

THE BIG IDEA: In the midst of working FOR Jesus, don't neglect to be NEAR Jesus.

The Take-Off

First off, let's read through Luke 10:38-42. What we CAN'T do is read this story and make our takeaway "*The work doesn't matter.*" This is NOT a story about not doing. Let's recap the last several weeks in Luke 9 and 10. Much of these chapters has been about working hard for the Kingdom:

- **Luke 8:21**, Jesus says his brothers and mother are the ones who HEAR His words and DO them.
- **Luke 9:1-9**, Jesus sends the 12 out to work. They deliver people from demons, heal the sick and proclaim the kingdom of God. He tells them to take nothing with them.
- **Luke 9:10-17**, Maybe 15-20,000 people are following Him, and when it gets late, the disciples want to send them home for dinner. Jesus says YOU feed them, and organize them into groups of 50. Work!
- **Luke 9:23-27**, Jesus says anyone who wants to follow Him must deny themselves daily and follow him, keyword DAILY.
- **Luke 9:57-62**, "Let the dead bury the dead. You follow Me, proclaim the Kingdom and DON'T look back."
- **Luke 10:1-20**, Jesus sent the 72 out to heal, deliver from demons and proclaim the message of Jesus that the Kingdom of Heaven is here.
- **Luke 10:2-**, Jesus talks about the harvest and there's a lot to be done and few laborers (workers) to do it. He says not to panic, but to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to SEND OUT workers to do the work.
- **Luke 10:25-37**, The Good Samaritan, where Jesus tells us to go serve and love and sacrifice for your neighbor and your enemy alike.

So this isn't a story about NOT DOING. It's also not a story about DOING.

It's a story about BEING; your heart's position WHILE you are doing; your spiritual state.

Who you are is more important than what you do.

That's the heart of today (and the heart of The Gathering)

This story is about your spiritual state.

This is a story about being near to Jesus.

Being NEAR really, really, really, really, really matters. (And we all know it!)

From concerts to relationships to seatbelts to pants to toilet paper, being NEAR matters.

When these things are FAR from you their impact ON you is limited.

Here's the big idea: **In the midst of working FOR Jesus, don't neglect to be NEAR Jesus.**

Martha was working hard but she wasn't near.

While working FOR Jesus she got distracted FROM Jesus.

We want to be near Jesus while we work hard for Him and for the Kingdom.

Here are 5 takeaways of what happens when you are NEAR Jesus while working FOR Jesus:

1. Your WORK will be WORSHIP, not OVERWHELMING DUTY.

1. Luke says Martha was "distracted by much serving."
 1. The Greek for this means "*pulled apart*"
 2. She was distracted over all of the tasks (*Good tasks at that...*) that needed to be accomplished, NOT focused on WHY she was doing them.
2. We can't limit "work" to just your job.
 1. 1 Corinthians 10:31, 'whatever you do, do it to the glory of God'
 2. Colossians 3:17, 'whatever you do, in word or deed, do EVERYTHING in the name of Jesus; vs. 23-24, 'Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.'
 3. According to Paul, EVERYTHING you do, as an employee, parent, spouse, neighbor, church member, evangelist, friend, grocery shopper, etc. should be an act of worship that glorifies God.

4. When your spiritual state is NEAR to Jesus, you'll be worshipping Him in everything you do. When you are far from Him, all of those things will be tasks to accomplish and they'll pull you apart.
5. If your heart is near to Jesus, you'll be worshipping him everywhere you go in everything you do. You won't be focused on the TASK you'll be focused on the One it honors and points people to.
3. Acts 16:25, Ephesians 6:7, 1 Peter 3:15

2. You will have **PEACE** not **ANXIETY**.

1. Jesus told Martha she was "anxious." That's the opposite of peace. She was worried
2. Anxiety means you are lacking peace.
3. The nearer you are to Jesus, the more at peace you'll be.
4. In just a couple chapters (Luke 12) He's going to tell His followers to relax; to NOT be anxious because they can TRUST God fully.
5. We don't trust people or things we aren't near to, and that includes Jesus.
6. How will we ever trust Jesus if we aren't near Jesus?
7. How will His peace become our peace?
 1. Philippians 4:6-7, Be anxious about NOTHING, but when you ARE, go to God in prayer and receive PEACE.
8. **In Christ you were SET FREE. Stay close to Him and REMAIN FREE!**
9. Psalm 29:11, 1 Peter 5:7, John 16:33, Romans 15:13

3. You will be **REFRESHED** not **RESENTFUL**.

1. Jesus tells Martha she is "troubled about many things."
2. Jesus describes her with words that seem to suggest she was flipping out. She was losing it internally AND externally.
 1. She was experiencing the OPPOSITE of refreshment: she was drying up
 1. Jesus says if you'll COME TO me, even though you're weary and burdened from life I'll give you REST. (Matthew 11:28-29)
 2. If you're far from Him while working for Him you'll just stay weary and burdened.
 2. In Martha's weary, burdened state of doing GOOD things, she became resentful.
 1. She resented Mary for not helping
 2. She resented God for seeming to not care
 3. Martha was freezing cold gathering wood FOR the fire but never coming close enough to be warmed BY the fire, mad she's doing all the work to FEED the fire.
3. Psalm 23:1-3, Jeremiah 31:25, John 4:34, Acts 17:28

4. You will follow **GOD'S** lead, not your **OWN**.

1. Because Martha wasn't near Jesus she took the lead.
2. In verse 40 Martha tells Jesus what to do: "Tell her then to help me."
 1. The Greek language suggests she came to Jesus in a manner of opposition, standing over Him, giving Him an order. (I told you she was flipping out...)
3. Jesus says His sheep listen to His voice. They know Him and follow Him (John 10:27)
 1. **If we are NEAR Him we will HEAR from Him.** We will walk in the power of the Spirit in everything we do. All the better to "do all things to the glory of God!" right?
 2. We'll also glean wisdom from Him to know when to turn away from doing something good that doesn't need to be on our plates.
4. Matthew 16:24, John 8:12, Psalm 16:11, Psalm 119:105

5. You will offer your **GIFT** without **MEASURING** what others offer.

1. Martha was trying to serve Jesus, but she was busy measuring Mary.
2. The moment you start measuring all you're doing against how much (or how little) someone else is doing:

1. you begin to elevate YOURSELF instead of JESUS.
 2. your focal point becomes what you're accomplishing.
 3. you take more pride in what you're doing for Jesus than in what Jesus did for you.
 4. you assume how others are serving Jesus is inadequate or insufficient.
 5. you prescribe what and how much others should be doing in order to be "right."
3. JESUS brings to light what is hidden in the darkness and JESUS exposes the motives of our hearts. (1 Corinthians 4:5) This isn't OUR job!
1. It's our job to offer up our LIVES as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1)
4. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16) Jesus tells the worker who put in a full day to not concern themselves that He is paying them the same wage as the ones who only worked a few others.
5. Matthew 6:1-8, 1 Corinthians 2:2, James 4:11-12

The Landing

It's really important to be near Jesus. And not because it's some good, religious thing to do. It's really important in the "Nothing in life will be quite right without Him" kind of way.

If you're living the Christian life far from Jesus your living it incompletely at best. At worst you might not be living it at all.

So how can we be near Jesus?

- 1st of all, you can't if He isn't your Lord and Savior
- intentional about spiritual disciplines
- community
- put God in the gaps
- redeem your commute
- 1D, 2D, 3D