

Unburdened of Busyness (Luke 10:38-42)

For the Travelling Light Series

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As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10:38-42)

Look closely at verse 40.

*But Martha was **distracted** by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"*

Corrie Ten Boom once said, "If the devil can't make you sin, he'll make you busy."

Both sin and busyness have the same effect, they cut off your connection to God, to other people and even your own soul.

John Ortberg said, "For many of us the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it. We will just skim our lives instead of actually living them."

I. The Problem of Busyness

Hurry Sickness definitions:

- "A behavior pattern characterized by continual rushing and anxiousness"
- "A malaise in which a person feels chronically short of time, and so tends to perform every task faster and to get flustered when encountering any kind of delay."
- "A continuous struggle and unremitting attempt to accomplish or achieve more and more things or participate in more and more events in less and less time." (as defined by cardiologist Mayer Friedman in the 1950's)

There are a lot of symptoms of "hurry sickness", including:

- Irritability
- Hypersensitivity
- Restlessness
- Workaholism (or just nonstop activity)
- Emotional numbness
- Out-of-order priorities
- Lack of care for your body
- Escapist behaviors
- Slippage of spiritual disciplines
- Isolation

Busyness is not just bad for our physical and mental health; it is bad for our spiritual health as well. Jesus in his teaching on anxiety in Luke 12:22-34 says this in verse 34: *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

"...in the chronic problem of human beings' felt experience of distance from God, God isn't usually the culprit. God is omnipresent-there is no place God is not. And no time he isn't present either. Our awareness of God is the problem..." (John Mark Comer)

II. The Solution to Busyness

If busyness or hurry is so bad for us, how do we fix it?

Magically adding more hours to our days will not make us less busy. We will find things to fill it up with.

In Genesis we read in the Creation story that we as humans were created in the image of God **but** not as God. We have limitations, a lot of them.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt 11:28-30)

The Message paraphrases it like this:

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me-watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

What Would Jesus Do?

Summit Drive mission statement. "Developing caring, passionate followers of Jesus Christ."

III. Habits for Combatting Busyness.

1) Silence and Solitude

Mark 1:35; *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."*

Mark 6:46; *"After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray."*

Luke 4:42; *"At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them."*

Luke 5:16; *"But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed."*

2) Sabbath

Gen 2:2-3: *"By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done."*

Mark 2:27: *"Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."*

A day to stop, *Sabbath*, was given to us and blessed for our own good by the Creator of the Universe. Maybe that is a gift we would want to accept and explore?

3) Simplicity

Matt 6:25-26; *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”*

We do not need to be afraid of a life of simplicity. Start small.

4) Slowing

Ortberg defined “slowing” as “cultivating patience by deliberately choosing to place ourselves in positions where we simply have to wait”.

Find ways to deliberately go slower and experience what is around you. Really experience the sights, sounds, smells and sensations around you. See the gifts they are and thank God for them.

Accepting Jesus and following these practices of Jesus will help us become more aware of God’s presence, which is always there, and lead us to travel a bit lighter.”

Reflection:

1. Martha’s work of hospitality was good work, and we’ll need to do good work as well. But she did get “distracted” from the most important things - and found herself frustrated with her sister.

Take time to reflect and consider ways you may need to “ruthlessly eliminate” some hurry through these four practical ways (Silence and Solitude, Sabbath, Simplicity, and Slowing)?

2. Are there places you have been trying hard to prove yourself, even trying to earn God’s approval?
3. How can you be deepening the practices you already have? Or, starting to weed out some of the over commitments you’ve grown accustomed to but are actually choking out a closeness with God?
4. Remember Jesus’ invitation...” *Come to me...learn from me.*” And that includes Jesus’ own pattern of life - one that trusted his Father’s love for him, one that made time for solitude and silence, for Sabbath, for slowness, for simplicity. In the text Jesus essentially said “Martha, Martha. I already love you. You do not need to prove yourself. Do what you need to do but not at the cost of My peace and love”.

Prayer:

As we respond in prayer, we are coming from a variety of places- what’s your next step? Pray from that place.