

Luke 10 verse 38 says, Now, as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

[3 : 56] And she said to her sister Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving.

And she went up to Jesus and said, Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.

You can hear it in her voice. But the Lord answered her. Martha. Martha. You are, say it. Anxious. And what? Troubled. About many things. But one thing is necessary.

Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her. This is God's word.

[4 : 57] Let's ask God to talk to us tonight as we pray. So God, here we are once again, week after week, learning about anxiety and worry, how to be anxious for nothing, how to not worry about our life, how to trust you.

We've been learning so many different aspects, spiritually speaking, from things that cause our anxiety and worry. And so once again tonight, come talk to us. And so once again tonight, come talk to us.

Lord, I know how much I need this sermon. Thank you for letting me preach it twice this weekend. I need it so much. And I know there are people in this room that just need to hear what you have to say to us tonight.

So talk to us. To the glory of Jesus, we pray. And all God's people said, amen. You can be seated. Everything's amazing right now, but nobody's happy.

That was actually a comment that was made from a guest comedian on a late night talk show host. Back in the old days, it was Conan O'Brien.

[5 : 58] And the comedian that was being interviewed was describing a time in history, how we have so much amazing technology and amazing human invention. And yet all we do is complain about it.

He gave several examples. He said, when I grew up, we had a rotary phone. How many of you remember the rotary phone? Don't admit that publicly, all right? You just aged yourself.

He said, we had to stand next to it and actually dial numbers. Do you realize how primitive that is? You were making sparks inside a phone.

And if a person had two zeros in their number, you hated them. But now we have cell phones. And when they don't work instantly, we get mad and scream, come on.

Like we can't even wait two seconds for the signal to come back from outer space. But flying, oh, flying is the worst. People come back from flights and they act like it's a horror story.

[7 : 02] Pastor Wine can attest to this, right? They describe it like this. It was the worst day of my life. We didn't board for over 20 minutes.

And when we finally did get on the plane, they made us sit on the runway for another 40 minutes. Yeah. And what happened next? Did you fly through the air incredibly like a bird?

Did you participate in the miracle of human flight? You were flying. Everyone on the plane should have been saying, oh my goodness, we're flying.

Think about it. You were sitting in a chair in the sky. Yeah, but the chair doesn't go back far enough. We complain about delays.

Do you realize it takes five hours to get from New York to LA? That used to take 30 years. You gave birth to children on the way.

[8 : 01] And you arrived with a totally different group than the one you started with. Some of you appreciate the Oregon Trail reference there. Now, those examples are funny because they're true.

You see, every single one of us here tonight knows that we live in a culture of now. Like the old country song goes, we're in a hurry to get things done.

We rush and rush until what? Life's no fun. All we really got to do is live and die. Okay, we're in a hurry and we don't know why.

Can anybody relate to this? Anybody always on the go? Anybody got more things to do than you have time to do it? Anybody grow impatient with your kids?

Would you hurry up? Anybody get impatient with the waitress when she takes too long? Where is my food? Anybody grow impatient with your internet speed?

[9 : 01] What about the num-num driving in front of you? Would you just hurry up? I got many of you on that one. If I didn't get you yet, I'll get you now.

How many have ever grown impatient with the preacher? Would you just hurry the sermon up? Watch it. Every one of us knows we live in a culture of hurry.

Let's go, let's go, let's go. In fact, we so live in a culture of hurry that slow is a negative word. If somebody has a low IQ, we call them slow.

If service is bad at a restaurant, we call it slow. If a movie is boring and doesn't have a very good plot, we call it slow.

No, that's because the way we think is slow is bad and fast is good. But of course, the danger of living life in a hurry is that we tend to forget important things.

[10:03] Be honest, show of hands. How many of you have been in such a hurry that you left your house without your keys? Show of hands. Yeah, a lot of you. How many of you have been in such a hurry that you left your house and like your shoes or your clothes weren't matching?

Anybody ever done that? Okay, a few of you. How many of you left in such a hurry you forgot a kid? Yeah, yeah, come on. There's a few parents that are like, yeah, I have to admit I've left a kid before, right?

