**STATE-OF-THE-CHURCH ADDRESS**

**Title:** *"FIRST THINGS FIRST"*

**January 1st 2017**

**Luke 10:38-42**

**BIG IDEA**: When our **WORSHIP TO JESUS** gets trumped by our **WORK FOR JESUS** our world falls apart.

**INTRO:** this has been one incredible, amazing year.

**Think back with me over some of the 2016 highlights:**

* + - [Share some big wins of the last year]

**And that's not to mention all that's on the horizon:**

[Share some vision for what’s ahead here]

**Wow!**

We have a strong core here who have sacrificed, gone above and beyond and Nancy and I are so honored to serve such an incredible team.

**As I pondered all God has done and sought him for where he is taking us next in our mission** I was overwhelmed with the word I am about to share with you now. I believe it is a prophetic word for this moment in our journey that each of us need to hear and heed.

**WARNING**: Be careful that your **WORK FOR JESUS** doesn't trump your **WORSHIP TO JESUS!** (*If that happens your whole world will start to fall apart.). First things first.*

This can happen as individuals and it can happen as a church. Remember what Jesus said to the once thriving 100,000 person church of Ephesus...

**Revelation 2:1-5**

1 “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write... 2 I know your **deeds**, your **hard work** and your **perseverance**. I know that you can**not tolerate wicked** people, that you have **tested** those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have **found** them false. 3 **You have persevered** and have **endured hardships** for my name, and have **not grown weary.** 4 Yet I hold this against you: **You have forsaken the love you had at first.** 5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place.

Let's look at how this can happen to us as individuals:

What happens when our **WORSHIP TO JESUS** gets trumped by our **WORK FOR JESUS**?

**Luke 10:38-42**

* 38 As Jesus and his disciples were **on their way**,
	+ **Jesus was on an important mission.**
	+ He and his disciples were purposefully working their way through Judea with the good news of the gospel.
	+ This was no small matter.
	+ For those who were aware of it this was a journey of epic proportion and unparalleled importance.
	+ Martha seemed to recognize this great moment and capitalized on the opportunity by sacrificially getting involved in the mission.
	+ So far so good...
* he came to a village where a woman named **Martha opened** **her home to him.**
	+ **Martha seems to be the one in charge here.**
		- Martha is listed as the home owner.
		- Martha is the one who invited Jesus over.
		- Martha is the one who took initiative and made the sacrifice to host Jesus and serve his mission.
		- But is Martha the example to follow or error to avoid?
		- Enter Mary to the story...
* 39 She had a sister called **Mary, who sat** at the Lord’s feet **listening** to what he said.
	+ Mary was in an entirely different physical position than Martha that reflected her different spiritual position.
	+ Mary was in a position of submission. sat at the Lord’s feet
	+ This was the proper position for a disciple.
		- **Luke 8:35** Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus and found the man from whom the demons had gone, **sitting at the feet of Jesus**, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.
	+ As she sat she listened. listening to what he said
		- * Her ears were tuned in to the voice of Jesus.
			* Her heart was soft to his touch.
			* She was ready to be changed.
			* Ready to receive.
* **SIDE-NOTE**: *"One other issue that should be mentioned involves again the great reversal. In contrast to common rabbinic practice, Jesus encouraged women to listen to his teaching and become part of his ministry (8:3).*﻿*" (New American Commentary)*

*Here comes the problem...*

* 40 But **Martha was distracted** by all the preparations that **had to** be made. (The Greek is literally *"with much serving."*)
	+ **Jesus himself was in her house. The source of living water and eternal satisfaction was just a few feet away and yet Martha was not able to FOCUS on Jesus. She was DISTRACTED. Her distraction kept her from experiencing the soul satisfying Word of God.**
		- * "Distracted":

*to be driven about mentally.*

*to be over-occupied, too busy, about a thing*

* + *"Consider Martha’s situation. She received Jesus into her home and then neglected Him as she prepared an elaborate meal that He did not need! Certainly a meal was in order, but what we do* ***with*** *Christ is far more important than what we do* ***for*** *Christ." (The Bible a Exposition Commentary).*
		- * There were **pressures** that we're demanding her utmost attention.
			* They were declaring their prominence in her life.
			* They were consuming Martha.
			* They became her new reality.
			* "Martha [may have] also wanted to hear Jesus, but the tyranny of the urgent prevented her from doing this." (New American Commentary)

What happens when our **WORSHIP TO JESUS** gets trumped by our **WORK FOR JESUS**? (Our world falls apart).

