

Luke Series #5

"Distractions" - Luke 10:38-42

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Distractions*

1. Ever been in prayer, and had your mind wander?
2. Ever gone to bible study and found yourself totally distracted by all the things you have to do?
3. We've all experienced this
4. No matter where we are, it sometimes seems that concentrating on the Lord is the most difficult thing in the world

B. *Today*

1. The problem is that we are distracted
2. Might be by our surroundings . . .
 - a. kids
 - b. room mates
 - c. noises outside
 - d. for a lot of us;
 - our busy schedule
 - the To Do list
 - ex.:
 - >> wash the car and change the oil
 - >> clean the windows
 - >> call Mom
 - >> take the kids to the park
 - >> clean the garage
3. Often we are distracted because we have misplaced priorities
4. Let's take a look at distractions and how to deal with them

II. TEXT

A. *Vs. 38-39*

38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

1. John tells us the village was Bethany

- a. just over the hill from Bethany
 - b. John also tells us that Martha, Mary and their brother Lazarus were friends of Jesus
 - c. when He visited Jerusalem, rather than spending the night in the City, he left and made the couple mile trip back to Bethany and spent the night at their home
 - d. it seems that this is the first time they met
2. Jesus' reputation has preceded Him
 - a. as the eldest person in the home, Martha goes out and invites Jesus to their home for a meal
 - b. Jesus accepts her invitation
3. Have you invited Jesus home?
 - a. many people see religion as something they go to church for
 - b. it's a part of their life they devote a certain chunk of time to
 - c. like joining a club and visiting a lodge once a week
 - d. they think they can fulfill their religious duty by attending church once a month, but as soon as they exit the building, Jesus is left behind
 - e. Christianity is not a religion in which God is appeased by throwing Him an occasional bone
 - f. it is a living relationship that encompasses all of life
 - g. Jesus wants to come home with us
 - He wants to sit in our living room
 - He wants to be at home in our kitchen, our den, even our bedrooms
 - h. really, our homes are the first testing ground of our faith
 - i. if we cannot live out our faith at home, we can't live it out anywhere else
4. Jesus enters the house and sits down
 5. As soon as He does, Martha's younger sister, Mary, comes and sits at His feet
 - a. the posture of a disciple
 - when ready to teach, a teacher would sit on a chair or rock
 - disciples would show their allegiance to him by arranging themselves at his feet
 - more distant followers would stand, a bit removed
 - b. pretty bold on her part - women were not accepted as disciples by Jewish teachers at this time
 - c. but she takes the position of a disciple anyway
 - d. Jesus not only accepts her, he commends her

B. Vs. 40

40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.”

1. As the eldest woman in the house, Martha was responsible for feeding her guests
2. But Mary’s role, as the youngest, would have been to assist her sister
3. So there was Martha, alone in the kitchen
 - a. working furiously to put the meal together
 - b. at first, thought Mary would come any second
 - c. seconds passed, no Mary!
 - d. bang the pots a little harder
 - e. don’t cut the carrots, whack ‘em real hard
 - f. she even resorts to talking to herself
 - at first quietly
 - then louder so she’ll be overheard
 - g. does any of this sound at all familiar?
4. It’s clear from her words to Jesus that she not only resented her sister — she resented Jesus
 - a. “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve all by myself?”
 - b. we don’t know exactly what thoughts were going through her mind — but we can venture a good guess
 - c. angry at Mary
 - to Martha, seemed Mary had shirked her responsibilities
 - and rather than being punished,
 - she got to sit in and listen to Jesus
 - d. Martha probably thought, “If Mary helped me, we could get done more quickly and both listen to Jesus
 - e. doesn’t Mary care about me? Doesn’t Jesus?
5. Luke tells us that Martha was distracted by much serving
6. What she was distracted FROM was Jesus Himself
7. What she was distracted BY was service
 - a. but she was making Jesus a meal — how could that be a distraction?
 - b. how could doing something FOR the Lord be wrong?
 - c. very simply, when service for the Lord distracts us from the person of the Lord, it is wrong
 - d. and we end up becoming like Martha, embittered and resentful of others who seem to be doing less than we are but who are experiencing the joy and blessing of fellowship with God
8. This is a tendency that is specially dangerous for people in ministry
 - a. they get so caught up in the details of serving the Lord, they have

