

How Resolute Are We?

(Luke 10:38-42)

I. Introduction

- A. As I get older, think more of the hereafter (*enter room, wonder what I'm here after*)
1. That's an old joke, but it's really not funny (*ask Cathy how often it happens!*)
 - a. **Point:** We can get so busy doing that we forget exactly what we're doing
 - b. We can be like the guy on a trip who was totally and completely lost
 - c. He didn't want to stop to ask directions; he was making such good time!
 2. It is easy too easy to stay too busy with life and forget the point of life.
 - a. We know that the point of life isn't doing laundry or mowing the lawn
 - 1) But those are the kind of things that we spend most of our time doing
 - 2) Those are important if you want clean clothes or to find your house
 - b. But we can stay so busy with those things that we forget the main point
 3. Maybe the real point is ask ourselves whether or not there is main point!
- B. Solomon has a particularly cheery outlook on the pointlessness of life (**1:14**)
I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind.
1. From the standpoint of life under sun, nothing ultimate matters (**1:3-6**)
Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course.
 - a. People are born and die. Sun rises and sets. Wind blows south and north
 - 1) We saw a field full of trash in Midland, TX. Blows in from Odessa.
 - 2) So what happens to all the trash? Eventually blows back to Odessa!
 - b. The problem with mowing lawn or doing laundry— it never stays done
 2. If it's meaningless under the sun, then meaning is on other side (**12:13**, GNT)
After all this, there is only one thing to say: have reverence for God, and obey his commands, because this is all that human beings were created for.
 - a. The point of life is to obey God, to do God's will, to live the right way
 - b. What really matters in life is eternal things... Godly things (**12:14**, NLT)
God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad
 - c. We will give account of all the things we do, even the little things
 3. If we seek the things of God, there are no little things (**Video: Last to First**)
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- C. It is easy to feel like “*a cog in a machine*” where nothing you do really matters
1. Our lives are usually made up of small, ordinary, mundane things
 - a. But the little things of our life are things that God sees... and can use
 - b. Our purpose is to serve God and keep His commands... in little things
 - c. When we are faithful in the little things, God will bless us (**Matt 25:21**)
You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things
 2. But we must keep in mind our continuing purpose to obey and glorify God
 - a. Otherwise we can become so distracted by the little things of life
 - b. The urgent then overwhelms the important, and we find ourselves lost
 3. Our daily Bible reading on Thursday from **Luke 10** reminds us of this
 - a. It is here that we meet Mary and Martha for first time (*1st time for Jesus?*)
 - 1) They and their brother Lazarus would become Jesus’ closest friends
 - 2) Their house in Bethany became something of a refuge for Jesus
 - 3) In was there that Jesus would spend the last week of his life
 - b. The details of the story are pretty familiar (**Reading: Luke 10: 38-42**)

II. Lessons from Mary and Martha

- A. Jeff Walling sees a metaphor of “*church workaholic*” (*Daring to Dance w/ God*)
1. Martha was busy with physical details of service— no time for relationship
 - a. God was in her living room! She was tossing salad and setting tables
 - b. Rather than joy in her service, she was critical of Mary for not helping
 - c. What could have been a sacred moment became mundane & oppressive
 2. Walling sees in Martha a warning those who work hard in God’s kingdom
 - a. We can get so busy with housekeeping of church that we miss the divine
 - b. Church is supposed to create a kind of sacred space where we see God
 - c. But sometimes church seems like anything but sacred space with God
 - 1) RUSH to get everyone ready for church and in their assigned place
 - 2) CRUSH of getting ready—class, communion, assignments, coffee
 - 3) FUSS of preparing for prayer breakfast before or pot lucks after
 - d. So, am I suggesting that it’s not important for all these things to get done
 - 1) **Just the Opposite:** If more were more involved, less burden to any
 - 2) Remember the old expression, “*Many hands make light work*”

B. The problem with Martha was NOT her focus on the necessary work of life

1. I remember once being invited to someone's house for a COOKOUT

a. We sat and talked awhile... then he left buy charcoal, burgers, buns, etc.