We are always in a hurry. And of course, we know that hurry isn't a good way to live. In fact, hurry can be an ungodly way to live.

I came across this quote in my preparation for the sermon this week. It said this, quote, Hurry is of the devil. Slow is of Jesus.

Think about it. What is the highest value in Christ's kingdom economy? Answer, love. The greatest command is the love of the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength.

[11:13] It's followed by love your neighbor as yourself. But love is painfully time consuming. Hurry and love are incompatible.

Hence, in the Apostle Paul's definition of love, the first descriptor he gives is love is patient.

And think about peace, which is what we've been talking about for several weeks. Think of when you're in a hurry to your next event and you're running behind.

Do you feel the deep shalom of God? Do you feel a grounded, present sense of calm and well-being? Don't you see love and peace?

Two of the great attributes of Scripture are incompatible with hurry. And that gets me. It's kind of the main idea I want us to think about tonight.

[12:14] And it's this. Notice it here on the screen. One of the reasons why you worry is because you're living life in a hurry. One of the reasons why you worry is because you're living life in a hurry.

That is exactly what Jesus addresses in the life of one of his closest followers here in Luke chapter 10. We're introduced here to Mary and Martha. Now, you know this.

Mary and Martha are two of the most prominent women in the New Testament. And they couldn't be more opposite. Every time you come across Martha, she's working. She's doing something.

Every time you come across Mary, she's usually at the feet of Jesus. She's either anointing his feet or listening to his teaching or she's at his feet when Lazarus dies.

These two women are very, very different. If you ask Mary, what do you want for Christmas? She'll say, I would like Charles Spurgeon's commentaries.

[13:17] Give me something to study. Give me something to learn. If you ask Martha what she wants for Christmas, she'll say, I'll take some Home Depot gift cards. I want something that I can use.

I want something I can do. If you ask Mary, her favorite Bible verse, she quotes something like this. As a deer pants for streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

That's Mary. Ask Martha, her favorite Bible verse, and she'll say, faith without works is dead.

Martha's a doer. She's a worker.

Don't you see Mary seeks and Martha serves. Mary likes to be. Martha likes to do. Which one are you? We're going to find out.

Let's say Jesus in the flesh, in person, is coming to your house tomorrow for lunch. What's the first thing you do?

[14:19] What is the first thing that comes to mind that you have to do? If you say, I've got a vacuum, and I need to clean, and I've got to prepare a great meal, and I've got to get everything ready, guess who you are?

Martha. That's Martha. Mary would say, I'm going to write down every theological question I've ever wanted to ask Jesus, and tomorrow afternoon at my home is going to be Bible study like you've

never heard.

That's Mary. These are very two different people. Now, do not get the wrong idea here. Both Mary and Martha are needed.

And God's people said, amen. Both are needed. In fact, I would say we need to have an element of Martha and Mary in us. We need to be balanced.

That is, we should seek Jesus, and we should serve Jesus. We should listen to Jesus, and we should live for Jesus. But in our passage today, there's actually something specific that Jesus wants to address to the Marthas.

[15:27] And by the way, if you're a Mary, that doesn't mean you can't listen in, and you should listen in. Jesus has something specific he wants to say to her and to us about this issue of anxiety and worry.

Here's the first thing I want you to notice. Look at chapter 10 and verse 38. Chapter 10 and verse 38. Now, as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house.

The first thing I want you to see here is Martha has a tendency to commit to everything. Some of you are already falling under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, right?

You know that God's reading your mail tonight. You have a tendency to say yes to everything. Do the quick math. You have Jesus, along with his 12 disciples, add to that Mary and Martha, and even though the Scripture doesn't always give us everybody that's in the group, we know that there were many other companions and people that often traveled with Jesus and the disciples.

So let's take a very, very, very conservative estimate. That is, Martha invited about 15 to 20 people into her home.

[16:49] Now, I realize in the ancient Near East that hospitality is a very important thing, but how many of you would invite 20 people over on just a moment's notice? Some of you might, but in doing so, you're not giving calculations to whether or not you can host that many people.

