



The ROAD LESS TRAVELED

The Road Less Traveled (Luke) Sept 3: Valuing the King

Series Summary: In the middle section of the Gospel of Luke, we see a unique aspect of Jesus' ministry- his life and ministry on the road. We see him interact with strangers, answer difficult questions, and teach with boldness. Along the way, Jesus teaches his disciples —and us as well —what the Kingdom of God is and what it means to follow Him.

Big Idea: We are called to have a faith that is free of distraction from Jesus. However, life, and even ourselves, seems to get in the way a lot. How do we build our faith in a way that sees distractions decrease?

Schedule:

- Live teaching
- Small group

LIVE TEACHING

Series Lead in: In the middle section of the Gospel of Luke, we see a unique aspect of Jesus' ministry, his life and ministry on the road. We see him interact with strangers, answer difficult questions, and teach with boldness. Along the way, Jesus teaches his disciples —and us as well —what the Kingdom of God is and what it means to follow Him.

Luke 10:38-39 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. **39** She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.

What a beautiful image of what we are called to do. Sit at the Lord's feet and listen to everything that he has to say.

Luke 10:40-A But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made...

Jesus did not come alone—"he had twelve disciples with him who all needed to have their feet washed, to be made comfortable, and to have a meal prepared for them. A respectable hostess in the ancient world would extend all of these courtesies to his or her guests. The impression here, however, is that Martha was overdoing it. She wanted something extra special for the Master, but she let herself get to the point where she was worrying, overworked, and unable to enjoy these guests. In attempting to serve Jesus, she did not understand or attend to Jesus' reason for being there."¹²

Luke 10:40 B 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!"

Somebody needed to play host. Martha was fulfilling her role as host. That was a good thing, a highly valued thing in that culture. **But rather than doing what she needed to do, she was consumed with what her sister was doing.** She was comparing her actions, faith, and obedience to her sisters. Then making the compounding mistake of assuming her actions were better, more righteous.

- **We do the same today!** We can so easily become consumed with how other people are living their faith (even if they're not wrong) that we become blind to our own spiritual pitfalls. Why? Because our pride and self-righteousness keep us blind to our own mistakes.
- Meanwhile, focusing on someone else's sins, or potential sins, makes us feel better and even gives us a false sense of being superior.

Luke 10:41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,

You are worried or consumed by many things. Notice that these are not evil things. They are not bad things, or even sinful things. Martha was fulfilling a culturally expected and valued task, hospitality. Hospitality is also one of the many listed spiritual giftings we see in scripture. Even our giftings need to be lived with discernment!

¹ Bruce Barton et al., Life Application New Testament Commentary (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 301.

² Walter L. Liefeld, "Luke," in The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 944.

We easily do the same thing today with many other things that aren't necessarily bad. But it's when we have our lives become consumed with those things to where they become a detriment.

Luke 10:42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

- **Mary had chosen to value Jesus, the King of Kings, with her attention and her time.**
- What gets our time and our attention is what we value. This is a hard truth that we need to realize. What we put our time towards is a big indication of what we value the most.

When we value Jesus, we value what is eternal. There is nothing in this life that you will have in eternity, except your relationship with Jesus.

- This begs the question- what thing in your life is keeping you from the feet of Jesus? What thing is taking your attention and time, and distracting you from an undistracted faith?
- For the junior high boys- maybe it's grinding on Fortnite to finish the battle pass or to make it to "unreal" status (yeah I know Fortnite somewhat)
- For the 8th-10th graders- maybe you're so consumed with acceptance and trying to fit in no matter where it may be or what it might take.
- For the upperclassmen- maybe it's panic about the next chapter of life that's a turn of a page away, and that's all you're giving time and energy towards.

Application: This is a warning to us. What often keeps us from being at the feet of Jesus is not evil or even sinful acts. Good things can easily get in the way of seeking Jesus and spending time with Him.

Segway to Small Group: God deeply desires this relationship with you. The question is, do we view God the Father as a loving father who is inviting us into a relationship with Him? We're going to unpack how to evaluate all of the moving parts of our lives, and what steps we can take to truly work towards an undistracted relationship with Jesus.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What can we learn from Jesus' interaction with Mary and Martha?

**What steps can we take in order to spend unhurried time at the feet of Jesus?
What gets in the way of spending intentional time with Christ in prayer or scripture?**

Leader Note: The question above is not a guilt trip. There are times when life becomes very busy, and it's hard to spend unhurried time in prayer or reading scripture. Some students are more busy than adults between 8 hour school days, crazy sport schedules, extracurricular commitments, trying to have a social life, homework, and then looking for 5 minutes of relaxation. Others...just want to play video games, or "doomscroll" on Tiktok. This question is not meant to shame them. However, if we are honest with ourselves, our day is sometimes consumed by priorities that are far less important than the examples scripture gave us.

READ: LUKE 11:1-13 AS A GROUP

Vs. 1 - Jesus modeled the need to spend unhurried and unrushed time with the Father by getting away to pray Jesus did this despite having a very demanding ministry schedule. Jesus's disciples noticed this habit and wanted to have the same passion for prayer as Jesus modeled.

What spiritual habits or values should we want to model for others?

Vs. 2-3 - In this passage, Jesus was not giving a prayer that had to be quoted solely. Although, committing the Lord's prayer to memory is beneficial. Instead, Jesus was modeling what a healthy prayer life included.

What topics or themes of prayer did Jesus address in this short prayer?

Leader Note: Here are the themes and topics in the prayer that are seen.

- *"Father, hallowed (or Holy) be your name"* - Prayers of worship
- *"your kingdom come & your will be done in the Matthew 6 version"* - Prayer for God's will to be evident in our lives and in the world.
- *"Give us each day our daily bread."* - Prayer for our daily needs. There is no need too small to take to God in prayer.
- *"Forgive us our sins"* - Prayer of confession.
- *"For we also forgive everyone who sins against us."* - Prayer over our faith. This is praying to reflect what God has done in our lives (forgiveness, love, mercy, etc...).

- *"lead us not into temptation"* - Prayer for obedience. This can include praying for victory against temptation and spiritual warfare

Vs. 5-8: What was Jesus' point about prayer in this parable?

Leader Note: Jesus was not comparing God the Father to a reluctant or selfish friend. Instead, Jesus was pointing out that if we are willing to ask with persistence and boldness for a simple loaf of bread from an unwilling friend, how much more should we do so with God?

- Unlike the friend, God is compassionate, patient, sovereign over all, and not limited in His ability to respond to our requests. As verses 9-10 show, our problem is not asking God in prayer too much or too often. Instead, our problem is that our prayer life is not bold, persistent, and passionate enough to accurately reflect the love and power of the sovereign God we are praying to.

Vs. 9-10: What keeps us from praying with persistence and passion as verses 9-10 ask us to?

Potential answers: Fear, doubt, worry, complacency (I feel like I have it all already), pride, ignorance (we simply don't care enough), lack of understanding.

What does it look like to pray to God in such a way that reflects that he is a loving Father?

PRAYER TIME

While we should regularly take our requests to God in prayer, it is also important to praise God by thanking him for his love, kindness, and patience. Today's topic of valuing the King points towards this prayer theme.

Luke 11:5-8 should encourage us to pray with persistence and boldness. Therefore, do not be afraid to pray for a certain need in your group week after week.