

Title: MOST IMPORTANT THINGS, LUKE 10:38 – 42
(Chatham, NJ; 07/17/16, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: Jesus praises Mary for choosing the best thing, listening to him, but there are other “best things” associated with his teachings.

Purpose: To remind the congregation that they need to focus their efforts on the best things: love God, save your soul, love and serve one another.

Introduction:

1. Last week was a cautionary tale about substituting religious duties for genuine obedience and mercy toward our neighbors.
2. Today we shift focus to balance out Jesus’ teaching.
3. This story of Martha and Mary turns our attention to the importance of hearing the Word of God, a religious duty of first importance.
4. Our religious obligations provide the fuel that energizes and motivates us to love God and love our neighbor: without hearing the Word of God we have no direction and no power.

I. The One Thing Needful: the Story of Martha and Mary, Luke 10:38-42

A. A woman distracted

1. Hospitality at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus
2. Hospitality without grumbling, 1 Peter 4:9
3. Martha was “distracted with much serving,” and “anxious and troubled about many things,” 40-41
4. Spiritual growth can be choked by well-intentioned over-activity, Luke 8:14
5. She was so bogged down in the details of hospitality that she forgot to enjoy the company of the guest
6. And Jesus is more than just another guest
7. Yet this is what the world does to us: it diverts our attention to numerous non-essentials, some good, some bad

B. A woman focused

1. Mary sat and listened to Jesus
2. This was the “one thing necessary,” 42
3. Man lives by the Word of God, Matthew 4:4
4. Listening to the Word of God was more important than food and drink

II. Necessary Things Stemming from This

A. Love God with whole heart, etc, 10:27 – the first and greatest thing

1. This comes first, love of neighbor follows
2. We must first feed on and live by the Word of God
3. Micah 6:8, the Lord requires us to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly with God: listening to his Word is the first act of humility
4. James 1:21 – receive with meekness the implanted word
5. Philippians 4:8, devote yourself to that which is good
6. Titus 3:8, devote yourself to good works
7. All of this comes from loving God first
8. Without staying attached to the vine, the branches wither and die and loving one’s neighbor becomes harder

B. Salvation is your goal

1. 1 Peter 1:9, salvation is the outcome of your faith
2. Peter’s initial message in Acts included “save yourselves from this corrupt generation,” Acts 2:40

3. He also exhorts people to “make their calling and election sure,” 2 Peter 1:10
4. He wants to provide for us an “entrance into the eternal kingdom, 1:11
5. If we behave according to the flesh, we will not inherit the Kingdom Gal. 5:21
6. All of this relates to entering eternal life after we pass through this one

C. Love and Serve One Another

1. Love one another earnestly, 1 Peter 4:8
2. Serve one another, 4:10
3. Put on love, Colossians 3:14
4. Do it more and more, 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10
5. Use your freedom to love and serve one another, Galatians 5:13
6. By this all will know we are Christ’s disciples, if we love one another, John 13:35

Conclusions:

1. Stay focused on hearing and obeying the Word of God.
2. Don’t let the distractions of life pull you away from that.
3. The salvation of your soul is at stake.
4. Put God first in all things; love your neighbor because God wants that.
5. Obey the Gospel first if you haven’t done so: this is the first step to a life focused on God.