Like Martha, you are ready, fire, aim. That's Martha. She's inviting these people over, and little thought is given to, well, do I have enough food to feed these people?

Do I have enough room to serve all of these people? Do I even have enough help to serve all of these people? Martha commits to everything.

She over commits to things that she may not be able to do. In fact, if you think that I'm making too much out of this, I think this point gets proven even further in verse 40.

Look at it. But Martha was distracted with much serving. The Greek there for the word distracted, it's the idea of being pulled in different directions.

[17:57] That is that Martha has so many things going, she can't keep focus. She's distracted. There's an inner turmoil taking place inside of her.

She has so many things on her mind. There's so many things that she has to get done. Some of you during the sermon aren't even listening to the sermon. You're already thinking, what do I have to do tonight?

And what do I have to do tomorrow? You've got so many things on the mind, which is why you should be listening to this sermon. Focus, Martha. Martha can't focus.

Pardon the pun, but Martha literally and emotionally has too many pots on the stove. I've got to stir this, and I've got to turn that, and I've got to check this, and I need to taste that.

Martha's soul looks like this. Ah! I can't do it all. I can't get it all done. There's just so many things to do.

[18:55] She's distracted. And what, might you guess, did Martha's tendency to say yes to everything and overcommit to things, what did that tendency create in her life?

Anxiety. Worry. Look at what Jesus addresses in verse 41. But the Lord answered her, Martha, Martha, you are, say it, anxious and what?

Troubled about many things. Don't you see? Notice this on the screen. Martha is suffering from the worry of hurry.

She's said yes to so many things. She's committed to so many things. She's got so many pots on the stove that all of that commitment has distracted her and caused anxiety and worry to build up in her.

In other words, listen, can I talk to the Marthas in the room? You've got too much going on. You're doing too much.

[20 : 14] Notice this on the screen, Faith Family. Martha's inability to say no has tied her soul in a knot. She's committed to so many things.

She's so stretched out. And she's worried, Jesus says, about many things. This reminded me of an old SNL clip back when SNL used to be funny.

And that's going back a really long time, right? And the clip actually has to do with money, but it really applies to how we think about our time. Take a look.

If you want to insert a political joke right about now, which I'm not going to do, but think about that as it relates not to money, but as it relates to time. Here's the point I'm trying to make with that video.

Notice this on the screen. We often spend our time when we don't have time to spend. We often, just like we do financially, people spend money they don't have in the same way we often commit levels of time that we can't in a healthy way give.

[21 : 23] Now keep this passage in context, Faith Family, namely that this isn't just talking about time commitments as it relates to worldly things, you know, like soccer practice and band competitions and going to work and all the things that we might do in the world, so to speak.

But this is actually even talking about commitment to godly things. Martha is serving who here? Jesus. This is her Christian service.

Faith Family, notice this on the screen. It is dangerous when your commitment to Christian service distracts you from your commitment to Christ. Martha is distracted from who?

Jesus. Martha is distracted by what? Her Christian ministry. That is a dangerous place to be.

Can I be honest with you, Faith Family? This hurts. This, I mean, you have no idea how much I'm preaching to myself here. Look at this on the screen.

[22 : 33] Listen, the greatest threat to your spiritual life may be your schedule. The greatest threat to your spiritual life may be your schedule. Let me say it this way.

The greatest threat to your peace of mind may be your pace of life. Martha was so committed to so many things that she became distracted and anxious and worried.

It reminded me, you know, one of my favorite C.S. Lewis books is Screwtape Letters. The fictional story of a kind of a senior demon that's mentoring a junior demon on how to attack Christians.

And when the senior demon is writing to the junior demon, he says this. It's a very famous quote.

He says, You will say that these are very small sins and doubtless, like all young tempters, you're anxious to be able to report spectacular wickedness.

But do remember that the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from God. It doesn't matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the light and into the nothing.

[23 : 56] Murder? Well, that's no better than cards. If cards will do the trick. Indeed, the safest road to hell is the gradual one.

