



# REST FOR YOUR SOUL

Living in the Pace, Practice, & Presence of Jesus

## 2. ONE THING

Luke 10:38-42

Sunday, November 5, 2023 / Travis Osborne

Please open your Bible to Matthew Luke 10:38



A story, made well-known by Steven Covey, goes like this:

Standing in front of a classroom filled college freshmen, a professor sets a one-gallon, Mason jar on a table.

He pulls out a half-dozen, fist-sized rocks and carefully places them, one at a time, into the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit, he asked, "Is this jar full?" Everyone in the class said, "**Yes.**"

He then pulled out a **sack of gravel** and slowly began dumping the gravel in, pausing to shake the jar as he did so the gravel could work itself down into the spaces between the big rocks.

He asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?" **YES**, the class replied.

Next he reached under the table and brought out a **bag of sand**.

He started shaking the sand in, and it sifted down into all the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. "*Now is the jar full?*"

The class caught on and shouted, "**NO! It's not full!**"

"Excellent!" he said, and finally he grabbed a pitcher of drinking water and began to pour it in, until the jar was filled to the brim.

Then he looked up at the class and asked, "What is the point of this?"

One student said, "No matter how full your schedule is, you can always fit some more things into your schedule!"

"Nice try," the professor replied, "The point is: **If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all.**"

What are the “big rocks” in your life?

What is MOST IMPORTANT? Those things must have priority and tended to first in your life.

We can get overwhelmed and exhausted because we are focused on so many things, while neglecting the most important thing.

We leave out the ONE THING that will put all the MANY THINGS in their proper place and perspective.



This is week 2 of our November teaching series titled:  
Rest for Your Soul  
*Living in the Pace, Practice, and Presence of Jesus.*

I have selected four passages from the gospels to study this month.

Passages that teach us the Pace and Practices of Jesus that bring us His peace and rest today...

Lets look at today’s passage from Luke 10:38-42.

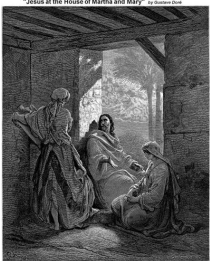
- Jesus interacts with two sisters: Martha and Mary
- These siblings, along with their brother Lazarus, were not only faithful supporters of Jesus...but they were FRIENDS of Jesus.
- I would go so far as to say Jesus ENJOYED spending time with them.

## Luke 10:38-42 (ESV)

<sup>38</sup> Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. <sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching.

<sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me."

<sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, <sup>42</sup> but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."



Ok, we have a bit of tension here between sisters!  
Martha & Mary have responded differently to Jesus' visit:

- **Martha is SERVING; Mary is SITTING.**

Let's describe these sisters by merely OBSERVING the text:  
MARTHA:

- (v. 38) "*welcomed (Jesus) into her house*" (**hospitable**)
- (v. 40) "*distracted with much serving*" (**drawn away; over-occupied**)
- (v. 41) According to Jesus, Martha is "*anxious*" ("**divided; pulled apart**") and "*troubled (disturbed; panic-stricken) about many things*"

Does THIS describe you? Distracted. Anxious. Troubled over many things?

### **BUT...we can identify with Martha, right?**

- There WAS work to do! Jesus is no ordinary guest!  
(*you're not going to just microwave a hot dog for Him!*)
- We had saying on our Mexico Mission teams:  
**"If there is a piano to be moved, don't reach for the stool."**

Let's be honest: There WAS LOTS of WORK TO DO!

- Martha is doing all the heavy lifting and Mary is not lifting a finger.
  - She probably gave Mary the stink eye (*get in here & help me!*)
  - Maybe Martha began dropping pans in the kitchen to get attention
  - My wife offers me a choice: *would you like to clean dishes or give the kids a bath? (uh, neither? How about I watch TV?)*

## Now let's observe MARY: what do we learn about her?

- (v. 39) *"Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet"*
- Mary is sitting...
  - but it doesn't mean she is lounging or playing video games while her sister slaves away in the kitchen.
- What was Mary doing at Jesus' feet? She *"listened to his teaching."*
  - Listening to Jesus teach. Learning from Jesus. Maybe even Laughing with Jesus.
  - Mary is investing in relationship with Jesus who has come for a visit.
  - She takes the posture of a DISCIPLE of Jesus:
  - To "sit at his feet" doesn't imply a dog-like adoring posture...
    - It was to be a "student" of a teacher.
    - Just as Paul, in Acts 22:3 sat at the feet of Gamaliel, his rabbi.
    - ("educated at the feet of Gamaliel")

Mary, a woman, is in the place where DISCIPLES sit!

