

ReGroup 2/20/22
Something Needs to Change:
Luke 10:38-11:13 - Seek First

We've heard a lot lately about the imperative to follow Jesus and serve His Kingdom. The next portion of Luke will continue that theme, but with an emphasis on our individual benefit from seeking and savoring Jesus.

It's easy to get so busy doing things for Jesus that we almost get *too busy for Jesus*. It's important that we maintain a healthy relationship with God, one not defined by mere busyness, but one that is rooted in delight and devotion.

Distracted Disciples

Luke's Gospel has made known the importance of Kingdom service and the calling that's over each of our lives. However, that calling and service should always be the overflow of our passion and pursuit of Jesus.

Many Christians experience burnout and grow disenchanted with their following after God. Most of the time this is a result of the cart getting before the horse. When we lose our heart for Jesus, and it all becomes routine, we run the risk of falling away.

If you find yourself in this place, your next step is very crucial. Many who are in this place think the solution is to back away from church or their devotional habits and take a break from what may have led to their burnout. However, if we don't replace the religious behavior with a real relationship, we will find ourselves in an *even worse* place.

Many people have experienced this cycle:

They are saved ->

Get involved in Church ->

Religion takes priority over relationship ->

They leave Church and back away from their faith

Like with any of our important relationships, if our love for someone becomes less a factor than our obligation to someone, then the relationship is not healthy. **If our relationship with Jesus is more defined by work than worship, something needs to change...**

As with the whole Gospel of Luke so far, Jesus doesn't mince words in confronting what needs to change in our lives and offering us the help we need.

Before we look at this passage featuring Jesus, Martha, and Mary, have any of you experienced this sort of burnout in your relationship with God? Maybe you're experiencing it right now? If you'd like to see it restored to where it can be and should be, Jesus has a powerful word for us.

Read Luke 10:38-42. At first it seems odd that Jesus would rebuke someone that was serving Him. *Isn't that a commendable thing?* However, we must remember that Jesus knows our hearts, and clearly He sensed something was off about Martha's.

First, Martha was not serving out of joy, she was serving out of obligation. We can tell this by Martha's bitterness towards Mary *not* helping her. This should be a warning for all of us, because we can easily become wearied in our labor for Christ, rather than find joy in it. If we are serving God for the right reasons, we won't be concerned about what someone else does or doesn't do. However, if we are doing it for our own glory - for self-justification - then we will be less focused on Who we're doing it for and more focused on who *isn't* doing it with us.

Martha accused Mary of failing to contribute. As it turns out, Martha was the one distracted, not Mary.

One Thing is Needful

Jesus intervenes in Martha's life, because He knew she was at risk of losing focus. Perhaps she had already lost focus. In verse 41, He reveals that her heart is unsettled. It should have been full of peace and joy, at rest in her Savior, but instead it was full of worry and resentment.

It's so important that these emotions don't become mainstays in our faith. If we continue to serve God from these unsettled places, our devotion could be derailed and the true benefit of our faith will suffer. Therefore, we must check our motives for our service to God, lest the joy of our service be forfeited.

There's nothing wrong with serving God because we're *supposed to*. However, Christianity is *better* than that. Yes, we *should* serve God whether we feel like it or not - **but Jesus wants to prevent us from wavering in our desire.**

This is the heart of our faith and the thesis of the New Testament. The Old Testament says, "*You should*", while the New Testament says, "*You can*". Religion is duty and obligation, but a relationship with God is motivation and opportunity. The Old Covenant was about commandments and laws, while the New Covenant is about promises and liberty.

Read Galatians John 8:31-32, 36, 2 Corinthians 3:12-18 and Galatians 5:22-25. Discuss the comparison between Religion and a Relationship with Jesus.

In Luke 10:42 Jesus says those powerful words, "*One thing is needful,*" and commends Mary for choosing "the good portion, which will never be taken away..." Martha's frantic service was not sustainable and was not fulfilling her heart's need for a true connection to God. It may have briefly checked a box, but it didn't fill her soul. Meanwhile, Mary had found rest and true salvation.

Before God wants us to do for Him, He wants us to accept what He's done for us. Yes, there's work to do, *but first* we must trust in the work He's finished for us. It's from that place that we are empowered and enabled to serve the Lord. **Read Hebrews 4:9-10 and Ephesians 2:8-10.**

How does this land with what how you understand your faith? Is your faith rooted in a relationship, resting on Jesus's promises?

Teach Us To Pray

All of this talk about relationships, calls to mind what is most important in any relationship: Communication. In **Luke 11:1-8**, Jesus continues to emphasize the heart of Christianity by teaching His Disciples how to pray and about the purpose of prayer. In this passage, it becomes clear that prayer isn't merely about getting our will and words to God, but about planting His Word in us and wiring our hearts around His Will. **Read this passage and discuss what stands out the most.**

In the Lord's Prayer, we're led to focus on God's Kingdom, with reminders of what God has done for us. He **provides our daily bread** and **forgives our every sin**. Having received from His hands all that we could ever need, we are all the more inclined to seek Him first.

In the parable that follows, Jesus reveals all that is available to us if we prioritize communicate and maintain fellowship with God. Our Heavenly Father desires to draw us close and fill us with His best.

Knowing that this is where God wants to bring us, how can we afford to be distracted by religion and miss out on such a powerful relationship?

In **Luke 11:9-13**, Jesus invites us to pursue a relationship with God over everything else. He promises to fill our hearts with the Holy Spirit. Seeking God and His Kingdom first ultimately is how we put *our own well-being* first. If we want to be complete, we will find our selves in Christ. We will *never* be full otherwise.

Read **1 Thessalonians 5:23** and **Colossians 2:9-10** for a final word on this important subject. One thing is needful and we find exactly what we need in Christ alone.