The gentle slope. The soft underfoot. Without sudden turnings. Without milestones. Without signposts. Without signposts. What's he saying? Just keep them busy and distracted and that's all you'll have to do.

Corey Ten Boom said this, If the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy. If the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy. So, what's the source of Martha's worry?

It's her hurry. Her busyness. Her overcommitment to things. And now I want to show you what that inward... And man, this is so relevant. Okay? I'm not sure if it's me or if it's you, but we're off a little bit tonight.

But I want you to see how practical this is when we see her anxiety come out. And you've seen this in your own life and you've seen it in the lives of others.

[25 : 08] Watch how her inward turmoil with worry and anxiety gets expressed outwardly. Verse 40. Look at verse 40. But Martha was distracted with much serving.

And when she went up to Him and she went up to Jesus and said, Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?

Tell Mary to help me. Anybody relate to that? Like you know exactly how Martha feels in that moment. Martha's got anger towards those that she perceives are doing nothing.

That is, Martha's anxiety makes her an angry and irritable person. And more than that, it makes her spiritually arrogant.

This will preach. Because Martha starts judging everyone else in the room based on whether or not they're putting in the same amount of hours and effort that she is.

[26 : 08] This anxiety starts coming out in anger and in arrogance. Why don't somebody else do something? Why aren't you as committed as I am?

Why don't you do something? Why don't you help? Listen, it goes like this. Notice it on the screen. Mary's anxiety that is brought about by her overcommitment gets expressed in anger towards others and ultimately leads to an arrogance because she thinks that her commitment is greater than everybody else's.

And I want to show you how this gets expressed in Martha's life. First of all, how it gets expressed spiritually. Look how she takes it out on Jesus.

Look at verse 40 again. Martha was distracted with much serving and she went up to Jesus and said, Lord, do you not care?

Wow! Like that's bold, right? Two ways that Martha's anxiety is getting expressed here. First of all, she questions God's care.

[27 : 30] Jesus, do you really care about my situation? Do you really care about everything that I've got going on? Well, first of all, you committed to all that. I didn't call you to all of that. Do you not care?

Do you not love me? Are you not concerned about my situation? Look at this on the screen, faith family. Jesus, how can you do nothing when I've done so much for you?

I'm telling you this will preach. I've seen this attitude in my own life and I've seen this attitude so much in the church. God, you owe me.

Look at everything I've committed to for you. Look at everything I'm doing for you, Jesus. Why don't you care? Hasn't my serving earned me some kind of status?

How can you treat me this way? Oh, how our own anxiety that's brought about by our commitment to our own to-do list gets expressed in anger and frustration towards God.

[28 : 40] But as if her questioning Jesus' care isn't enough, secondly, she tries... Am I the only one awake tonight? Like, she tries to control Jesus.

What does she say? Tell Mary to help me. In other words, Jesus, if you don't know what to do here, I'll tell you what you should do here.

The nerve of this woman to boss Jesus around. I mean, it's all fun and games, Faith Family, till we start telling Jesus what He should and shouldn't do.

Don't you see that here? Martha thinks she knows better than Jesus. And all of this anger has been produced by her anxiety because she's committed to things that she did on her own.

Notice this on the screen, Faith Family. When our emotions get out of control, watch, we try to solve it by taking control, even if it means controlling God.

[29 : 43] Let me say that again. When our emotions get out of control, we're anxious and we're worried because we've committed to so many things. Well, then what we try to do is we try to take control of the situation, even if it means controlling God.

And the word that God has for us tonight, and to me is don't blame your to-do list on Jesus when Jesus didn't ask you to accomplish all those things. Last time I checked, His burden is easy.

His yoke is light. You did this to you. By committing to so many things, and now you want to blame Him?

Now you want to control Him? Be careful that at the root of your anger is your own anxiety that's been produced by committing to a life in a hurry.

That's how this gets expressed spiritually, but notice how it gets expressed socially back in verse 40 again. Martha's distracted with much serving. She goes up to Jesus and says, Lord, do you not care that my sister's left me to serve alone?

[31 : 01] Tell her then to help. So here's the third thing that Martha's anxiety does, and this is towards Mary, is she starts to compare.