**NOTE: I want to make a few comments here about Jesus' treatment of women in the Bible.**

Here is an important question of our day:  
Does Christianity denigrate/disparage women?  
(*Treat women as second-class?*)

As we read the Bible carefully, we see that Jesus consistently valued and affirmed a woman's equal status before God and His desire for personal relationship with them.

*\* I learned this from Rebecca McLaughlin's book, [Confronting Christianity](#):*

**It is believed that the early church was majority female**

(more striking because the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> century Greco-Roman world was majority male due to selective infanticide of baby girls and the high number of mothers who died in child birth)

**Early Christianity was mocked by outsiders for its appeal to women.**

2<sup>nd</sup> Century Greek philosopher Celsus criticized Christians because they "want and are able to convince only the foolish, dishonorable and stupid, only slaves, women, and little children."

**At the end of the book of Romans, Paul includes 9 women among the ministry partners,** revealing that women played a major role in the 1<sup>st</sup> century spread of Jesus' message.

**And now, here in Luke, we see Jesus affirming a woman's role as a disciple.**

- In Jesus' time, houses were divided into male "space" and female "space"
  - The public room is where the men would meet.
  - The kitchen and other hidden areas belonged to the women.
- But Mary is found sitting where only the males were expected to be...at the feet of Jesus with His other disciples!
- And Jesus doesn't shoo her away...as we will see, Jesus affirms Mary's right to be there as one of His disciples (*probably shocking to those in attendance!*)

OK, back to Luke 10:



Martha is SERVING Jesus;  
Mary is SITTING with Jesus. (BOTH are GOOD!)  
...which one is most important?  
...which one does Jesus commend?  
...**which one is true hospitality?**

Well, Martha pleads her case with Jesus.

- (v. 40) “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.”
- Martha feels she is right...and she accuses Jesus of not caring about her...she commands Jesus to reprimand her sister, Mary, and tell her to get to work!

But let's pay attention to Jesus' response: (v. 41,42)

<sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, [exhausted & frantic]

<sup>42</sup> but **one thing is necessary**. Mary has chosen the good portion [chosen what is better], which will not be taken away from her.”

Martha prioritized the MANY THINGS...

Mary prioritized the ONE THING.

...And Mary has chosen what is best!

Mary has prioritized the one thing that must come first before all the other things:

- Mary has shown **true hospitality** (not a good meal & clean house)...
- True hospitality is to be **FIXED ON YOUR GUEST** (present & attentive)  
To SPEND TIME with the One who has come for a visit.

**STORY:**

- It was New Year's Eve, 1985...38 years ago...in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade...
- Jennifer invited me to go with her and her church to Knott's Berry Farm.
- Unbeknownst to me, She also invited another dude!
- When we got to the park, she left me and spent the whole time with the other dude...That was NOT HOSPITABLE! (to ignore your guest)

When Jesus came to visit, rather than getting busy doing things FOR Jesus...  
Mary sat down for an un-rushed conversation WITH Jesus.  
...to ENJOY HIS PRESENCE & LEARN FROM HIS WISDOM  
(If you have RECEIVED Christ into your life as Savior, you have INVITED HIM  
in...but do you NEGLECT TO MEET WITH HIM?)

**Mary Chose what is better.**

- MARTHA'S desire to serve was not wrong in itself,  
...but she had her priorities out of order.
- MARTHA's first attention was on the MANY THINGS she had to DO.
- **But MARY put FIRST THINGS FIRST**

**Jesus is speaking to the “Frantic Martha” in ALL of us:**

(Insert YOUR name: “Travis, Travis, you are anxious & troubled about many things...”)

**Jesus is inviting each one of us to:**

- Pull up a chair
- Set aside all the busyness and tasks that lie before us for a little while.
- Have an **un-rushed conversation** with the only One who can **settle our hearts** and **get us back on track** with the energy & strength & focus we need for today

→ Our tendency in the Christian faith is to prioritize DOING FOR JESUS over BEING WITH JESUS

(learning from Him, Reading His Word, talking with Him in prayer, and enjoying all that He has done for us).

Our relationship & communion with Jesus MUST INFORM  
the things we DO in His name.

**We might ask, “Should I be a Mary or a Martha?”**

- I say: Be a Mary first, then a Martha!
- Being WITH Jesus fuels our activity FOR Jesus.

But the reality is that, when life gets busy, the first thing to go is our time with God.

**TENSION:** It is not easy for us to prioritize some quiet time with God when there are so many tasks and people calling for our attention.

- When there is so much to do...doesn't it seem **unproductive** to spend time sitting at Jesus' feet in prayer and reading His Word?
- Sometimes I feel a bit **guilty** SITTING when there is WORK to do and people to help (remember the piano phrase?)...

