

February 2, 2020 – Elmont Baptist Church

Text: Luke 10:38-42

Message Series: Stand Alone

Title: Devoted or Distracted?

Introduction:

1. Next Sunday we will be celebrating with our students as they wrap up the DNow weekend. The Sunday after that we will head into the book of 1 John.
2. Today is a time to look back and evaluate for a minute. We're a month into 2020 and many of us ran through the holidays, which seems like it was 6 months ago, and haven't stopped running yet.
3. We're a busy people living in a day where there are more things to keep us busy than ever before and at the same time less productive and fulfilled than ever before.
4. If we don't regularly take a minute and ask ourselves if we are on the best path pursuing the best things, we may end up where we never thought possible with little to no idea of how we got there.
5. I take one of our foster sons to Ft Worth every other week to see his dad. For some reason on the way back in rush hour traffic the last two times I have gotten distracted and missed one of my exits.
6. Thankfully it's only a little aggravating and only costs me a little time, but distracted driving can be much more costly as too many know all too well nowadays.
7. Even more dangerous is distracted living.
8. We're called to be a people that have been chosen by God, bought by the blood of Jesus, set apart for His use, wholly surrendered to His call, to pursue Him in love for all eternity because our hearts have been changed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
9. We are called to be devoted to God, but He often gets the leftovers and extras.
10. I don't mean avoiding things we have to do. There are those things we have to do. Things that demand our attention. Things we are created to do.
11. To work. To care for our family. To take care of the responsibilities we have.

12. And there are times to celebrate and enjoy the good gifts of an abundantly gracious God.
13. But in the midst of responsibilities and enjoying God's gifts, are we making time for the Giver?
14. We're going to look at a story this morning that helps us see what happens when we live a distracted life.

Read Luke 10:38-42

1. This is a home that would become very special to Jesus throughout His ministry. He would spend quite a bit of time here with Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus.
2. We don't know what Lazarus is up to in this story, but we know exactly what's going on with his sisters.
3. And they help us see the difference between being devoted and distracted as we see...

The Distracted Life...

1. Keeps us from Spending Time with Jesus – v. 42

- a. **We might be doing good things**
- b. **But not the best thing**

- i. We're going to start at the end and work our way backwards in a way. To start with the big problem with distractions and what they cost us most.
- ii. Then we will look at the effects they have from there in how we view God and people.
- iii. Now, when Jesus entered a house many usually entered with Him, so Martha is doing what a good hostess would do. She's serving. She's making sure everyone is taken care of.
- iv. She has the gift of hospitality and she's operating in that gift.
- v. Mary isn't. She isn't serving. She isn't helping. She's only focused on one thing. The one thing that is necessary according to Jesus. Listening to every word He speaks.
- vi. Jesus' words to Martha may seem a little harsh, but here's the truth – ANYTHING that keeps us from spending time with Jesus needs to be rebuked. ANYTHING.
- vii. There are things you have to do. There are things you need to do. And there are things you get to or like to do. And those may all overlap at times.

- viii. But do you think of time with Jesus as a have to do? Can you go days or weeks without opening your Bible or praying other than over a meal?
- ix. If we aren't making time for the one thing that is necessary, we cannot expect any other things to go well.
- x. Most importantly distractions keep us from time with Jesus, and its effects are seen in so many ways as the distracted life...

2. Causes Us to Have Stress and Anxiety – v. 41

a. There's so much to do

b. What will others think?

- i. Martha is doing what is culturally expected of her. And it's a big deal not to let down your guests in this day and time.
- ii. We live our lives in a constant state of "what if's?" and "If I don't do it, it won't get done"
- iii. But if we really stopped and thought about it much of what we're stressed and anxious about either doesn't really matter that much or is likely outside of our control.
- iv. The things Martha is doing are within her control but they pale in importance to Jesus.
- v. Her stress and anxiety are really about the expectations of others in her home. "I have to serve them well, so we'll have a good reputation in the neighborhood."
- vi. Jesus is always calling us to rest in who we are in Him rather than how we're viewed by others.
- vii. He sees us with perfect vision and loves us regardless of, and even in spite of us.
- viii. Everyone else sees us through their own sin and insecurity, and most will struggle to overlook a mistake or forgive a hurt when it happens, and it will happen.
- ix. Yet our perfect Father has said "Forgiven!" but somehow, it's not enough. Somehow, we will long for the approval of another sin-ridden knucklehead down the street.
- x. And so, the distracted life fills us with stress and anxiety about what others think, but it also...

3. Causes Us to Question God's Concern for Us – v. 40

a. Does He even care

b. Can He even help

- i. The only result of not spending time with Jesus through the Scriptures is some level of bad theology. You will not develop good theology apart from time with Jesus in His Word.
- ii. The enemy's ploy is to make us question God concern and love for us. It's been his plan from the beginning with Eve in the Garden of Eden, "Did God really say...?"
- iii. It's the opening argument of almost every atheist, "If God is so loving, why is there pain and suffering?"
- iv. I've known way too many people that think they are Christian that never spend time with Jesus in His Word, they are not connected to a local faith family, and when hard things happen, they blame God.
- v. My response is no longer frustration, but sadness that they don't know or love the God they are deceived into thinking they will spend eternity with.
- vi. And we don't even have to be engaging in heinous sin to develop bad theology. We just have to be distracted enough to not spend time alone with Jesus.
- vii. I'm not saying devoted Christ-followers never struggle with what God is doing or allowing or even that they don't ask questions at times. They do, but they don't stay there. They take that attitude to the Scriptures and ask God to overcome it.
- viii. So, if the distracted life affects our love for and view of God, it will undoubtedly affect how we love and think of others as it always...

4. Causes Us to be Critical of Others – v. 40

a. Pointing out their shortcomings

b. Compared to our strengths

- i. The point of this is not to think about who you know that is typically a critical person. If you're doing that, it may be more an indictment on you than them.
- ii. No one spends quality time with Jesus in the Word and prayer and walks away more critical or bitter than when they began.
- iii. People that live the distracted life operate in the default human condition – prideful. The only way to move from prideful to true humility is to spend consistent time with Jesus learning at His feet.
- iv. If you cannot rejoice in another's success or if you feel some sense of satisfaction when they fail or suffer, then you are not in a good place – eternally speaking.
- v. If you're constantly looking down at others and no matter what they do, it's never good enough, as a Christ-follower, there's not much worse things you can do.

Closing

1. Today is a level-set. One month into the new year and it's time to deal honestly with our heart.
2. Maybe we didn't realize that we're living the distracted life rather than the devoted life, but if the your journey with Jesus is showing up here a couple of times a month or more, then we're missing it.
3. Most likely we're riddled with stress and anxiety about how others see us and things we can't control.
4. We find ourselves wondering if God really cares and even angry more times than we'd like to admit.
5. When we look at most any other person, the first thing we see is their shortcomings and faults.
6. But at least now we know the cure. Spend time at the feet of Jesus. Confess to Him right now and ask for His power to change.
7. Dive deep into the Scriptures. If you need help, just ask me or another leader, and we will get you the help you need to start journeying with Jesus. To move from the distracted life to the devoted life.

8. At the end of the day, you are as close to Jesus as you want to be. Distractions are easy but will cost you more than you want to pay. Seeking Jesus above all else is going to be difficult at times, just like any relationship, but the rewards last forever.
9. Devoted or Distracted?