



1 Personal Prayer Life

Introduction to the series:

Our prayer life is a good indicator of our spiritual condition. Prayer is our expression of dependence on God for everything, including the very air we breathe. Today's passage reveals one of our human struggles: our love for busyness, which keeps us far from prayer. This choice not to pray reveals distorted values.

3 observations about busyness:

1. Busyness is a 'badge of honour' in our society, which labels our sense of self-importance – and we wear it with pride.
2. Busyness is the main reason why a lot of us don't get around to the things that are valuable to us.
3. We are aware that our busyness keeps us from the valuable things in life, and so we constantly feel the tension of being torn between the two.

Text: Luke 10:38-42

Points to discuss:

1. There are many good reasons for being too busy

In this story, Marthe gets a bad rap for being too busy. The Bible tells us to serve and yet Jesus was disappointed at her decision to serve in the moment when she had a choice to serve or to spend time with him. She chose service because in her mind, serving made her feel honourable. She prided herself by being good at serving others well. She did not expect to be called-out for choosing something good, over choosing what was right or best in that moment. Many of us choose good things, over choosing what is right or best – the things that will draw us closer to God, like prayer. We need to take stock of our decisions, and ask ourselves what good things we are choosing over spending time with God.

2. Being too busy is not a condition – it's a decision

The truth is, that we busy ourselves with the things we *want* to pursue. Many of us, like Martha, get our value through what we do. Therefore, our hearts are tied to our performance, and when we are prevented from being able to succeed or perform in that area, it affects us deeply. Martha's reaction to Mary not helping her was just that. She was frustrated because she was not getting the usual affirmation from her serving, and at the same time, Mary was getting the praise for doing absolutely "nothing". Marthe could not grasp that Mary had chosen what was better – because she had chosen time with Jesus. In that moment, Mary's priority was better.





3. [Our decisions expose what we truly value](#)

In choosing Jesus, over the need to serve the people around her, Mary chose what had eternal value. All our decisions reveal what we truly value. When we value other things over time with God, we drop prayer from our priority list. Over time, we begin to feel less and less connected to God, and he drops further and further down the list. In order to *want* to pray more, we need to draw near to Christ again and to value him deeply once again. Our affection for him drives our desire to pray and spend time with him. And as we spend time with him and talk to him, we will value him more. That is the cycle we want to get back into in 2018.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why was it such a shock for Martha when Jesus challenged her on her choice to serve, rather than to sit with him?
2. Why do you think Martha had such a strong reaction to Mary's choice to sit at Jesus feet?
3. ♥ Personal Reflection: In your own personal capacity, what good thing do you pride yourself on doing, because you get a "badge of honour" for it? (e.g. serving in the band at church, helping a charity, getting up early to go to gym etc.) Assess whether this activity is keeping you from having the time in your schedule to pray?
4. Why was Jesus concerned about Martha's decision, and what does that reveal about his heart for us?
5. Why was Mary's decision to choose time with Jesus the best decision at that moment?
6. How do our choices of where we spend our time and energy reveal what we truly value?
7. ♥ Personal Reflection: What one thing has God put his finger on, that you value too highly, and have put too high on your priority list (resulting in a poor prayer life)? Explain.
8. Why is the answer to prayerlessness not just a firm commitment to pray more?
9. How do you think we value Christ more, and therefore make time to pray more?

