

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: Abide – Abiding in Jesus’ Presence  
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Abide – Abiding in Jesus’ Presence  
Luke 10:38-42

**<sup>38</sup> As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. <sup>40</sup> 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!”**

**<sup>41</sup> “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”**

Well, let me take you back a bit. And for some of you, it's more than just a bit, but let's go back to when you were 16 years old. You remember that? You're about to take your driver's test. Maybe for some of you, you don't remember your driver's test. I will never forget my driver's test because I was nervous.

Like the biggest thing in your life when you're 16, at least what I remember, is making sure that you don't fail the driver's test. Because all your friends know you're taking it, you don't want to show up to school the next day and be like “I still can't drive”. So, I remember getting in the car, I'm a little bit nervous, hands are shaking a little bit, but I'm ready. Like I've taken the classes, I've put in the hours. I'm ready. I sit in the driver's seat, and I've got this random guy next to me with a clipboard ready to grade my every move. And I put my keys in the ignition, I start the car, take a deep breath, and I'm like, “Okay, let's go.” So, I put my foot on the pedal to drive and all of a sudden, the car just goes (makes car revving noise), and it doesn't go anywhere. And I was like, “What just happened?” So, it felt like a glitch. So, I was like, okay, let me just try it again. So, I put my foot on the ignition and the same thing happened (makes car revving noise again), and it didn't go anywhere.

So, I'm sure I had this extremely concerned look on my face, but I just told my instructor, I was like, “Sir, I think the car is malfunctioning.” And he's like, “Hey, are you serious?” And I'm like, “Yes, it's not working. I've done all the things. We're not going. It's not working.” He's like, “Are you serious?” And I was like, “Yes, it's not working. We're not going anywhere.” He goes, “Son, you haven't put it in drive.” It was just the worst way to start the test. Cause I was like, I feel like

I failed before it's even over. And yet, and this makes me terrified to drive, he passed me. I'm like, what in the world?

As I think about that, I thought I had done everything. Like I thought I had everything necessary for me to move forward, but I hadn't done the one thing necessary for me to move forward. That's kind of what we've been talking about these past couple of weeks as we're in week three of Abide. Week one, a couple of weeks ago, JP talked about how in church we've been taught to do all these Christian things. We've been taught to read the Bible, go to church, sing worship songs. We've been taught to do all these things. But just because you do all those things doesn't actually mean you are a Christian. Because you can do all these things on the outside and you can seem like you're one thing, but on the inside, you're not. And he had this example of, he had two limes, and there's a fake lime and there's a real lime and they both look like limes, but they're not limes. Even though this one (points to fake lime in left hand) on the outside seems like it's a lime. It's not. This one is the real lime (points to real lime in right hand). And this one (points to real lime in right hand again), is the one that's got the juice. Like, this one is the one that's got life flowing through it. This one (fake lime) just looks like it does, but on the inside there's nothing there. This one (real lime), it's got the juice. So, he said, there's a difference. You can do the things, but if you're forgetting *the* thing, then you are not the actual real thing.

Then last week, we talked about love, and he opened up by telling a story about a professor at USC who started a class on love. And he taught his students how to love and he gave them unique homework, asked them to have lunch with someone they disagree with, or serve someone under seven years old and over 70 years old. Just to do things that are acts of love. But that's missing something. Because you see, you can do all the “Christian things” and still feel like you're lacking something. You can do all these acts of love. You can do all this stuff, but still feel exhausted. You can do all these things and not be moving forward. Why? It's because you're missing something. And it's Jesus. Specifically, it's an awareness and an awe of the presence of Jesus. That's what's missing. Because you can do all this stuff and if it's not with Jesus, then it's just stuff and you're not going to move anywhere.

