

Luke 10:38-42

“Hospitality & God”

July 17, 2016

In life, it is easy to be distracted by the stuff that goes around us. This week we had a terrorist in a truck run down innocent people. Likewise we had the attempted coup in Turkey. Then Donald Trump was trying to find time in the midst of it all to name the person he wanted to be his running mate. In our text Martha was distracted by her need to welcome and feed Jesus to her home. So Martha asked Jesus to tell Mary to help. Martha was showing that she and Mary had a poor relationship.

Martha was trying to show hospitality. In my study of the text, I looked up the word hospitality. Hospitality seems to be a spiritual gift that some have more than others. Over the years I have learned that God gives His spiritual gifts according to the needs of our ministry for Him. God gives His spiritual gifts according to the ability of people to exercise it. The old sayings are that if we don't use it, we lose it. Likewise if we need it, God will provide it.

So if hospitality is a spiritual gift and Martha was exercising this spiritual gift, then why did Jesus gently tell her that she was concerned about the wrong things? Again I studied that text and found that Jesus was gently pointing out that she was worried and concerned about many things. When we are worried and

concerned, we are not content. God wants us to be content in all things. We can't exercise our spiritual gifts when we are allowing our personal and worldly concerns to dominate our relationships. This hinders the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Therefore we are clogging up our spiritual lives with personal and worldly concerns.

What is Jesus saying to Martha and to us? There are more important things in our spiritual lives than exercising our spiritual gifts. As Scripture says, there is a place and time for everything. In our text, Jesus is telling Martha that Mary feeding her spiritual life is more important than exercising her spiritual life by providing hospitality. Jesus is not going to take that away from Mary. In the presence of the Master, Jesus Christ, it is more important to be fed than to feed. In our worship, it is more important to feed upon the Lord than to be distracted. Of course some distractions are a blessing like the noise of little children in worship. Remember Luther use to beat himself because he was distracted while saying the Lord's Prayer. We live in God's undeserved grace and mercy even when we become distracted in worship.

How healthy is our spiritual life? The world traps us with things to do and places to be. Our relationships trap us with this and that demand upon our time. Movies, television, books and gossip distract us from our relationship with our God. We need to say no to even worthy things like hospitality if our spiritual life is

suffering. We need to recognize that some of us need more time with the Lord than others to maintain a healthy relationship with our Savior Jesus Christ. This is vital especially for those who have a tough time understanding what God is doing around them and in them. Therefore when times are tough, then we need to spend more time at the feet of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I would guess that Martha was older than Mary. I would guess that Martha was more mature than Mary. Yet, Martha needed to be reminded that being at the Lord's feet was more important than serving the Lord. Over the years we see life-long Christians and pastors lose their way because they get distracted by serving and forget to sit at the feet of their Savior. Some get caught up in telling others what to do or demanding that things go their way. We can forget that the more mature we are in the faith, then the more we are to be servants of all. For some the church becomes their kingdom and they are the kings and queens or should I say matriarchs and patriarchs. We are called again and again in God's Word to humble ourselves and follow Him.

Yes, there comes a time to drive greed and sin from God's church like Jesus driving the money changers from the temple. Most of the time in humility, we speak the truth in love and allow God to do His work. We trust that God will lead us to those times when we are to drive sin and greed from the church. If we are reacting to the sin and we are distracted by the events going around us, then we are

not in a time to drive greed and sin from the church. Rather we are in a time to sit at Jesus feet and open our hearts to Him. Amen.