

Men, it is not necessary for you to remember your wife's birthday. Or your anniversary. Not necessary for you to help around the house. Not necessary to buy your loved one flowers, buy her some sweets, massage her feet. It isn't necessary, but don't do it and you are a fool.

But One thing is necessary declared our Lord. Jesus visiting his close friends, Mary, Martha, Lazarus. Martha's scrambling, frustrated, stressed out, complains, **tell her to help me. Martha, Look at you. You're anxious and worried about many things. And for what? I didn't come to your house to be served. I came to serve you, to be with you and your sister. Your sister has chosen the good portion, the one thing she (and you) need most, I'm not about to take that from her.**

Martha, Martha, you are anxious, troubled about many things. You can relate to that. We think through, worry about many things of which 99.9% never happen. Anxious, troubled. The Greek words there Luke uses means Martha was 'being drawn in many directions'. Sound familiar. We're busy people. Running here and there. Always on the go, something to do, somewhere to go. Work demands more and more. To do list always growing. Barely time for a family meal, let alone devotions. We get stress out.

The saying goes 'idle hands are the tools of the devil'. Perhaps so. But busy hands are the devil's delight when they keep us from the Word of God. Woe to us when we listen to the seductive world, our flesh seducing us, to be anxious about so many things in the life, too busy for devotion to His Word. The business of life distracts us from seeing the One thing truly needed. The One thing we so easily put off each day. Repent. Just stop. Stop being distracted, sit at His feet.

Our Lord says to you as well, **dear child, you are anxious, troubled about many things, one thing is necessary.** Sit quietly at Jesus feet, listening to His Word. In her busyness, Martha completely lost sight of why she was working so hard. Do you see this in your life? Her busyness robbed her of the joy of Jesus' company, robbed her of peace with her sister. It robs you as well.

Martha worshipped Jesus in the way of the law, offering Him her works, her busyness, doing good works. Not wrong but she lost focus of why, what is before her. Mary worshipped Jesus in the way of faith and Gospel. She offered Him nothing but her presence; sat quietly at His feet, received His Word. And Jesus simply delighted to have her sit there. The most important activity as a disciple of Jesus is to stop -hear the Word of God, receive the forgiveness of sins, receive His very Blood and Blood; nothing more important, necessary, more central, for your life than that.

It's no coincidence, when you drove onto the church property, centered before you, as central in your life, the cross of Christ, a large crucifix on a tall steeple, a steeple directing you to things above. Focus there. That crucifix is to assure all, as St. Paul wrote, **we preach Christ crucified**. How our Lord directs you to see Him. A picture of our God in His glory, a picture of God being God for you. And as you enter the doors, notice under that crucifix; you are just like Mary. At the feet of Jesus, to learn, to listen, to receive from Him who desires to give you the One thing you truly need. There is nothing else. Forgiveness is everything. It is Christ, only and always, the one thing needful.

Mary comes to Church to listen, to receive, to be fed, not for a so-called contemporary worship experience or entertainment. Here for His words, His works, His Divine Service, not ours.

We all need to remember that who we are, what we do, how we truly live, always must flow from the **one thing necessary**, listen at the feet of our Lord, giving you His Word, His Sacraments. Don't be a fool just stop being anxious and troubled. He takes your anxieties, troubles from you, so you rest in His peace. He sets the table for weary souls and feeds you with His life and forgiveness, His good portion you receive, the One thing necessary will not be taken from you, never leave you, but will work in you to the very end.

114 years in this area. 14 years of Risen Savior. It's all by gift. All His works. All by God's grace that you and I are here. That our fathers and mothers who served, sacrificed, suffered, even died that we can call ourselves Christians, Lutherans. Thanks be to God, He has preserved His Word, His presence in this place. **The One thing necessary** can still be received.

That this places continues, a place of His unchanging truth, His unchanging Word and Sacraments He instituted, commanded continue to literally join the One to His people. That the gates of hell cannot prevail against this place or His people. Not ever. May God ever preserve this place until He comes again. That today and tomorrow, our children, grandchildren, generations will come here, the unworthy, sinners and failures; the broken, the wounded; the dregs, the likes of you, to come here to bask in His forgiveness and gifts. Dwell as heaven and earth come together as in no other way on earth- giving you the One thing necessary. Himself; at the feet of Jesus, to listen and learn, receive from Him. His presence. His works. Happening right here.

So whatever happens today, tomorrow, the next day -how mighty the evil one seems, how much the world hates you, how much you struggle against your own flesh, anxious, trouble -be at peace, you are safe. Nothing can truly harm you. You have the One thing necessary.