For example, you can choose to read the Bible to make yourself feel like a good Christian. You can do it as something to check off the box and it will be a burden to you. Or, you can choose to get in the word of God because you believe it's the inspired word of God and you want to get in it so that you can have a deeper relationship with Jesus. I tell you what, that's got the juice. You can listen to worship music because of what the radio says. You can listen to worship music because it's positive and encouraging. And if that's why you're listening to it, because it's positive and encouraging, then you should join my two-year-old daughter and watch Daniel Tiger with her. That is positive and encouraging. If that's your goal, it's only going to get you so far. Or, you can listen to worship music because you want to participate in the song of heaven. That right now, all the angels are singing, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. And you want to pour out your soul to your king. I tell you what, that's got the juice. Or you can love people and

just have all these acts of love and try to make other people feel good. And you can give generously, and you can make meals, and you can do all this stuff, and it will leave you exhausted. Or you can be so filled up with love from your heavenly father that he's poured his love into your soul, that you can't help but allow it to overflow into the lives of people around you. I tell you what, that's got the juice.

You see, these are two different ways of doing things. These things lack it. These things have it. And what is it? It's an awareness of Jesus's presence. You can abide in those things or you cannot abide while doing those things. As we're in week three of abide, I just want to give you a simple definition of abide. Abiding means staying connected to the presence of Jesus. Abiding means staying connected to the presence of Jesus. And today what we're going to look at, is we're going to look at what it means to spend time with Jesus. How do you spend time in his presence? And we're going to be in Luke chapter 10. So, if you have your Bibles, you can open there now as we try to figure out what that means. What does it mean to spend time with Jesus?

But before I read in Luke chapter 10, I want to show you two other places in scripture that speak to the importance of being in God's presence. The first is in Acts chapter four. There's a moment when Peter and John are arrested. The religious leaders arrest them and then they come and visit them, and then they question Peter and John, Jesus's disciples. And then Peter and John reply with extreme clarity and courage. And then this is what it says in Acts 4:13. It says, <sup>13</sup> **When they, the religious leaders, saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.**

Not took note that these men knew the Bible. Not took note that these men had made good choices. They took note that these men had been with Jesus because the presence of Jesus changes you. So, we want to be a people who abide in the presence of Jesus, who sit in the presence of Jesus, who are aware of the presence of Jesus. So that the presence of Jesus might permeate the rest of our life. So that other people might look at us and say, "Hey, it seems like they've been with Jesus." And I hope you know this, but Satan knows how important and how powerful the presence of Jesus is in your life. He's going to do all he can possibly do to stop it. In fact, we can see it in scripture. One of the first things we see is in the Garden of Eden in Genesis. Genesis chapter three, God has created everything perfectly. He has an intimate relationship with Adam and Eve. Satan comes in the garden in the form of a snake, and tempts Adam and Eve, and allows and convinces them to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And they sin. And one of the first effects of that sin was this. The Lord is walking in the garden, as He had done previously, and then it says this in Genesis 3, verse 9. <sup>9</sup> **But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"** Adam and Eve's sin had convinced them to leave the presence of God. I want you to know this, one of Satan's greatest desires for your life is for you to be kept from God's presence, because he knows that where his presence is, is where the power is. He's going

to do all he possibly can do to keep you from the presence of God. Let's make sure he doesn't get what he wants.

So, we're going to be in Luke 10, we're going to be looking at what it means to spend time with Jesus. And we're going to look at someone who showed us what it means to spend time with Jesus. She stayed connected to Jesus when other people did not. And we're going to be in verses 38 through 42, looking at the famous story of Mary and Martha. And we're specifically going to try to look at what Mary did right. We're not just going to throw stones at Martha because there's other things she did well in scripture, but here we specifically want to look at, 'Hey, what did Mary do right?' We're going to read this story and then we're going to break it down from there.

So, starting in Luke 10 verse 38 says this. <sup>38</sup> **As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.** It's believed that Martha was a widow. The only way at this time where she could have actually owned a home and owned a home large enough to host people, would be if her husband had purchased it, and there's no mention of her husband, so she was likely a widow. <sup>39</sup> **She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.** <sup>40</sup> **But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.**

You know, whenever I've read this story before, I've just kind of assumed that it's just like Martha, Mary, and Jesus in the house, but in all likelihood, that's not the case. Jesus traveled with his twelve disciples. He traveled with other people as well. It's very likely that at least the twelve disciples were there with him as well. So, there's a lot of people there, a lot of preparations that have to be made. Then Martha **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!"** <sup>41</sup> **"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,** <sup>42</sup> **but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."** So, Martha sees Jesus, she warmly greets Jesus and welcomes him into her home, and she wants to use her spiritual gift of hospitality to serve Jesus. So, Jesus and his friends come in the house, and they hang out in the living room, and everyone sits down and Jesus begins to teach them. And Martha gets really busy. She starts putting together the meal for everyone and the more she puts together things the more frustrated and upset she gets. So, she goes to Jesus and says, "Jesus, tell my sister to help me." And Jesus says, "No, she's chosen what's better." That's the story.

