

“ONE THING IS NEEDFUL”

Text: John 11:1-5; 12:1, 2; Luke 10:38-42

Subject: “The Power of Being Still Before God”

Introduction

Question: How many of you parents ever had to tell your children (when they were small) to “sit still”?

Question: How many of you have ever had to tell yourself to sit still?

Question: How many of you have ever caught yourself hurried and rushing, thus not enjoying what you were doing?

Question: How many of you know that if the devil can't make you **too bad**, he'll try to make you **too busy**?

Notice the Setting of Our Text

1. In (Vs. 1-24) we are **ambassadors** (sent out to represent Jesus wherever we go).
2. In (Vs. 25-37) we are **neighbors** like the Good Samaritan (looking for opportunities to show mercy to those in need).
3. In (Vs. 38-42) we are **worshippers** (taking time to be still at the feet of Jesus).

(In Verse 38)

“Now it came to pass, as they went, that Jesus entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house.”

Question: Where was Jesus going?

Answer: He was entering the village of Bethany.

- ◆ Bethany was a suburb, two miles outside of Jerusalem.
- ◆ It was located on the eastern slope of the Mt. of Olives.
- ◆ Bethany was called the “House of Misery” because of the invalids who congregated there.
- ◆ It was also the home of Martha.

Question: Who was Martha?

Answer: Martha was a woman Jesus thought much of. (John 11:5)

“Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.”

Question: What was Martha like?

1. **She was unselfish:**

- ◆ She owned a large house, big enough to lodge Jesus and His disciples.

2. **She was fearless:**

- ◆ She associated with Jesus when it was now dangerous and unpopular:
 - The authorities were seeking to kill Jesus. (John 7:25)
 - Disciples had forsaken Jesus. (John 5:66)
 - Others were now speaking against Jesus. (John 7:20; 43-44)
 - His own family rejected Jesus. (John 7:3-5)

- ◆ But Martha had the guts to let the world know of her devotion to Jesus, unashamed.

3. She was a giver:

- ◆ Martha was taking care of her younger sister Mary and her brother, Lazarus.
- ◆ For some unknown reason, Martha was caring for her family members.

Question: Who was this hostess Martha?

1. An **unselfish** woman, hosting Jesus.
2. A **fearless** woman, publicly devoted.
3. A **giver**, taking care of Mary and Lazarus.

Question: Why did Jesus go to her house?

Question: And what is the message to my heart today?

(Secrets from Meal Time in Bethany)

I. The Devotion of Mary (V. 39)

“And Martha had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His Word.”

Question: Who was Martha’s sister?

Answer: Mary

Question: What was Mary doing?

Answer: (V.39) “Which sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His Word.”

#1. She was **sitting** (and) #2. She was **listening**

Fact: Three times Mary of Bethany is seen in Scriptures:

1. In John 11:32 (Sharing her burden **at the feet of Jesus**)
2. In John 12:3 (Pouring out her worship **at the feet of Jesus**)
3. In Luke 10:39 (Listening to the Word **at the feet of Jesus**)

Question: Where was Mary living?

Answer: “At the feet of Jesus.”

Question: What’s the big deal here?

Answer: The big deal is:

- ◆ In First Century Judaism, it was highly unusual for a woman to be accepted by a teacher as a disciple.
- ◆ But Jesus overcomes every objection and obstacle, and swings the door wide open, and He invites you and me to come in and sit down).

Question: Why was Mary so devoted and so received by Jesus?

(Two Reasons)

Two Qualities God Births in Your Heart and Mine

1. She was humble

- ◆ The room was large enough for a crowd.

- ◆ She could have chosen to sit in the back, off to the side, or in a high seat somewhere.
- ◆ But Mary's devotion and humility ran deep enough to take the low road.
- ◆ It is the only way I can make progress with God.

#1. Mary Was Humble

2. She was **hungry**

- ◆ The phrase "and heard His word" means:
 - She was attentive, listening, concentrating, hungering for more of the Word.

(Spiritual Hunger Implies Three Things)

1. A **readiness to hear** the truth.
2. A **desire to surrender** to the truth.
3. A **willingness to act on** all the truth.

II. The Distraction of Martha (Vs. 40-41)

(V. 40) "But Martha was cumbered about much serving."

Question: What does it mean to be cumbered about much serving?

Answer: The Greek word here for cumbered is (PERIESPATO). It means:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. To draw around | 3. To be drawn here and there |
| 2. To twist | 4. To be distracted |

(The Idea Here Is)

- ◆ That Martha was drawn around and twisted up inside with anxiousness and worry.
- ◆ She was running here and running there. (Are you?)
- ◆ She was drawn away by this person and that person. (Are you?)
- ◆ She was distracted from her first priority in life, ministry to Jesus. (Are you?)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Martha was <u>distracted</u> . | 2. Martha was <u>disappointed</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

(V. 40) "Lord, don't you even care that Mary has left me alone; tell her to get over here right now and help me." (Resentments crept in)

1. She gets **distracted** (and the result is)
2. She gets **disappointed** and aggravated and critical of someone else (Mary).

