

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study

### “DISTRACTED FROM DEVOTION”

For individual study or group discussion

In Luke 10:38-42 we read the familiar passage about the family from Bethany with whom Jesus had formed a close, intimate friendship. Scripture indicates that he visited their home repeatedly during his earthly ministry. On this particular occasion, Jesus was partaking of the hospitality of Martha, as she welcomed him into her house (v. 38). Martha's generosity and willingness to serve was a wonderful thing, so where did Martha go wrong? The passage tells us. "Martha was distracted from much serving" (v. 40). Any work that takes the place of worship can easily become idolatry when it *distracts us from devotion* to Christ.

*The context: welcoming Jesus and Jesus' welcoming (vv. 38-39)*

In the Gospel of Luke we learn a lot about the Kingdom of God through hospitality (Luke 5:29-32; 7:36-50; 9:10-17 to cite a few). Hospitality in the Old Testament is described as the welcoming of strangers into one's home (Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Genesis 18:1-16; Hebrews 13:2). In the New Testament, Jesus describes himself as the "Bread of Life" and welcomes us to be present at the table (John 6:48-51; Luke 22:15).

- Read Romans 12:13 and 1 Peter 4:9-10. How do these passages emphasize Martha's welcoming Jesus to her home?
- Read Luke 22:7-20. How does the Lord's Supper welcome us into Jesus' presence? (cf. Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:23-25)

*The complaint: revealing the presence of activity for Jesus without attention to Jesus (v. 40)*

Dr. Kelly Kopic, in his book *You're Only Human: How Your Limits Reflect God's Design and Why That's Good News*, touches on the stress that we have all felt in the presence of activity without attention to Jesus: "Stress produces anxiety when we allow it to overload our capacity to handle it. Anxiety changes us mentally, physically, and emotionally, reducing our ability to handle stress, thus making itself into a bigger and bigger problem. And anxiety typically crowds out the possibility of recognizing and responding to God's presence with us."<sup>1</sup> Because Martha "was distracted with much serving" she missed the fact that before her was "the Son of Man [who] came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

- What went wrong with Martha's heart to serve (vv. 40-41)?
- Read Luke 22:24-27 and Mark 10:43-45. From Jesus' message to his disciples, how can we become disoriented like Martha about serving?
- How did Martha's approach affect the way she felt toward Jesus and others?
- Are there areas in your life where anxiety "crowds out the possibility of recognizing and responding to God's presence"? Hand over your anxieties to God and make his presence in prayer a priority this week.

*The call: inviting us away from distraction for Jesus to devotion to Jesus (vv. 41-42)*

We learn from Mary's example in verses 41-42 that she had "chosen the good portion" and the "one thing necessary"—devotion to Jesus. Pastor and theologian J.C. Ryle explains, "The grace of God which brings salvation, is the one thing needful. Let this little sentence be continually before the eyes of our minds. Let it check us when we are ready to murmur at earthly trials. Let it strengthen us when we are tempted to deny our Master on account of persecution. Let it caution us when we begin to think too much of the things of this world. Let it quicken us when we are disposed to look back, like Lot's wife. In all such seasons, let the words of our Lord ring in our ears like a trumpet, and bring us to a right mind. 'Only one thing is needful!' If Christ is ours — then we have all and abound!"<sup>2</sup>

- Read Proverbs 8:34-35 and Acts 17:11. How does Mary's posture in verse 39 relate to these passages?
- Read John 12:1-8. What else do we learn about Mary and her devotion to Jesus in John's passage?
- Why is spending time with Jesus and his Word so important, and how does it benefit your daily walk? (Psalm 119:98-100; John 8:31-32; 2 Timothy 3:14-17)



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: November 6, 2022

SPEAKER: Aaron/Brian

SERIES: Gospel of Luke

PASSAGE: Luke 10:38-42

## Family Dinner Table

### One Thing

by Scotty Smith

"Your day isn't going to be any different than mine. Though my list includes sixteen things in a seven-day week, you have your list too. And no matter if we have three or thirty things to try to squeeze in before the final tooth-brushing of the day, the same issue is before us: Will we be distracted by the work-to-be-done, like Martha, or will we be centered on the Lord-to-be-loved, like Mary?

My drive to Dad's home in Burlington, NC, was awesomely beautiful, but within the first two hours of arriving I had visited the office of his primary care doctor to take care of all the paper work the memory care facility needs back in Nashville; stopped by the assisted living facility Ruth, my step-mom, will soon enter; visited Ruth at Twin Lakes rehab center where she will be for the next three or four weeks after a fall left her unable to use her right hand; came to see my dear Dad and introduced myself to him seven times; drove back to Twin Lakes to help Ruth wade through a pile of papers and bills needing attention; then came back to visit with Dad and reintroduce myself to him a few more times....finally, I went to bed, profoundly aware of your prayers and the goodness of Jesus.

Only ONE THING is really necessary today, only ONE THING, cannot be taken away from us: Staying alive to Jesus and his love for us—drinking in his grace, adoring him in our hearts, expecting to see his faithfulness, relying on his power, and serving as conduits of his compassion. Let's choose well."<sup>3</sup>

### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

The House Campus Ministry at UTC, supported partner ministry

### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Joanna and Peter Vaughn, supported missionary partners who are co-directors of Amani US and Amani Ya Juu

<sup>1</sup>Kopic, Kelly. *You're Only Human: How Your Limits Reflect God's Design and Why That's Good News*. Brazos Press, 2022. 132

<sup>2</sup>Ryle, J.C. *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke*, Luke Chapter 10. Grace Gems. Retrieved November 2, 2022, from <https://gracegems.org/Ryle/l10.htm>

<sup>3</sup>Smith, Scotty. *One Thing*. The Gospel Coalition. Retrieved November 1, 2022 from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/scotty-smith/one-thing/>