- little time left for Him
- b. and then they look around and see others who seem to be doing little, and they get resentful
 - c. they cry out to the Lord - "Lord, get 'em. Show them what's up"
9. This passage shows us that people have different temperaments and personalities
- a. whenever we see Martha, she is a dynamo of activity
 - here
 - in John 11, when Lazarus had died and Jesus came to Bethany, first one to go out and meet Him
 - then in John 12, she is again making Jesus and the disciples a meal
 - b. Mary is about as like her sister as a water is like fire
 - everytime we see Mary, she has quietly placed herself at Jesus' feet
 - here
 - in John 11, she throws herself at His feet and pleads for her dead brother
 - in John 12, while Jesus is eating the meal Martha has cooked, Mary anoints His feet with perfume
 - c. while Martha was a perpetual motion machine, Mary was the quiet, sensitive dreamer
10. These kinds of people tend to get on each others nerves - BIG TIME!!!
- a. the one who is more geared toward action looks at the contemplative person and gets frustrated that they don't DO more
 - b. the contemplative person looks down their nose at the busy person and calls them spiritually shallow
 - c. but you know what?
 - while both kinds of person have their strengths
 - they also have their weaknesses
 - and the reason calls us into fellowship together, just as Martha and Mary were sisters who shared the same house —
 - is because God wants us to complement each other and learn to bring each other into balance
 - d. yes; blessed are the balanced, for they shall not fall

C. Vs. 41-42

41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

1. Jesus spoke tender words to Martha

- a. we see that in the way he calls her
 - b. “Martha, Martha” - the repetition of a person’s name was a means of endearment
2. You see, Jesus knew both Martha’s and Mary’s heart
 - a. on the surface, it really was most appropriate for Mary to be helping her sister
 - b. but Jesus knew that Mary was not merely being lazy
 - c. she had caught the sense of the supremacy of Christ and knew life itself was comprised of hanging on His every word
 - d. while Martha, was busy in the kitchen making a loaf of bread, Mary was in the front room eating the bread of life
 - e. on the other hand, Jesus knew that Martha’s wasn’t really all that far off track and that her hearts was to serve the Lord
 - f. so He very gently corrects her by telling her her priorities were messed up
 3. “You are worried and troubled by many things”
 - a. sure she was
 - b. Jesus and His followers
 - c. a big meal to prepare
 - d. the table, cleanup
 - e. the problem was this, she was worried and troubled about it all
 - f. rather than resting in the Lord while she served, she trusted in herself to get it all together
 - this resulted in anxiety and distress
 4. “But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen it.”
 - a. in other words, Martha’s problem was a case of misplaced priorities
 - b. Martha was troubled by MANY things when she should have been centered on ONE thing
 - c. Mary chose that ONE thing - and that was to put Jesus first
 5. Martha called Jesus Lord, but she was clearly being merely polite
 - a. she didn’t really own Him as Lord, *yet*
 - b. if He was, then she should have waited on Him, until He told her to start cooking
 - c. that’s what Mary did
 - d. Mary knew that service to the Lord must always be energized by the Lord Himself
 - e. and that only comes by patiently sitting at His feet and listening to His word
 6. Many of us are trying desperately to live for the Lord
 - a. at home, at work, in our neighborhoods
 - b. but we lack power
 - c. the reason? = we aren’t spending time at His feet first!
 - d. we are trying to make bread before we first partake of the bread of

life

- e. we are trying to give others a drink when we haven't gone to the fountain of living water
 - f. we are trying to shine as a light in the darkness when we haven't gazed with unveiled face into the light of God's truth
 - g. we are trying to be salt in a decaying world when we haven't spent time just peering into the consuming fire of God's holiness
 - h. before we got out, we must first come in
 - i. before we rise up, we must first sit down
7. It is easy to become so busy serving Jesus that we spend no time with Him.
 8. The disciples duty is to maintain an intimate personal relationship with God
 - a. maintain = worked at daily
 - b. intimate = an open and honest sharing
 - c. personal = must be ours, not somebody else's
 9. You see, service is important
 - a. Jesus didn't berate Martha and tell her to get out of the kitchen
 - b. He simply showed her her service was ill timed and out of focus
 - c. we are called to serve; but service must flow from a full heart
 - d. it must flow from time spent in His presence or it is just the work of the flesh
 10. We should imitate both Mary and Martha
 11. It is that balanced life we are after
 - a. Charles Wesley wrote
 - b. Faithful to my Lord's commands I still would choose the better part;
Serve with careful Martha's hands

And loving Mary's heart
 12. Jesus said, "Without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)
 13. Whenever we feel overworked and begin to criticize others because they aren't as devoted as we are, we need to examine ourselves

III. CONCLUSION

A. Distractions

1. Martha was distracted from the Lord by her attempt to serve Him without first listening *to* Him
2. As a result, she was filled with worry and trouble
3. Over the years, many people have come for help with anxiety and distress
 - a. ask them, are you spending time with the Lord
 - b. are you reading God's word and praying
 - c. response is almost always the same

- hang their head
- and say, “No.”
- d. no wonder!
- 4. Be on the watch for distractions, for things that will take you away from the Lord
- 5. Gang tactic is stores;
 - a. create a disturbance in one area,
 - b. rip off another
 - c. often, owner will not realize he’s been ripped off till later
 - d. too late!
- 6. So too with the devil
 - a. he’ll create a diversion, a distraction
 - b. trying to keep you from resting at the Lord’s feet
 - c. because that is your source of power
 - d. Isa 40:31 “Those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.”