What can we learn from the story? We're going to look at three things that Mary did to abide well with Jesus. And the first thing is, I want to point out what it says in verse 39. It says this: <sup>39</sup> **She, Martha, had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet.** Rather than talking with the other disciples, rather than cleaning up the house, Jesus was in the house, so she wanted to be with Jesus. So she sat at his feet. And this is the first characteristic of someone who abides well with Jesus. This is point number one.

### 1. *Abiding means sitting at the feet of Jesus.*

And that phrase here obviously literally means what Mary was doing in this moment. She was sitting at the feet of Jesus. But at that time, it actually also meant something else. That phrase “sat at his feet” described someone who was a disciple underneath a rabbi. So, if you're being trained by a rabbi, which was a religious leader, you would say “I sat underneath their teaching. I sat at their feet.” In fact, we actually see this in scripture. Paul says this in Acts 22, and I'm going to read from the ESV because it gives a literal translation, exactly what the Greek says. NIV puts it a little bit differently. It says this, <sup>3</sup>“**I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel.**” NIV translates it as studied under, the Greek literally says, I studied at the feet of this teacher.

So what's happening here in Luke chapter 10 is actually revolutionary, because in that day and age, rabbis would not take women to be their disciples. Women would not sit at their feet. Here, Jesus is allowing Mary to sit at his feet, to be his disciple. It's revolutionary because what would happen in that day and age is, young men would graduate from their schooling, typically at the age of 14 or 15. And these rabbis would go to these schools, and they try to find the best of the best. They try to find the students who are the most educated. So they'd find these young men, ask them questions, and once they found someone they deemed worthy of being their disciple, they would say the phrase that Jesus used. They'd say, “Hey, follow me.” And then that young man would leave all that he knows, and he would go and follow that rabbi wherever he would leave.

Now, whenever he left the town, that young man's family and friends would come around him and they'd say a phrase. They'd say, “May you be covered in the dust of your rabbi,” meaning would you follow him so closely, that as your rabbi is walking down the dirt roads and he's kicking up dirt, may you follow him so closely that his dirt covers you because they knew something. They knew that the power of being with the rabbi was being in the presence of the rabbi. The power of the rabbi was being in the presence of the rabbi. So, they said, stay so close to him. The closer you can be, the more you'll be like him. So, sit at his feet, follow in his footsteps, so you might think the way he thinks, speak the way he speaks, acts the way he acts. Because they knew that if that disciple would be with the rabbi, they'd become like the rabbi.

And here, Mary knew this well in Luke chapter 10, she knew that being with Jesus would make her like Jesus, because his presence is where the power is. Which begs the question, where is his presence? If we're going to relate this to our life, where is his presence today? I know many of us, we pray a prayer that we've probably learned, something like, “Hey Lord, would you be with us?” And I don't know exactly why you might pray that prayer, potentially it's because you don't think he's with you. You're asking him to do something that he's maybe not already doing. “Lord, would you be with us?” I just want to make it clear, where is the presence of Jesus in your life today? Well, Jesus' last words to his disciples before he ascends into heaven was the great commission. He said this in Matthew chapter 28, “**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.** <sup>19</sup> **Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,** <sup>20</sup> **and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**”

He's with you. Surely, he's with you. In the valley of the shadow of death, he's with you. In the mountaintop of your victories, he's with you. When you sleep, he's with you. When you awake, he's with you. When you're doing the dishes, he's with you. When you're changing diapers, he's with you. He's with you now, and surely he will be with you always. Listen to this- catch this, the question is not, "Is he with you?" The question is, "Are you with him?" He's promised you "Hey, I'm with you. I am with you always." The question is not, "Is he with you?" The question is, "Are you with him?" Like, are you aware of his presence? Are you in awe of his presence? Are you sitting at his feet every single day? Are you with him? He's with you, but do you look like Martha? Are you off doing other things? Is your mind elsewhere? Because you see, Jesus was in the house. Jesus was in the room and Martha was with Jesus. But she wasn't with Jesus because her mind was elsewhere. She was worried and upset about many things. And the more she served, the more frustrated she got with her sister. So eventually she just goes to Jesus and says this in verse 40. She says, "**Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me?**" I can just imagine Jesus hearing that from Martha and going. "No, I don't care that your sister has left you. I care that you've left me."

