



# Hitting Spiritual Birdies



*“Since they refused to listen when I called to them, I would not listen when they called to me, says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies.”*

*The Lord | Zechariah 7:13 (NLT)*

I played a lot of baseball when I was young... I mean a lot! Our team’s record for winning was evidence that we were very good; always in the state finals. Despite this, each spring it was back to the fundamentals... as if we were beginners.

The hitting drill we used to train our eyes to track the ball was to hit badminton birdies over and over and over... Birdies never quite move the same way so they’re harder to hit. Though our team was full of short guys like me, we could really hit... thanks to hitting thousands of birdies! Mid-season, if our bats were slumping, we’d pull out the birdies again. Winning depended on us being solid on the fundamentals.

Having a midseason slump? Is it time for you to pull out your “Spiritual Birdies?” Refresh your fundamentals?

*“If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.” James (James 1:5)*

Check yourself, does the Lord listen when you call to him? Does he answer?

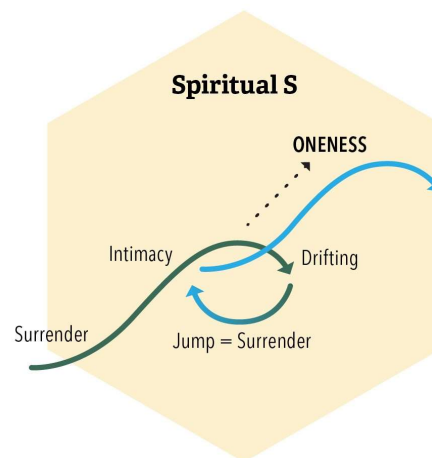
*“Now return to me, and I will return to you,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies. “But you ask, ‘How can we return when we have never gone away?’” Malachi 3:7*

Does he feel far off?

**Reflect: When did I last refresh my spiritual fundamentals?**

Drifting from the Lord is inevitable... a characteristic of the Spiritual S Curve. Periods of close Intimacy with the Lord wain as complacency overtakes, worldly comforts distract... when we don’t “need him!” as much as we did before. Are you any different than the Jews in Malachi... really? It’s no use to try to hide!

Accepting the inevitability of the Spiritual S is transformative. Once we do, we can watch for the telltale signs of drifting, then press ourselves to go back to the fundamentals.



Ask, “Do I feel tired, apathetic, bored, stuck, unimportant, disconnected, trapped, angry, complaining? Like I want to escape? I find myself immersing in diversions (drinking, drugs, excess work, exercise, travel, or hobbies)?” Perhaps what’s really happened is that you’ve drifted. Again, you can’t hide from the Lord.

*Consider: **When I drift, it's time to pull out my Spiritual Birdies.***

What are your Spiritual Birdies? Those things you do to bring yourself back to the Lord, to quiet your mind so that you can listen and not just ask and ask for him make your life go better? Consider these...

Close yourself in a quiet room, fasting from food, with Bible, pen, and a pad and...

### **① Lay yourself before the Lord.**

*"Put me on trial, Lord, and cross-examine me. Test my motives and my heart." King David (Psalm 26:2)*

I love the boldness of David, willingly asking the Lord to cross examine him. When we drift, our motives slide away from the Lord's to our own.

*"So whenever you speak, or whatever you do, remember that you will be judged by the law of love, the law that set you free." (James 2:12)*

Re-ground yourself by remembering the enormity of what happened when Jesus saved you. Incredibly humbling!

*"... let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up." (Hebrews 12:1)*

If you're like me, this leads to confession of worldly things that have

come between me and the Lord. Exposed, I realize all I can pray for is mercy alone. Think on this...

## ② Read scripture, dwell, ask, and listen.

Open your Bible, perhaps to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) or Philippians 3 or Romans 6 or Psalm 23... Read and dwell on what is written.

*"Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you." Kind David (Psalm 25:4-5)*

Ask the Lord to show you the right path. I like to ask, "What are you saying to me through this?" Let the Spirit illuminate. Grab you pad and jot down your thoughts, what you hear. I'm always surprised how invigorating and transformative this is... and it brings me closer to the Lord.

***Imagine: My Spiritual S Curve leading me to walk closer with the Lord.***

When your Spiritual S indicates you have drifted from the Lord, you will struggle to advance your Mission.

*"Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?" The Lord (Amos 3:3)*

It's as if you and the Lord are walking in two different directions. Coming close to the Lord leads you to agree on the direction the Lord has for you. If your Mission is stalling, perhaps you have drifted and you need to go back to...

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Go off the grid and ask these questions:

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### Coach's Questions

- What are my emotions signaling? Have I drifted from the Lord?
- What Spiritual Birdies will I use to bring myself closer to the Lord?
- Commit to hitting my Spiritual Birdies... when will I do this?

## Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

### Hit My Spiritual Birdies.

*"So we must listen very carefully to the truth we have heard,  
or we may drift away from it."*

*Hebrews 2:1 (NLT)*



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