

Daily Devotional, June 15, 2020 The One Thing That is Needed

With the many troubles that we are facing in our world lately, have you had a hard time keeping your focus? We have been on shutdown from this pandemic for more than 3 months now and the consequences of it have put a stranglehold on our mental states, our world economy and the intimacy of our relationships. This is true amongst families and friends, and even in our church, school and business relationships. On top of that, we are confronted with the realities of social injustice, racial inequality, and unimaginable rioting in major cities. In times like these, it's not hard for our focus to be redirected from the one thing that keeps us on track when everything around us has been derailed and brings life seemingly screeching to a halt.

Jesus said there was only one thing that was needed, just one thing that we should place above all others. Unfortunately, not many of us conduct our lives as if this is a priority. We allow the demands of life to control us. Whatever agenda item seems to be most pressing is what garners our attention. So, what is that one thing that Jesus tells us is most needed and ought to take the most precedence in our lives? In Luke 10:38-42 we are given a story in which Mary models for us the proper attitude towards filling our greatest need in life through an experience she has with Jesus.

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 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." Luke 10:38-42 (NIV)

The story itself is a reflection on our own lives. Here we have two sisters, Mary and Martha and their brother, Lazarus, who are good friends of Jesus and are hosting Jesus, offering the hospitality of a dinner in their home. We read that Mary "sat at the Lord's feet listening to what He said."

Can you just picture what emotions Mary was experiencing with Jesus. She is absorbing His every word and basking in his presence. As she dwelled on His words, you might wonder if she was the only one who seemed to have an intuitive vision of His death. This is the same Mary who would soon anoint Him with a very expensive perfume, an act that Jesus said she did in preparation of His burial in John 12:7. This type of spiritual vision occurs at those times when we do the one thing that is most needed, that is, to sit at Jesus' feet to listen and learn.

The one thing that is important in our lives is the presence of God. It is the one thing that is needed. We need God. We seek God. God designed us that way, and we are broken without God. How often have you found yourself running around like Martha, so caught up in the claims that are placed on your time that you find yourself exhausted and spent? You allow yourself to become so distracted by all the busyness that surrounds you, that you miss out on the joy of life that the One within you has given himself up for. Stop being so busy! Don't miss the presence of God in your zeal to serve God. Listen to the loving admonishment Jesus gave to Martha, "*Martha, Martha... you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.*"

My suggestion is today, do the one thing that is needed. Put everything on hold for a few minutes. Be still. Open up your mind and heart and listen as you spend time with God in God's Word. Then, do a Mary, after dwelling on, act on the spiritual insight you gain in God's presence.

Prayer: Oh, God, I want your Word to dwell in me richly. I don't want to be shallow in your Word, I want to know it well, in all of its riches and fullness. And as it does, may it flow from me. Help me to sing your Word and the truths of your Word with joy and thanksgiving in my heart to you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.