

Making Christ the Center of Time Luke 10:38-42

Introduction

- I'm going to go out on a limb today and say there's a pretty good chance that you are going to be convicted by today's sermon
 - Two reactions
 - Who does this guy think he is?
 - Great; just what I need to hear! I didn't come to be convicted; I came to be encouraged!
- We're going to talk about making Christ the center of our time
 - Time is one of the most precious things that is available to us
 - Time is as valuable as money itself
 - All of us want more of it; and none of us want anyone to tell us how to spend it
- Now, do you understand why I said you will be convicted by today's sermon?
- Time is a funny thing isn't it?
 - If we have to wait for something; time seems to slow down
 - If we have to do something; time seems like it goes really fast
 - Yet, time doesn't change. There are always 24 hours in a day; 60 minutes in an hour; 60 seconds in a minute.
- Time is critical when we talk about making Christ the Center of our life
 - It's how we spend our time that reveals what our life revolves around
 - How we spend our time is what shapes us
- In order to make Christ the center of our lives, we have to wrestle with competing priorities.
 - Those priorities dictate our time
 - What's most important to us is what we usually spend our time doing
- I'm not going to ask you to add one more thing to your life
 - I'm going to ask you to reprioritize your life with Christ at the Center
 - Unfortunately we can't add hours to a day, but we can take the time we have and maximize that time by focusing on what is most important
 - Living Room Illustration
 - If I walk into your living room, there's a pretty good chance that the seating in your living room is arranged around what is most important in the room
 - Most living rooms have a T.V. in the room. All the chairs are arranged around the T.V.
 - Sunroom; no T.V. but several windows.
 - In the morning, the sun comes up on that side of the house. I positioned the couch so that I can drink coffee, work on my laptop, and enjoy the sunrise.
 - Before, I had a recliner in the corner to where my back was to the sunrise. I love the recliner because I can work with my feet

propped up. It's comfortable, but the view was not good. I had to rearrange the seating to focus on what was most important.

- The couch that was in the room, was big, but I couldn't recline, and it's size put me in a position that the sun was in my eyes. I changed out the couch for another couch that does recline and fits perfectly to where I can enjoy the sunrise without it blinding me.
 - Just like that room, we can't change time. What we can do, is rearrange our time to focus on what is more important.
- The Story of Mary and Martha
 - Luke 10:38-42
 - Mary and Martha are sisters; their brother is Lazarus-the one Jesus raised from the dead
 - Jesus was very close to this family, so for Jesus just to drop by their house was not an unusual thing.
 - As people read this story, they often identify with one of the sisters
 - Martha was busy serving, distracted by the tasks at hand
 - Mary acted as though she didn't have a care in the world, just enjoyed spending time with Jesus.
 - The Martha's are always frustrated with the Mary's, because the Mary's just don't seem to understand what needs to be done.
 - The Mary's don't understand the fuss of the Martha's. There's always time to take care of the busy work. It's necessary to take time to enjoy what is in front of you.
 - I get the sense that these two sisters fought a lot!

What is most important?

- Martha
 - Greets Jesus at the door
 - Serving Jesus
 - Wants to serve a guest with the utmost hospitality
- Mary
 - Sat at Jesus' feet
 - Listened to Jesus' teaching
 - Receiving what the guest has to offer
- Temptation to apply this story in the wrong way
 - It's not about who was right and who was wrong
 - Two things to consider
 - Both of the women were focused on Jesus
 - They just had different priorities
 - In other words, you can't interpret this story as
 - Mary being lazy and Martha not being polite.
 - Mary being focused with Jesus and Martha not paying attention

- There's a good chance that you do a lot of good stuff with the time you have. It's the reason you struggle with making room for Christ.
- The question is: Are you focused on what is most necessary?
 - Martha's perspective
 - Jesus, the Lord of Lords, just stopped by for a visit!
 - Hospitality
 - Everything needs to be perfect
 - In that culture, a woman was not supposed to sit at the feet of a teacher. Her role was to serve
 - She had a list of things to do
 - There were expectations that she had for herself, that Jesus didn't have for her
 - In order to be a good parents, I need to do this
 - In order to be a good spouse, I need to do this
 - In order to be a good employee, or boss I need to do this
 - In order to be successful, I need to do this
 - Those things in and of themselves are good things, serving Jesus' wasn't a bad thing for Martha to do—It just wasn't what Jesus expected of her, nor was it the most important thing in that moment!
 - Mary's perspective
 - Jesus, the Lord of Lord's, just stopped by for a visit!
 - I know it's not culturally acceptable for me to sit at Jesus' feet, but I want to soak up every minute I have with him.
 - There will be time for the other stuff. Martha and I will get to it—but it's important for me to just be in the presence of God!
 - Jesus' expectation was not to be served. He had a relationship with this family where they could relax around one another and appreciate each other's company without any expectations.
- What is most important?
 - **Luke 10:42**
 - What is the most necessary thing in your life?
 - Before you are a parent, spouse, employee, boss, successful, etc.
 - The most important thing is the time you spend with God
 - You can not be what you need to be without Christ being at the center
 - It's not about the expectations of the world
 - It's not about the expectations even of your family
 - It's about what Jesus expects from us, that is what is most important!
 - When you invest your time in Jesus it will not be taken from you!