So where are you? Like, where are you sitting? All of us are sitting underneath someone's teaching. All of us are abiding in someone or something. All of us are learning from something. You're maybe learning from the music that you listen to, the podcast you subscribe to, the news that you pay attention to, the TV shows that you watch. We're all sitting underneath something or someone. Who are you sitting at the feet of? Are you the person that when you wake up, before your feet even hit the ground, you're going, "I want to sit at the feet of Jesus today. I want to be aware of his presence today. I want to make sure that I'm making set aside time in my day where everything else is gone, where I can sit and be with Jesus. I can spend time in his word. I can spend time in prayer. I can be aware of his presence." But not just in those "quiet times." But in the loud times while I'm doing the dishes, I'm reminding myself, "Hey, be with Jesus. He's with me. Be with Jesus." I'm driving down the road. I'm reminding myself, "Hey, be with Jesus. He's with me. Be with Jesus." Where are you at? And who are you sitting under? So, point number one, first thing we can learn is, abiding means sitting at the feet of Jesus. Knowing where he is and going where he is.

So, the second thing I want to point out is actually just in that same verse that we just looked at, in verse 39. Let me read it again. Jesus is at the house. Martha's doing other things. It says this: <sup>39</sup> **She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.** She sat with Jesus and listened to Jesus. She wasn't trying to say anything that made her feel profound, ask any questions that would impress other people. She wasn't talking to other people. She was sitting there and listening to Jesus, which is the second thing we can learn from this passage. Point number two.

## 2. *Abiding means listening to Jesus.*

Now, the word here for listening doesn't mean she heard Jesus. It means she understood Jesus. It means these words landed in her heart. You know, there is a difference between hearing and listening. Because, you know, you could be at a restaurant and you can hear the conversation at the tables around you. Like you can hear the noise of those conversations, but just because you're

hearing them doesn't mean you can actually really listen to them and understand them, because those conversations around you, they just kind of get lost in the noise. You're hearing those things, but you're not listening to those things.

And I think for some of us, we've gotten used to hearing Jesus. We're not listening to Jesus because his voice has just gotten lost in the noise of our life, and Jesus cares deeply about this. In fact, he said something about this very thing about the Pharisees in Matthew chapter 13, he said this, <sup>13</sup> **This is why I speak to them in parables: “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. <sup>14</sup> In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: “You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.**

You know, Judas heard Jesus. The Pharisees heard Jesus. Hearing Jesus is not a distinctive of a disciple. Listening to Jesus is a distinctive of a disciple. So where are you at right now? You hearing Jesus or listening to Jesus? Here's how you might know if you are hearing Jesus, and this has been me many times in my life. Let's say you spend time in the morning to spend time in God's word. You read the Bible. Then a couple hours later, someone asks you, “Hey, what'd you read in God's word today?” And you go, “I have absolutely no idea.” It's happened to me many times before. And it's because I was speeding through it. I was hearing the words of God, I wasn't really listening to the words of God. Or you go to church, you're at church right now. Let's say this afternoon, someone comes and finds you and they go, “Hey, what was the sermon about?” And you go, “I don't really remember.” It's because you're hearing the words of God, you're not really listening to the words of God. You're not like taking them in, because your mind is elsewhere. And since the word of God isn't getting deep in your soul, it's not doing what it can do in your life.