Right? At first, she questions God's care. Don't you care about what's going on? Then she tries to control Jesus. Well, why don't you do something here? And then she's comparing her and Mary.

My sister clearly isn't as committed as I am. It goes like this, faith family. Notice it on the screen. If you are not doing as much as I'm doing, it must mean you don't love God as much as I do.

That is spiritually dangerous. Clearly, you're not doing as much as I'm doing, so that must mean you don't love God as much as I do. Because if you love God as much as I love God, then you do for

God the same level that I'm doing for God.

And all that really is, is Martha's anxiety talking. She's committed to so many things that it's made her want to compare her life up against everybody else's.

[32 : 14] You've heard me say this before in the past, but I've said before that spiritual pride is like going to Denny's. Nobody plans for it to happen. Right?

No one has ever said, I have a great idea. Let's go eat at Denny's. That's never happened. It's just never happened. You just end up at Denny's, and afterwards you're like, why did we go to Denny's? It was never your point when you set out for an evening meal, and it's the same thing with spiritual arrogance. Right? You just became a Christian, and you had some spiritual awakening, and you went to that conference, and you read that book, and you heard that sermon, and man, did you see the light.

And now everything makes sense. So you step out in faith, and you up your commitment. You make big changes. And on your way to the front of line of following Jesus, you notice that others aren't running at your speed.

They don't know everything that you know. They're not as committed as you are. They're not in your theological camp. And rather than having compassion on them, you get frustrated with them, and you end up theologically, spiritually, and denominationally arrogant.

[33 : 25] Listen, notice this on the screen. Sometimes we try to calm our anxiety by justifying our arrogance. Here's what I mean by that.

I can justify my anxious heart by telling myself it's because my commitment is superior to everyone else's.

There's a reason why I'm anxious and worried, because I'm a better Christian than most. And if you want proof, look at everything I do for God.

Get my seminary degrees on the wall. Look at my years of Christian service. And all of those things are wonderful, but they aren't the most important thing.

And you can commit your life to serving Jesus and end up spiritually arrogant. This is where Martha is.

[34 : 36] Are you with me tonight? She's overcommitted. Her overcommitment makes her anxious and troubled. Her anxiety gets expressed through anger, both at Jesus and then at Mary, all the while she's missing...

Lord, talk to us. She's missing what her anxious heart needs the most. You with me? Verse 42, and we're done.

But one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion.

Interesting that Jesus uses the word portion when Martha's fixing a meal. Here's essentially what he's saying. Mary chose the right meal.

Your meal was important, but Mary chose the good portion, and it won't be taken away from her.

[35 : 39] You see, your meal is important, but we're going to eat it, and we'll need another one of those meals again tomorrow. But the meal that Mary has will never be taken away from her.

This is such an important lesson, Faith Family. And we've been taught this throughout this series. First of all, that anxiety is a warning light. And what is the warning light of anxiety intended to do? Do you remember from a few weeks ago? Anxiety is a warning light telling us to stop and spend time with who? God. With Jesus.

That is, who better to fix you than Jesus when He created you? In other words, anxiety is not a warning light saying, you really ought to drive faster. Father, I know you need an oil change, but why don't you go a hundred more miles?

No, no, no, no. He's saying there's something going on under the hood. You need to stop and spend time with Jesus. We learned that in Philippians 4. And secondly, Jesus taught us in Luke 12, don't worry about your life, what you eat or what you drink or what you wear, but seek first the kingdom of God.

[36 : 59] In other words, listen, listen, listen, zone in. I think this story of Martha is actually showing us everything that we've previously learned. You say, what do you mean?

Martha is ignoring the warning light. The warning light of anxiety is to bring her to the feet of Jesus where Mary is. Instead, she's just trying to do more and work harder.

Martha is more concerned about food than she is the bread of life. And what she needs to do is seek first the kingdom of God, and the meal will be taken care of.

Do you see? So let me give you just three, and I'm not going to elaborate on them, but three implications of this and we're done. Three implications of this and we're done.

I trust that they will all be encouraging to you. And here's the first one. Doing for Jesus must never take priority over being with Jesus.

