

First Things First

Luke 10:38-42

What is an oxymoron?

Two words put together that contradict each other

Oxymoronic situations

A sick doctor who makes her sickness be the focus of our visit

A troubled therapist who makes his trouble be the focus of our visit

Making demands of someone who is in authority over us

How might we do this with God?

Luke

Luke's big purpose

That we would live by the certainty that Jesus is the Son of God who lived a perfect life, died for us, and rose to life again to rule over all creation

The "Travel Narrative" in Luke (9:51-19:27)

An advanced class in being a disciple (follower) of Jesus

They had learned: Jesus is God's Messiah, the One who is God and will bring God's Kingdom to humanity

They hadn't yet learned: how to live according to this reality

Luke 10:38-42

What not to be like: Martha

"Distracted"

From what?

Being a genuine host (complaining to an honored guest??)

Listening to Jesus

Helping others listen to Jesus

Helping Jesus use His time as He chose

"Worried and upset"

About unfair/unjust treatment

Martha was "standing over" Jesus

Accusing Him of not caring

Telling Him what He should be doing

"Lord, do this" is an oxymoron

What to be like: Mary

"Sit at the Lord's feet"

Not merely a physical location

An idiom: live as a follower of Jesus

Radical for a woman! Yet Luke doesn't highlight it

"Listening to His Word" (NIV: "what he said")

Not merely having words reach our brains

It is to trust and obey His teaching and His life

"A voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.'" Luke 9:35

Mary was living as a follower of Jesus

God will protect her opportunity to do that

The Big Idea

**Truly living as a Christian is
active submission to Jesus**

Draw an arrow with 4 straight lines that includes these 3 dots

It is possible to include Jesus in our lives without actually following Jesus



It is possible to have all our 'dots' be biblical without actually following Jesus (theology, systemic racism, world missions, justice, mercy, ...)

We must actually follow Jesus from first to last to be a genuine follower of Jesus

Martha's problem was not a 'doing' problem but a 'following' problem

Standing over Jesus

Like Martha, sometimes we tell God what we think He should do (and other Christians what they should do)

Sometimes we just do our own thing

And if we see it in the Bible, we can be certain & bold!

Seeing eye-to-eye with Jesus

Sometimes we assume that our agenda/priorities and God's agenda/priorities are the same agenda/priorities

Sitting at the feet of Jesus

Being a follower of Jesus is to be at the feet of Jesus and let Him set the agenda/priorities

Jesus' agenda and Our agenda

We live according to our agenda

Sometimes our agenda is not on Jesus' agenda

our pleasure or pride or pain or personal focus or ...

Sometimes we find our agenda in the Bible (rightly or wrongly), so we become certain and self-righteous in making it the priority

Often we want Jesus to help us with our agenda (in prayer)

Often we put our agenda before His agenda (in thought & action)

Jesus has His own agenda, and His is **always** better

He is all good // every part of us is less than His goodness

He is all knowing // we just see partial reflections

He is perfectly wise & skillful // we are so clumsy

Just because we can find a verse in the Bible, or many verses in the Bible, that seem to support our agenda...

It doesn't mean that we actually understand His agenda

It doesn't mean that now is the time when it will be His focus

When is the right time to give attention to _____?

What is the right way to give attention to _____?

We need discernment and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

When we put our agenda first, no matter how good it is, we are not treating Him as "Lord"

Martha: make this family situation fairer

Man: make my brother be just in dividing our inheritance

Prodigal's brother: reward "better" people more

Peter: don't make my life harder than other peoples' lives

Paul: take away this troublesome weakness in my life

Jesus said "No" to all these requests!

Submitting to God's agenda completely

Job: suffered unspeakable losses he didn't deserve

Then he fell to the ground in worship and said:

"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart.

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised."

In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing." Job 1:21-22

In contrast: Martha accused Jesus of the wrongdoing of not caring about her

Mary the mother of Jesus: was told to live out God's impossible plan that would completely disrupt her life

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Luke 1:34

Paul: when God repeatedly refused to remove a deeply troubling weakness

"Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Application

Live every day at the feet of Jesus

In full submission to His wisdom and His will

What does He care most about?

What is His focus for me and for us today?

How am I, and how are we, to live it out today?

It requires...

deep and genuine listening to God, in the Bible, from His people, by the Spirit

We will hear and follow something: Is it Jesus?

The Lord's Prayer: our daily focus...

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| "Your name be hallowed" | not ours |
| "Your kingdom come" | not ours |
| "Your will be done" | not ours |
| "Give us our needs for today" | not 'make us great and rich' |
| "Forgive us our sins" | not 'judge our enemies' |
| "Help us to forgive our enemies" | not getting even |
| "Deliver us from evil/the evil one" | not 'make us powerful' |

God's first priority might not be (and usually isn't)...

to solve the part of the world that is most bothersome to us

whether it is unfairness, or sickness, or weakness, or systemic racism, or poverty, or war, or the environment, or conflict, or ...

to make life less painful or problematic for us

to fulfill our dreams or desires

God does promise...

"to love you always"

"to be with you always"

"to work everything together for your good in My time"

"especially in transforming YOU to be more like ME"

"to bring the day when all pain and suffering and loss will be gone completely and forever"

How do we know we can trust Jesus this much?

It takes great faith, courage, and trust in Jesus!

It takes active listening and following

How do we know we can trust Jesus this much?

Look at the cross

Jesus lived at the feet of the Father

In full submission to His wisdom and His will

Even when it meant suffering and death

"Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.'" Luke 22:41-42

He was later raised to highest glory!

He was later raised to give us life and to intercede for us

We are to submit fully to this One who submitted fully to the Father to give us true life in Him

Conclusion

The only way to live as Jesus intends is to actively submit to Him each day

The only way to hear His Word today is to let go of our agenda and deeply listen to Him (in His Word with His people by His Spirit)

There is no other place of such abounding joy and freedom and hope than at the feet of Jesus

The only way to really live the life God intends is to live at the feet of Jesus, and He won't let anyone take that away

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. Where can you become distracted, worried, and upset, even when doing good things, so that you stop living at the feet of Jesus?
2. What does your prayer life reveal about the relationship between God's agenda and your own? What changes might you want or need to make? How might the Lord's Prayer be a part of that journey?
3. In what part of life is it challenging for you to sit at the feet of Jesus, submitting fully to His agenda rather than our own?
4. How can we tell when we are following our own agenda and priorities rather than Jesus' agenda and priorities? What if we can find our agenda in the Bible? (Note that Satan, when tempting Jesus, quoted verses to convince Jesus that his agenda was right.)
5. In what ways is this statement true?

"There is no other place of such abounding joy and freedom and hope than at the feet of Jesus."

Where and when have you experienced it? Where and when do you struggle to believe it?