The best way I know how to describe it is this. Let's imagine right now that I'm hungry. I typically don't eat all that much before I preach. So, let's just say right now that I'm hungry. Good news is that I brought some snacks with me to fix that hunger. So I went to H-E-B yesterday and picked up some beef jerky and Starburst and M&M's and Snickers, and I've got these things that can fix my hunger. So, let's just say I've got these things and I'm hungry. So, what am I going to do with this? Well, I'm going to put this in my pocket and then I'm going to just, yeah, put this right here (puts all the items in his pockets). I've got all this food with me and now it's on me. Why do I still feel hungry? It's because it's on me, it's not in me. I haven't actually taken the time to chew on this food, to swallow this food, to get it deep in my stomach. So it's not doing what it can do because it's not actually in me.

Some of you are spiritually starving and you don't know why. The Word of God is all around you. The Bible app is on your phone. You've got Bible verses on the walls of your house. You've got Bibles on every single shelf in your house. And you're still spiritually starving. And you don't know why. It's because the Word of God is around you, it might be on you, but it's not in you because you haven't taken the time to chew on it, to meditate on it. To get the word of God into your bones. And it's not doing what it can do because it's not actually in you, because you're hearing the word of God, but you're not listening to it, and it's not in you.

I want you to know, JP does an amazing job of caring for our staff, and he does that in many ways. He deeply cares about how we do at our job, but he also cares primarily about how we do at our first job, which is having an intimate relationship with Jesus. So he'll frequently ask us to do things that challenge us and force us to go deeper and deeper in our relationship with Jesus. One of the things he asked us to do recently was something I had never done before. He asked us to do something called chair time. And here's what it was. He said, for the next 30 days, find a chair, pick a chair today, and then for the next 30 days, spend 15 minutes in that chair in silence, listening to Jesus. Just ask God, "Hey, what scripture needs to come to mind? What friend needs to come to mind? Who needs encouragement? Help me make some decisions." Don't have your phone on you. Don't have a TV. Don't have a journal. Don't have anything else. Just sit there and listen for God. I tell you what, it's incredibly uncomfortable if you haven't done it. Fifty seconds feels like fifty minutes. But my challenge is to you, hey, can you do that? Would you do that this week? I'm not asking you to do it for 30 days, but until we meet again next Sunday, could you do that every single day? 15 minutes, you find your chair, you're spending your time alone in silence, listening for God.

And I also want to make sure you know I was probably the number one person on staff who pushed back the most against this thing. So, if you're sitting there, I might know what you're thinking. So maybe you're thinking, "Man, what if I don't hear from Jesus? What if I don't feel prompted by Jesus? What if I don't?" Well, what if you do? And even if you don't, what you're doing is you're training yourself to turn off the noise of your life. You're pushing it all aside, and you're learning to enjoy the presence of Jesus. And you're just saying, "Jesus, I am putting you first, and if you have anything to say to me, anything to prompt me with, I'm all ears." So, would you do that the next seven days until we meet again next Sunday? Could you do that - 15 minutes in a chair listening for God's voice? You know what? It's a distinctive of a disciple. Jesus says this in John chapter 10 that his sheep know his voice. They listen to his voice because point number two, abiding means listening to Jesus.

Last thing I want to look at is the contrast between Mary and Martha. Let's read verse 40 to the end. It says this: **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 few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."**

So Martha is busy making food, and I actually don't think the problem for her was that she was serving. I don't. I noticed this for the first-time last night. I don't think her problem was that she was serving. I think her problem was the way in which she was serving. Because here was her problem- Her problem was who she was thinking about when she was serving. You ever noticed that? Like Jesus is in the room, Jesus is in the house and she's serving Jesus. She's not thinking about Jesus. She's not going, 'Jesus is in the house so I want to serve Jesus.' She's thinking 'Jesus is in the house and Mary's not serving Jesus.' She's not thinking about Jesus. She's thinking about her sister and the way in which she is serving is keeping her from the presence of Jesus. And this is really the main thing that we can learn from these two. The key characteristic between these two is that one sister was distracted, and one sister was undistracted, which is point number

three. Third thing we can learn is that abiding means removing whatever is distracting you from Jesus.