Question: What happens whenever we get out of order on the inside?

Answer: We lose our sweetness on the outside. **(Remember)**

- ◆ It is injured people who injure others!

Question: What does Jesus say to Martha in (V. 41)?

Answer: "Martha, Martha"

- ◆ "Martha, Martha" here is a tender reply despite Martha's failure.

Question: What happens whenever we get distracted from the feet of Jesus?

(V. 41) "Two things, says Jesus #1. Thou art **careful** #2. Thou art **troubled**

#1. The word “**careful**” is the Greek word (MERIMNAO) which means anxious

(It Means)

To worry, to be anxious, to be inwardly torn and divided in two, to be distracted from what your mind should be focused upon.

#2. The word “**troubled**” is the Greek word (TURBAZO) which means:

- ◆ To be disturbed ◆ To be in turmoil ◆ To be agitated
- ◆ To be stirred up ◆ To be ruffled

Question: How many of you have ever had your feathers ruffled by someone?

Question: What was the root cause of Martha’s anxiousness and disturbance?

Answer: She was distracted from what Mary was doing.

Question: What was Mary doing?

Answer: Sitting at the feet of Jesus!!!

- ◆ Drinking more ◆ Filing up ◆ Soaking in ◆ Coming close

III. The Directions of Jesus

Question: What did Jesus say to Martha and you and me? (Three things in V. 42)

1. “One thing is needful”
2. “Mary has chosen that good part”
3. “I’m not telling her to move”

Fact: The problem was not that Martha had too much work to do.

Fact: The problem was that she allowed her work to interfere with her worship.

(The Result Was)

- ◆ She was “**distracted**” on the outside (and) ◆ She was “**pulled apart**” on the inside

Question: What is Jesus saying to us all?

Answer: “**One thing is needful**” above every other thing in your life and mine. (What is it?)

- ◆ **Remove** what interferes with your ministry at the feet of Jesus.
- ◆ **Renew** the altar that will leave you with a peaceful calm.
- ◆ **Return** again to your highest priority.
- ◆ **Resolve** (that from now on) nothing and no one will rob you of God’s intention for a healthy, spirit-filled, non-disturbed, rested soul. (Purchased at Jesus’ feet)

But I’m Busy

(In the average life time span of 70 years, we will spend...)

- ◆ 21 years sleeping ◆ 4 years learning
- ◆ 14 years working ◆ 3 years in meetings
- ◆ 7 years on bathroom basics ◆ 2 years returning phone calls
- ◆ 6 years eating ◆ 1 year looking for lost things
- ◆ 6 years traveling ◆ 8 months opening junk mail

◆ 5 years waiting in line

◆ 6 months waiting for red lights

2 hours of TV a day = 730 hours of TV a year

730 hours a year x 70 years = 51,000 hours or 2,125 days or 6 years of life wasted on TV!

Psalm 46:10 – “Be Still”

- ◆ Some of you today, God might tell you to demote the remote control to promote the healthier soul!!!

“In silence and quiet the devout soul advances in virtue and learns the hidden truths of scripture.”
(Thomas A. Kempis, Pg. 21 of “Imitation of Christ”)

“I am sure you sense the desperate need for unceasing prayer in our day. We pant through a endless series of activities with scattered minds and noisy hearts. We feel strained, hurried, and breathless. Thoughts dart in and out of our minds with no rhyme or reason. Seldom can we focus on a single thing for long. Everything and Anything interrupt our sense of concentration. We are a distracted people.” (Richard Foster, Pg.121 of, “Prayer Treasury”)

“Hurry is not of the devil, it is the devil.” (Karl Jung)

Remember Christian Worker

A professional chef can starve to death while preparing food for someone else!

And Never Forget

No one can do enough for others, if they are always surrounded by others!

Why The More You Pray – You’ll Love To Pray

1. Prayer is communion of my soul with God.
2. Failure in prayer will forfeit what prayer was meant to do.
3. God limits His activity to those who chose to pray.
4. Prayer connects my need with God’s spiritual storehouse.
5. Prayer conquers the hindrances (strongholds) in the unseen world.
6. Prayer is the road to tranquility, the only pathway to peace within.
7. Prayer is the breath of the soul, when I breathe, I live, when I cease to breathe, I die.
8. If we prostrate ourselves before the Lord, we will never be prostrated before the enemy.
9. If we learn to wrestle with God in secret, we will never have to lower ourselves to wrestle with men in public.
10. The only thing that lies outside the power of prayer, is that which lies outside the will of God.

AMEN!

Bill Kirk