Have an Eternal Perspective

- **Luke 10:40**

- Martha was distracted with much serving
- It would be wrong to think that Mary had no concern to serve Jesus
- What should be distinguished between the two ladies is their perspective on time.
 - Martha had a very linear perspective on time
 - Limited time
 - Everything has to fit in this limited amount of time
 - I need to get everything done now
 - Mary had an eternal perspective on time
 - It's not that Mary was lazy. It's not that Mary put things off all the time.
 - Mary, in that moment, was able to capture what was most important from the perspective of eternity.
 - Spending time with Jesus
- John 11:5-6, "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was."
 - Someone is ill and instead of going to heal them, Jesus lets them wait it out!?!
 - Was Jesus lazy?
 - Was Jesus just too distracted?
 - What's up with Jesus' response?
- John 11:21 & 32, "Lord if you would have been here our brother would not have died."
 - Do Mary and Martha have a right to be upset with Jesus?
 - Of course they do! Logical would tell us that Jesus had plenty of time to get to Lazarus before he died. And, if Jesus truly is God, then he could have healed Lazarus from his illness.
 - From a linear perspective, Jesus messed up!
- But what is the real point for why Jesus hung back a few extra days before visiting Lazarus and his sisters?
 - John 11:4, "But when Jesus heard it (that Lazarus was ill) he said, 'This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.'"
 - John 11:25, "Jesus said to her (Martha), 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?'"
- When Christ becomes the Center of Our Time we begin to have an eternal perspective
 - It's not a license to be lazy
 - It's not a free pass to not care anymore
 - When Christ is at the Center, our priorities change, which impacts how we spend our time.
- Examples from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount
 - Matthew 6:19-21, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves

treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

- Matthew 6:25 & 33, “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
- Both examples express concerns we have from a linear perspective rather than from an eternal perspective.
- The habit we get caught up in with time.
 - The struggle with time, in part, is a struggle for control
 - What stressed Martha out, was that she was trying to control the time Jesus had to visit; even to the point that she tried to control her sister.
 - This is where the competing priorities in our life come into play with Jesus at the Center.
- Have an Eternal Perspective
 - What is most important?
 - Find your identity in something bigger than yourself
 - Watch your priorities change, as Christ becomes the Center of your life.

Make Time Stop

- How many of you would like to push the pause button on your life?
 - Things are going too fast
 - Mind is cluttered
 - Maybe made some bad decisions that you wish you could just stop
- The interesting piece of this story is how differently Martha and Mary experienced time when Jesus showed up
 - For Martha, time sped up. However, for Mary, time seemed to slow down
 - Martha’s running around the kitchen, frantically working
 - Mary, on the other hand, feels as though there is plenty of time to take care of the house work. Now that Jesus has shown up, her whole world has stopped.
- Other Examples
 - The Transfiguration [Luke 9:28-36](#)
 - The Road to Emmaus [Luke 24:28-32](#)
 - Jesus’ Retreats [Luke 6:12](#), “In those days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued to pray to God.”
 - Jesus prays in the Garden [Luke 22:30-46](#)
- In moments of joy and in moments of distress, time seemed to stop when people took time to spend with God. It is a glimpse into eternity. [Revelation 4:8-11](#)
- So, we come back to the story of Martha and Mary [Luke 10: 41-42](#)
 - Anxious and troubled about many things
 - Only one thing is necessary
 - Choose the good portion, which will not be taken away from you.
- Take time to stop, spend time with God, Make him the center of your life.

- The more you get in the habit of stopping everything to spend time with Jesus, asking: what is most important, and then having an eternal perspective...Your priorities will change, how you spend your time will change, what your life revolves around will change

Conclusion

- I began this sermon by saying, “There’s a good chance you are going to be convicted by today’s sermon.”
 - Almost every day, I run into people who struggle with time
 - It’s not a particular age or generation; it’s everyone
 - It’s a struggle I experience in my own life as well.
- This struggle doesn’t make you a bad person
 - The story of Martha and Mary is not about who is right and who is wrong
 - Both were focused on Jesus, however their approach was different
 - The challenge in all of our lives, is to take the time to stop, focus on what is most important, and have an eternal perspective
 - The only way to do that, is to make Christ the Center of your life