### 3. *Abiding means removing whatever is distracting you from Jesus.*

Recently I was speaking at a DNOW at another church, and it was a youth retreat for 6th through 12th graders, and they had me do a dating Q and A. And someone had asked the question, “Hey, I’m dating someone who I don’t think knows Jesus and this relationship is pulling me away from my relationship with God, what should I do?” And I just said, “Man, I understand how difficult this might be. That relationship probably feels like your whole world, but I just want to make it so clear what you need to do. Right after this, you need to go find him as soon as you possibly can and tell him, ‘Hey, I may like you, but I love my God. And as much as I might enjoy this relationship, I care so much more about that relationship. And I just want you to know that you are pulling me away from the one whom I love most. So, as hard as this might be, we’re done.’” And there are parents in the room who are volunteers and they’re like, “Amen! Preach it!”

And, you know, I’ve been thinking about that moment because it feels clear to me. I’ve been thinking about that moment, because, you know, we grow up and we get different responsibilities. Our schedule gets fuller, like there’s different things going on. And now the things that are keeping you from Jesus, they’re not like a middle school relationship, they’re different, they feel more important. And if you’re like me, I can look at that middle schooler or high schooler and go, “Oh, that’s so easy. He’s pulling you away from Jesus. Well, get rid of him.” Why don’t you do that now with the things keeping you from Jesus? Like, what’s the thing right now in your life that’s keeping you from Jesus? Maybe for you it’s your job. Maybe it’s your phone. Maybe it’s your kid’s youth sports teams. Maybe it’s your sorority or your fraternity. Like, what’s the thing that’s keeping you from Jesus? And why haven’t you broken up with it?

Let’s take the most extreme example out of all of them. Let’s take your job, for instance. You’re like, hey, my job is keeping me from Jesus. The stress of it, I’m just thinking about it all the time. There are so many late nights. So it’s keeping me from time with Jesus, time with my family, the relationships there, they are just really, really, really not good for me. And they are changing me in a way that is keeping me from Jesus. This job is keeping me from Jesus. My question to you is, “Why don’t you just break up with it?” And you might be thinking, ‘Nate, I can’t just like quit my job. Like that would be so costly, because if I quit my job, that would mean I have to go find another job, and I make X at this job, but I don’t know if I can make X at another job. It would be so costly for me to quit this job.’ I just want you to know it’s far more costly for you to stay in that job. For what would it profit a man to gain the whole world and yet lose his or her relationship with Jesus?

What’s the thing for you? You got to know it. What’s the thing in your life that is keeping you from God? It’s pulling you away from God. I don’t know what it is for you. You need to know what it is for you. Is it Instagram? Is it Netflix? What is it for you? You need to name that thing and break up with that thing. Say, “Hey, as much as I might like you, I love him. And as much as I might enjoy you, I enjoy him more. And you are keeping me from the one whom I love most. So although it feels costly to break up with you, it’s far more costly to stay with you.” Or, I

mean, of course you can just keep making excuses. You can keep saying, “Ah, I'm too tired. I'm too busy. Got too much going on.”

I heard this from pastor Craig Groeschel this week: “You can either continue to make excuses or you can have an intimate relationship with Jesus. What's it going to be for you?” And again, you might be thinking, “Man, I can't just not do this thing.” Think about this story, think about Martha. She's making food for the people in the house. She's making food for Jesus. And she's going, “If I don't do this, how is it going to get done?” Think about this, she's making food for Jesus. You know what happened in chapter four, Luke 9? Jesus fed 5,000 people with virtually no food, hardly any food, and zero prep time. So, Martha's going, “If I don't do this, how's it going to get done?” And Jesus is going, “I might know a guy. And by the way, it's more important for you to be present with him than to produce for him.”

So, in summary, point number one, abiding means sitting at the feet of Jesus. Point number two, abiding means listening to Jesus. Point number three, abiding means removing whatever is distracting you from Jesus.