Martha's neglect of Jesus shows us how a busy schedule and a hurried heart can sever us from what is MOST IMPORTANT.

What could it look like for YOU to set aside your schedule, your tasks, your screaming To-Do-List for 30 minutes, or an hour, ...or even a day...  
and simply acknowledge & enjoy God's presence,  
talk with Him in prayer,  
sit as his feet and learn from His Word?

...AND JESUS DID THIS VERY THING  
often in His own life...

...HE MODELED IT FOR US.

(and next week, we will learn from Jesus' example)



Before we close in prayer, allow me a few minutes to look ahead to next month, the season of Advent,  
...the whole month of December when we slowly and worshipfully celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, God Himself who took on flesh to save us from our sins.

BUT...December is also a time when we are PRONE to be so busy, we neglect to worship & enjoy Jesus.

I invite us as VC Family Church to consider a counter-cultural approach to celebrating Christmas.

For us to move from being “Consumer-Centered” to “Christ-Centered” at Christmas.

Let’s watch this 3-minute video from Advent Conspiracy, a group of Christian pastors seeking to make Christmas meaningful again:

SHOW VIDEO: Advent Conspiracy (3 min)

Let us be intentional this Christmas to:



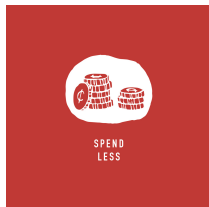
1. **Worship Fully:** All December long, let us worship the miracle of the Incarnation when God revealed Himself as a baby born in Bethlehem.

Like Mary, we will sing to our redeeming God.

Like Elizabeth, we will open our homes and lives to others.

Like Joseph, we will obey without regard to cost.

Like the Shepherds, we will leave our busyness to worship Christ.



2. **Spend Less:** (not “Spend NOTHING”, but Spend Less).

Christmas has become a season of excess and consumerism.

(some people go into debt just to buy gifts for others).

...and many of the gifts we purchase this year may just end up in the donation pile a few months later.

Let’s give thoughtfully and relationally.



3. **Give More:**

For most of us, the most special gifts we have received have been relational & personal:

Hand-made, thoughtful gifts. Experiences together.

Relational giving means we pay attention to the other person.

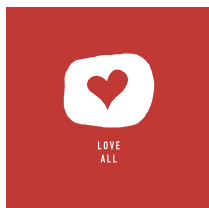
We think about who they are, what they care about, and what they need.

The Father gave us His one and only Son.

God’s answer for the world’s problems has never been material things.

God did not give us more STUFF. He gave us HIMSELF.

The most priceless and personal gift of all.



4. **Love All:**

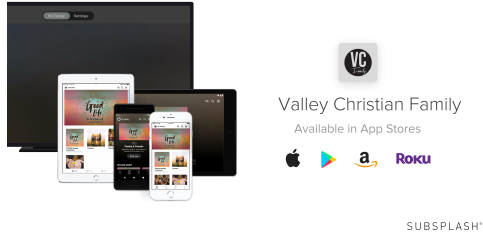
We spend less that we might funnel some of our resources away from over-consumption and toward those who might be considered “the least of these” around the world.

The hungry, thirsty, and naked.

The poor in our midst, and the poor around the world.

Can the way we celebrate Christmas be good news for THEM?

We believe it can.



We are gathering some helpful resources to help us truly celebrate Christ this Advent season.

- devotional readings for each day of Advent
- Family Advent Candle Readings for each Sunday of the month.

- and ways to invite your whole family to bless those in need this Christmas.

We will put ALL these resources on the VC Family App (that we told you about this morning...see the bulletin insert).

So...when we gather on Friday, December 1st for our Tree Lighting, we will be ready and poised to worship Jesus all month long!

What if Christmas was no longer about stuff?

What if this Christmas, we could worship fully, spend less, give more, and love all?

To the glory of God, Christmas can STILL change the world!

## **PRAYER**

Lord, you are ever-present.

You are always attentive to us.

May we be attentive to You.

We have MANY THINGS to do.

But first, we will choose the ONE THING we GET TO DO...

The BEST THING of all: to sit at Your feet,

talk with You, learn from You,

and let You direct our steps.

## **CLOSING:**

- Come forward to receive prayer

## **BENEDICTION: (from Luke 10:41,42)**

My friends, we may be anxious and troubled about MANY THINGS.

But ONE THING is needed:

to SIT at the Lord's feet

and LISTEN to His teaching.

## Verbal Announcements for Nov 11, 2023

**Welcome.** For those who are **first time visitors** we ask you to fill out a Get Connected Card which is in the pocket of a chair in front of you.

**OFFERING**