

WHEN LESS IS MORE

When Less Is More

Key idea:

True abundance is not found in a life full of distractions but in one that has reduced activities to allow time to listen to Jesus speak.

Key text:

Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" ⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Key points:

1. Mary and her sister Martha display a great series of contrasts that are intended to teach followers of Jesus an important lesson:
 - a. Mary displays quiet focus, while Martha is full of noisy activity.
 - b. Mary experiences peaceful rest, while Martha is in a state of worried uproar.
 - c. Mary has a posture of quiet listening to Jesus, while Martha questions and commands Him.
 - d. Mary's attention is focused with laser precision on one thing, while Martha's attention is scattered among many things.
2. Martha's problem is not that she is focused on evil things, but rather that she has allowed good things to crowd out the best thing - sitting with and hearing from Jesus!

Questions for discussion/application:

1. What part of Sunday's teaching stood out most to you? Why?

2. When I read the story of Mary and Martha, do I think it treats Martha unfairly? Why or why not?
3. When I consider my own desires and behaviors, do I think I tend to be more like Mary or Martha?
4. When I consider modern American culture, do I think it tends to encourage being more like Mary or Martha? What examples can I give to support this?
5. What activities - perhaps even good activities - are preventing me from sitting with Jesus and listening to Him?
6. Is my soul quiet and at peace and able to sit and listen to Jesus, or is it full of noise and worry and unable to sit and listen to Jesus?
7. How do periodic periods of reducing or eliminating activities help to calm and quieten my soul so that it can hear Jesus better? How does this practice of “less is more” help to reset my soul?
8. What activities do I plan to restrict during Lent (February 14, 2024 - March 28, 2024) so that I can spend more time sitting with and listening to Jesus? What will I do “less” so that I can do “more” of being with Jesus?
9. Who will I call or see to encourage this week? Who can I encourage to gather with God’s people to worship this King this coming Sunday?