐

Rhonda Rhea is a speaker, humor columnist, and author of multiple books, including *Turtles in the Road*, co-authored with her daughter, Kaley Rhea. Rhonda and her husband, Richie, live in the St. Louis area and have five grown children and five adorable grandchildren. To learn more about Rhonda go to rhondarhea.com.