Well, to close, I want to tell you about one of my favorite memories of when I was dating my now wife. It happened on Valley Mills, which all great moments happen on Valley Mills. We were cruising the valley, as the kids say, and I'll never forget exactly where we were in this moment. We were at a stoplight, the light was red. And I'm driving the car and Adalee's in the front seat, and we're just talking and I'm looking at her, and it just felt like a normal day. Until I was looking at her and out of the corner of my eye, I realized that the car next to us was not happy with us. There was a woman in this car. She was by herself and she's like screaming at me through her window. She's like, “Hey! Hey! Hey!” Like trying to make sure that I pay attention to her. And I'm like, okay, I am about to get in a fight on Valley Mills. Like, this is going to be very interesting. And she just keeps going and going and going. Eventually, she opens her car door. I assume because her window could not go down. She opens her car door. She's out of her car going, “Hey! Hey! Hey!” And since I'm so brave, I open up the passenger window so that my wife takes the first blow. And, she's out of her car and she's going, “Hey! Hey!” I roll down the window. She goes, “Son, I've never seen anyone look at a woman the way you're looking at your girl! If you don't put a ring on her finger, you've lost your ever-loving mind!”

That only can happen on Valley Mills. And she shut the door and then she drove off. That's exactly what happened. And it's just one of my favorite memories because it's like, man, I remember what that felt like. I remember getting to date Adalee Lamberth because I had admired her from afar for a while. And when it was like, she wanted to date me?! It was like, what?! Like Adalee Lamberth, out of all the other guys at Baylor, she chose me. This thing doesn't make a whole lot of sense. So while we were dating, I'm like, she chose me. I get to be with her.

In your relationship with God, you know, you're told spend time with God, abide with God. So you're probably thinking, you know, ‘As a Christian, I need to choose Jesus. I need to choose Jesus. I need to choose Jesus.’ I want you to know if that's your mindset, you've got the dynamics of your relationship all messed up. It is not, ‘I have to choose Jesus today.’ It's instead, ‘I cannot believe he chose me. I cannot believe the God of the universe, the creator of the stars chose me,

the Savior of the universe chose me!' Like, what!? God so loved me that he sent his son to live for me. To be crucified for me. To die for me. To be buried for me. To rise again for me. What?! Out of all of the people that he could have chosen, out of all his creation, he looked at us and was like, I want them.

I don't know about you, but all I had ever done was run from God. I had thrown myself in a pit, covered myself with sin, and shame, and godlessness, and arrogance, and selfishness, and a whole host of other sins. And God saw that and said, "I choose him." And it's like, "You want him?! The runt of the litter? You want him? You want her?" He's like, "I want that one. I choose that one." And when we were lost, he found us. When we were dirty, he washed us. When we were dead, he raised us. And scripture even says, Zephaniah 3:17, that he delights over us, that right now he rejoices over us with singing. That's how much he loves you. That's how much he wants to spend time with you. So if that's the case about my God, time with him is not a duty or a drudgery, it's a delight! Because I'm with my God. I'm with my Father. I'm with my friend. I'm with the shepherd of my soul. I'm with the one who loves me. So, if you're a believer in Jesus, it's not 'I have to choose Jesus today.' It's, 'I can't believe he chose me. I get to be in his presence' and 'Where else would I want to go?' Like, where else am I so loved? Where else am I so seen? Where else am I so forgiven? Where else is grace so abounding? Where else would I want to go than in the presence of Jesus?

So, if you're a believer in Jesus, it's like, man, I want nothing else other than him, because where he is, is where the power is. Where his presence is, is where the power is. Let me pray that we'd all partake in it today.

Father, we all have a lot going on. We do to different degrees. Every single person in this room has things to be worried about, things to be stressed out about, things to be anxious about, things that they got to get done. God, I pray that those things just wouldn't come first. That instead you'd allow our mind to wander, not to worry, but that you'd allow our mind to wander to you. That every single moment of our life we'd be aware of your presence. We'd be in awe that you're with us. That surely you are with us right now, you're in the room. The question is not "Are you with us?" The question is "Are we with you father?" Would your Holy Spirit allow us to be with you every moment of our life? That we would be aware of your presence sitting at the foot of your presence, listening to what you have to say in your presence, and removing everything that keeps us from your presence. Would your presence be the thing we long for? The thing we wake up eager to get to. Eager to be aware of. That we get to sit in the presence of the King simply because you chose us. So Father, what we want to do now is we want to worship you like you saved us. We want to worship you like you've chosen us. We want to worship you like you've forgiven us, because you have. We want to worship you because of this one very thing. The fact that Jesus is alive and with us and for us. May we always be attentive to that throughout our lives. It's in Jesus name we pray, amen.