

Sermon for July 20, 2025 – 6th Sunday after Pentecost

Luke 10:38-42 (EHV)

Theme: **Just stop, sit, and listen to Jesus!**

1. Leave your cares and worries behind.
2. Listen attentively to His Word.
3. Apply His peace to your life.

³⁸As they went on their way, Jesus came into a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who was sitting at the Lord's feet and was listening to his word. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with all her serving. She came over and said, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me."

⁴¹The Lord answered and told her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²but one thing is needed. In fact, Mary has chosen that better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Does this situation sound familiar? You feel guilty about neglecting your Bible reading, so you sit down for a devotion. As you begin reading, your mind wanders to something you need to do. You try to refocus, but other distractions pull you away. Frustrated, you offer a quick prayer and move on to something else.

Life is filled with many worries, deadlines, and distractions, yet Jesus tells us there is only one needful thing. Let us learn what that one thing is and the peace it offers our lives under the theme: **Just stop, sit, and listen to Jesus!** 1) Leave your cares and worries behind. 2) Listen attentively to His Word. 3) Apply His peace to your life.

Part One: Leave your worries behind.

Our sermon text begins: *³⁸As they went on their way, Jesus came into a village, and a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who was sitting at the Lord's feet and was listening to his word.*

Both Martha and Mary loved Jesus, but expressed it differently. Trusting that Jesus was *the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world,*ⁱ Martha wanted to make His visit with them as relaxing as possible, empathetic to the rigours of His ministry. In contrast, Mary understood that Jesus came to "*preach the good news of the kingdom of God.*"ⁱⁱ Therefore, she sat at His feet, giving Him her full attention.

⁴⁰But Martha was distracted with all her serving.

The Greek word behind the translation “distracted” implies being pulled in many directions. You know that feeling, don’t you: to be overwhelmed with so many responsibilities that you feel stretched thin?

Therefore, we can empathize with Martha because entertaining a guest in that culture was a lot harder than it is now. There were no delivery apps, supermarkets, or refrigerators to help you out. Everything had to be prepared by hand from start to finish.

Martha thought she was doing something good for Jesus, and she was. But even a good thing can become harmful if it distracts us from the peace God wants us to have in Jesus, or worse, steals others away from it. Sadly, that is precisely what Martha tried to do.

She came over and said, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me.”

It’s sad when we fail to find peace in Jesus! Our overwhelming cares and worries can lead us to start questioning God for not granting us the peace we need, even though He has been offering it to us all along.

The LORD certainly cared for Martha. He saw all she was trying to do for Him and loved her. Sadly, her desire to serve Him prevented her from doing the one thing He really wanted her to do at that moment: stop, sit, and listen to Him. He wanted his visit to bring her peace.

Therefore, ⁴¹*The Lord answered and told her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴²but one thing is needed. In fact, Mary has chosen that better part, which will not be taken away from her.”*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, do you understand Martha’s problem? It was not her desire to serve – that was a good thing. No, it was that she became so distracted by her service that she lost sight of why Jesus came.

And doesn’t that happen to us also? We live in a world bombarding us with information, responsibilities, and worries. We can focus so much on what we think we need to do that we forget why Jesus came. In losing sight of this essential truth, we also lose our peace.

Therefore, Jesus calls to us through His Word, reminding us of who He is and why He came. He is our Saviour, who redeemed us through His cross. He invites us to truly listen to His Word, not as another task we need to get done, but as a source of peace as we meditate on His promises to care and provide for us. Only faith in God’s promises enables us to prayerfully leave our cares and worries behind to focus on Jesus.

Sadly, because the devil is in the world, we will never be able to leave our distractions behind fully. As Luther once said: “Whenever I sit down to read the Bible, Satan sends a fly.”

However, realizing who is behind our distractions helps us to prayerfully leave them at Jesus’ feet. We can pray: “Dearest Jesus, you know how easily I get distracted. Help me leave my worries

behind and sit at your feet with an open heart, concentrating on your Gospel promises. Nothing is more important to me than you. Help me live that truth.”