1) I was starving! I wanted Martha to show up and get everything done

2) Was it OK for Martha to work? Was it OK for her to want HELP?

b. Sure! Martha's problem was NOT that she was busy preparing the meal!

2. What was the problem? Martha let her work disconnect her from Jesus!

a. Martha's focus on work made her an extremely critical person (**Luke 10:40**)

Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!

1) Martha is critical of Mary for not being busy in same way she was

2) Martha is really critical of Jesus— for not caring she does all work

b. What should have been an joyful service became a drudgery for her

c. Why? Because she focused on the JOB rather than on JESUS Himself

C. Jesus' words to Martha really focuses on **priorities** (**Luke 10:41-42**, NLT)

My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her

1. Martha here was “worried and upset” over the details of the dinner

a. The word “worried” is the same word Jesus uses in **Matt 6:31,33**

1) Focus is on priorities—don't worry about things vs seek first God

2) Undue stress, anxiety, worry over stuff detracts us from God

b. Mary is also “upset.” This come from word for “uproar” or “riot”

*When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion (**Mk 5:38**)*

*“But not during the Feast,” they said, “or the people may riot.” (**Mk 14:2**)*

1) Mary was so stressed over the details, it caused a RIOT within her

2) Why? Because she was so focused on all the wrong priorities

2. So what exactly should have Martha done here? *There are several things*

a. She could have joyfully, lovingly fed Jesus as a way of honoring Him

1) Mary would anoint Jesus and be seen preparing for burial (**Jn 12**)

2) Jesus saw that as serving him; he would have seen meal in same way

b. She could have fussed less and fellowshiped more (*like on the Sabbath*)

c. She could've suggested she & Mary change places (*many hands, lite work*)

3. If she focused on Jesus, lunch wouldn't matter (*he fed 5000 in last chapter!*)

D. Most of us spend the bulk of our time at work— we work more than we sleep

1. And then there is all the Martha stuff—cook, clean, do laundry, do lawn
 - a. Have errands to run, appointments to keep, bills to pay, games to play
 - b. Life is so BUSY—we sometimes make it BUSIER than it needs to be
 - 1) Couple who struggled with time/energy required for his second job
 - 2) Why a second job? To pay for a new car... needed for second job!
2. We fill our life responsibilities, activities, obligations— ***not the problem***
 - a. The problem is in process, what really DOES matter gets pushed aside
Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed
 - b. In middle of all the urgent things, we forget what is the important thing

III. Conclusion

A. There's a turning point in Luke that you missed if you read too fast (**Luke 9:51**)

As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem

1. John has Jesus make many trips to Jerusalem; Luke telescopes them into one
 - a. Luke organizes his material around Jesus decision to go to Jerusalem
 - b. He “*resolutely set out*” for Jerusalem where he will go to the cross.
 - c. Much action/teaching takes place during this intentional trip to cross.
2. Jesus always knew where he was going; His life had a specific purpose
 - a. And every decision He made contributed to that overall purpose.
 - b. He resolutely set out to do God's will, and He would not be distracted

B. What is the purpose of our life? Is the purpose not to glorify God? (**Isa 43:6-7**)

1. Jesus knew that the reason he was on earth was to glorify God (**Jn 17:44**).
 - a. He knew the purpose of His and He resolutely set out to accomplish it.
 - b. How resolute are we? How focused are we on the purpose of our life
2. If we keep that in mind, then it TRANSFORMS the rest of our lives
 - a. We spend just as much time at work, but see it as serving God (**Col 3:23**)
 - 1) Like Martha could've done, we fix the meal while focusing on Jesus
 - 2) We take care of normal stuff of normal day focused on the eternal
 - 3) We may make different choices because we focus on ultimate choice
 - b. Martha let urgent thing distract from eternal things... and we must not!
3. Jesus resolutely set out to do the Father's will. How resolute are we?