

Luke 10:38

by Chuck Smith

Jesus teaches that while serving is important, worship and communion with Him are essential and should be prioritized above all else.

Scripture: Luke 10:38

Topics: "Service vs. Worship", "Prioritizing Time with God"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the contrast between Martha and Mary, two sisters who represent different approaches to serving Jesus. Martha, busy with preparations, becomes frustrated with Mary for not helping, while Mary chooses to sit at Jesus' feet and listen to His words. Smith highlights that while service is important, it should not overshadow the need for personal communion with Christ. Jesus defends Mary, stating that she has chosen the 'good part' by prioritizing her relationship with Him over mere tasks. The sermon calls believers to balance their service with time spent in worship and fellowship with Jesus.

Transcript

One Thing is Needful I. The tale of two sisters. A. He entered into a certain village, from the gospel of John we know that the name of the village where Mary and Martha lived was Bethany. 1. And a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. 2. John tells us that Bethany was the town of Mary. 3. The house belonged to Martha, and the village belonged to Mary. 4. Martha was would might be described as a homemaker, she was a doer, she was absorbed with things. 5. Mary, in contrast, could be called a people person, she was absorbed with people, everyone in town knew Mary, it was Mary's town. 6.

This is true of people today, there are those whose lives are spent with things, and those whose lives are spent with people. 7. This is not to speak negatively of either one, nor is it to say that one is better than the other, both are necessary. a. It would be bad if nothing were ever done. We need doers. b. It would also be bad if there were no social contacts. B. When Jesus came to the home of Martha true to form, Martha was cumbered about, to use the King James language, with many things, that is, the preparing of special foods and other things to make the stay of Jesus in her home a pleasant experience for Him. 1.

Many people show their love for Jesus by doing for Him. a. They are always involved in some sort of service for the Master. b. James said to be doers of the word and not hearers only. c. James, being the practical sort, would have appreciated Martha. d. The doing is necessary and has to be done. 2. Doing however, can never be a full substitute for worship. a. It would appear that Martha was so busy serving Jesus that she did not take time for Jesus. b. The house did not need to be spotless. c.

Every little thing did not need to be in perfect order. 1. Can you not see Martha rearranging the little knickknacks on the shelf? 2. Cutting the carrots with special little curlicues, and arranging them with the other snacks in a perfect picture on the tray. 3. Those things are lovely and appreciated, and a beautiful way of showing love, but can never substitute for time at His feet. C. Mary on the other hand we are told also sat at Jesus feet and heard His word. 1. I think the word (also) indicated that she did do some serving, but with her serving also took time to sit at his feet to just listen to His word and to worship. 2.

This is true to form for Mary, who was more of a people person. a. She could let the extra little touches go in order to just spend time with Him. b. She was the one who later, just a week before He was crucified, took a pound of extremely expensive perfume, which Judas estimated the cost several thousand dollars and poured it over the head of Jesus as He sat at supper. Judas claimed that it was a waste and should have been sold and the money given to the poor. c. Jesus however again defended Mary's expressions of devotion for Him and commanded Judas to leave her alone, she had done this special act of love for His burial. 3.

It seems that Mary was always being criticized for her pure devotion for Jesus, but it should be noted that Jesus always stood up for her and defended her love for Him. II. The complaint of Martha to Jesus. "Lord do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? bid her to help me." A. Now it is a wonderful thing to serve the Lord, it is a necessary thing, however we should never find ourselves complaining about our serving. 1. When Peter wrote about our service for the Lord, he said that it should not be by constraint.

That is under pressure with a sense of duty, thinking that I have to do all of this. 2. Paul said that our giving to the Lord should not be grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver. 3. Martha is giving herself to serve the Lord, but she is now beginning to complain. 4. She is upset that Mary has taken time out to sit at the feet of Jesus just to chat with Him. B. The defense of Jesus for Mary. 1. "Martha, Martha, you are troubled and filled with care about many things."

Yes that is Martha, things. 2. The repetition of the name has in it a tone of familiarity and tenderness. 3. The things are appreciated, it is not to belittle the things. With all the things that she had been doing, she was neglecting the main thing, and that is the person of Jesus. 4. She was so busy with things, she did not have time for Jesus. 5. We doers must be careful about this, that we get so involved doing for Him that we do not take time for Him, just Him, just pure communion with Him.

III. One thing is needful. A. Martha was cumbered with many things, she was troubled and filled with care for things. 1. These things are nice, they show a special touch that is appreciated, but they really are not necessary, from a very practical standpoint. a. A salad is a salad, even if the tomatoes are not arranged in a special design on the top. b. Mashed potatoes are mashed potatoes even without the special little swirls. c. A pie crust is a pie crust even if the edge is not curled in a special fashion. 2.

These things are not really needful, if you want to do them that is fine, but just don't then complain about it, or use it as an excuse of not having time to just spend at the feet of Jesus. B. Jesus said the Mary had chosen the good part. 1. Mary had taken time for that which was really needful, and that is to take time to sit at the feet of Jesus to fellowship. 2. When Satan tempted Jesus to turn the stones into bread when He was hungry. Bread was necessary, but Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

With Martha, it was bread alone. Mary had chosen to also listen to the word that came forth from the mouth of God. C. Jesus declared that He would not take her away from the good part that she had

chosen. D. John tells us that Jesus loved Mary and Martha. They shared a special relationship with Him. 1. He loved Martha the doer, and Mary the communer. 2. They both shared a special place in His heart. 3. He did not like Martha the complainer. If you want to do, that is fine, but don't complain about it. 4. If you give your time to doing, do not neglect the time for communing also.

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