Part Two: Listen attentively to His Word.

Mary’s secret to leaving her cares behind and listening to Jesus was her deep understanding of His importance. That is why Mary sat at Jesus’ feet, taking on the position of a Jewish student about to be taught by their rabbi. Despite the hustle and bustle, she maintained focused attention, believing that Jesus held the words of eternal life.ⁱⁱⁱ She listened with the mindset that everything He taught was meant for her to learn and apply.

And what did Jesus teach Mary? The good news about His Kingdom. He explained to her how He would suffer and die for the sins of the world and rise on the third day so that whoever repents and believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.^{iv} Jesus taught Mary the same thing He teaches us every Sunday: God’s love for us in Christ.

Even though the concepts Jesus taught are difficult for the human mind to accept,^v Mary listened intently, asking Jesus to help her believe. Through His Word, Jesus brought peace to Mary’s troubled soul, assuring her that He would not allow anyone or anything to separate her from His love.^{vi}

Brothers and sisters, what excuses do you make for not attending Bible class or reading the Bible? Do you say, “I’m too busy” or “The Bible’s too complex for me?” Consider how Mary, who lived in a culture where everything had to be done by hand, made time to listen to Jesus. Consider how this simple woman, with far less schooling than you, prayerfully made every effort to listen and learn from Jesus. Why? Because she believed what the Bible said about Him was true, which moved her to listen even more intently. God blessed her with such insight that, when the time for Jesus’ death came near, she was the only person who anointed Him beforehand, understanding that He was about to die for the sins of the world.^{vii}

God offers you the same peace, joy, and insight that Mary experienced as she listened to Jesus. The only reason we do not have these blessings is that we don’t truly listen. For example, when we come to a difficult passage, we might find ourselves wanting to argue with God instead of prayerfully asking Him for the serenity to accept His Word. Or we might think about how the section we are reading fits someone we know, all the while failing to apply it to ourselves. When that happens, distractions naturally follow that prevent us from receiving the peace Jesus offers us, just as they did for Martha.

Therefore, don’t just listen to the words God speaks to you in the Bible, apply everything He says to yourself!

Part Three: Apply His peace to your life.

Yes, the more you take Jesus' words to heart, the more you realize your worries are insignificant. Think about it: God's Word affirms that Jesus fully paid for all your sins. Why then do you persist in feeling shame over sins you repented of? The LORD has washed your guilt away through the waters of baptism and clothed you with His righteousness.^{viii}

And why do you worry about making ends meet? Don't you know you are more precious to God than the animals on this earth? If He provides their daily bread, will he not provide yours as well?^{ix}

Why do you worry about all the evil you witness in the world? Don't you remember His promise to work in everything for your good?^x

My point is this: listening to God's Word is more than just hearing the words; it is applying them to your life the way God wants them applied. When you take refuge in Jesus' promises, you will find a peace that surpasses all understanding. You will not be afraid of death because you know Jesus has secured your place in God's everlasting home. You will not be afraid of life either, trusting that God will send His angels to guard you in all your ways. More importantly, you will live for Jesus, knowing that regardless of what happens, nothing will be able to separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, your LORD.

The Bible does not tell us what Martha did after Jesus' gentle rebuke, but I would like to think she joined Mary in listening to Jesus. What would you have done?

My prayer is that you always take time to stop, sit, and listen to Jesus. Leave your cares and worries behind. Listen attentively to His Word. Apply His peace to your life. Amen.

ⁱ John 11:27 EHV

ⁱⁱ Luke 4:43 EHV

ⁱⁱⁱ Cf. John 6:68

^{iv} Cf. Luke 9:22

^v CF. 1 Corinthians 2:14

^{vi} Cf. Romans 8:35-39

^{vii} Cf. John 12:7

^{viii} Cf Galatians 3:26-27

^{ix} Cf. Matthew 6:25ff

^x Cf. Romans 8:28