[38 : 04] Doing for Jesus must never take priority over being with Jesus. Yes, serve, but first seek.

In fact, service ought to be an overflow of our seeking. Amen? Like feast on the bread of life.

So then you can cook a meal. And you can do so without anxiety and arrogance. That's what Martha's missing. Here's the second thing for us to learn is this.

The answer to worry, Martha, isn't more work. It's more worship. Let me say this a different way.

The answer to worry, Wes, isn't more work. It's more worship. Stop and spend time with God.

[39 : 05] Again, who better to fix you than the one who created you? In other words, we got a lot of Marthas in the room, and you think the solution to your anxiety is just, I'm going to take control, and I'm going to do more, and I'm going to solve it.

And maybe if I just knock some more things off my to-do list. Stop. Stop. Because the answer to your worry isn't more work. It's more worship.

Thirdly and finally is this. This is a whole sermon, faith family. You won't be in a hurry to accomplish everything when you know you've already found the necessary thing.

This just preaches. You won't be in a hurry to accomplish everything in life when you've already found the necessary thing in life.

Why stress out over a temporary meal when you have the eternal bread of life? So you don't make the deadline.

[40 : 09] You still have Jesus. So the sermon doesn't quite come together exactly how you hoped it would by Saturday night. You still have Jesus.

You're stressing out about temporary meals. Mary found the necessary portion that won't be taken away from her.

When you have the bread of life, you won't stress as much about all the meals you have to prepare in life. Because you have the necessary thing.

Everything else, though important, yes, important, even God-given, is secondary to Him. You with me?

I'm going to close. It's an illustration I've used in one of my books. But it so fits, I think, what's going on in this passage. And we'll close with this.

[41 : 12] It's about an event that took place on a Friday morning. And it was in the middle of rush hour in the Washington, D.C. metro. That morning, there was a man that... He walked into the metro with all the crowd around him.

And he took his place over by the wall of the subway. He was wearing blue jeans. He had a long sleeve shirt, a Washington Nationals baseball cap. And he opened up this small violin case. And for the next 43 minutes, he played six classical pieces. During those 43 minutes, 1,100 people plus walked by and none of them stopped to listen.

Had they stopped, they might have realized that who they were hearing was not just any violinist. It was Joshua Bell. Internationally acclaimed violinist Joshua Bell, who three days earlier had just sold out Boston Symphony's Hall with the cheapest ticket going for \$100.

On that day in the subway, he didn't make 30 bucks. Had they stopped, they might have noticed that he wasn't playing a pawn shop violin.

[42 : 30] He was actually playing an 18th century violin worth over \$3.5 million. But on that day in that subway, Joshua and his violin couldn't grab the attention of busy people.

I fear the same is true when it comes to us stopping in the presence of God. And we wonder why we're worried.

And we wonder why we're anxious. Faith family, I know there's a lot to get done in life. But I close this evening asking you this.

Is your pace affecting your peace? Is your worry due to the fact that you are living in a hurry?

If so, I would plead with all of us to stop and reflect on the nature of our God.

[43 : 44] Look at Psalm 86.15. But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.

Aren't you glad, faith family, that the Lord has been slow towards you? Aren't you glad that love is patient?

And the greatest of these is love. Let's pray. Lord, I may have been the only one in the room that needed tonight, but I doubt it.

We as Americans, we in this culture struggle with the Martha Syndrome. We rush and rush until life's no fun.

And we wonder why we're so anxious. We wonder why we're worried when we have committed to so many things. And I believe, Jesus, that what you want to say to us tonight is what you said to Martha on that day.

[44 : 54] why are you so anxious and troubled? You are distracted by so many things. You've got so many meals to prepare that you're missing the most important portion of all.

because there's something to be said that when we are in the presence of our gracious Savior, the cares of this world seem to cease.

You have a way of speaking into the storms of our soul. Peace be still. So I pray that we would not rush and rush and rush and be in such a hurry that we're missing the meal that matters most.

Talk to us tonight, God. Speak to our souls. Grant us peace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.