How do you know if your Work is trumping your Worship?

**Here's four ways:**

**1) You feel isolated, abandoned and overwhelmed by your situation.**

* 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!”
	+ - * At least Martha came to Jesus.
	+ Too bad she misunderstood his care. She came to the shepherd and said “Lord, don’t you care**"**
	+ Could anyone care more than Jesus?
	+ Isn't it interesting how Mary prays for Jesus to deal with her frustrating circumstance? Mary has it all figured out. She knows how to fix her problem and she attempts to recruit Jesus to do it. "Tell her to help me!”
	+ But does Jesus answer her prayer the way she might expect?
* 41 “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are **worried** and **upset** **about many things**,
	+ There are several notable instances of this repetition of the name by Jesus in the New Testament, and in each case apparently in pitying love.
		- * “Simon, Simon,” in ch. 22:31,
			* “Saul, Saul,” in Acts 9:4.
	+ Was Jesus rebuking Martha for taking care of the preparations? Jesus didn't say that. He spoke about her focus not her actions.
	+ **You Can Have A Clean House And A Cluttered Heart**
	+ Jesus sized up the situation and brought reality into view:

**2) You are worried: *"anxious or troubled about actual or potential problems."***

* + - * Martha was frantic.
			* It was causing her to treat Jesus wrong.
			* It was causing her to treat other people wrong:

Controlling

Criticizing

* + *"****Whenever we criticize others and pity ourselves because we feel overworked, we had better take time to examine our lives.*** *Perhaps in all of our busyness, we have been ignoring the Lord.*
	+ *Martha’s problem was not that she had too much work to do, but that she allowed her work to distract her and pull her apart.*
	+ ***Side note: If serving Christ makes us difficult to live with, then something is terribly wrong with our service!***
	+ *(The Bible a Exposition Commentary).*

***3*) You are upset: *"to cause disorder in something"***

* + - * + Jesus addressed a disorder in Martha's heart.
				+ Work for Jesus had trumped worship to Jesus and it was causing Martha to be "upset".

**4**) **You are overwhelmed by many things:**

* + - It was one thing after another for Martha and because she couldn't focus on the one important thing she was becoming overwhelmed by the many unimportant things.

			* **ILLUSTRATION**: **Clyde Beatty** the Lion Tamer by James Clear-
			* Over a century ago, a lion tamer named Clyde Beatty learned a lesson that is so important that it impacts nearly every area your life today.
			* Clyde Beatty was born in Bainbridge, Ohio in 1903. When he was a teenager, he left home to join the circus and landed a job as a cage cleaner. In the years that followed, Beatty quickly progressed from a lowly cage boy to a popular entertainer.
			* Beatty became famous for his “fighting act” in which he would tame fierce wild animals. At one point, Beatty’s act included a segment where he brought lions, tigers, cougars, and hyenas into the circus ring all at once and tamed the entire group.
			* But here’s the most impressive feat of all…
			* In an era when the majority of lion tamers died in the ring, Beatty lived into his 60s. In the end, it was cancer that took his life, not a lion.
			* How did he manage to survive? Thanks to a simple idea.
			* Clyde Beatty was one of the first lion tamers to bring a chair into the circus ring.
			* Here’s what happened…
			* The classic image of a lion tamer is one of the entertainer holding a whip and a chair. The whip gets all of the attention, but it’s mostly for show. In reality, it’s the chair that does the important work.
			* When a lion tamer holds a chair in front of the lion’s face, the lion tries to focus on all four legs of the chair at the same time. With its focus divided, the lion becomes confused and is unsure about what to do next. When faced with so many options, the lion chooses to freeze and wait instead of attacking the man holding the chair.
			* How often do you find yourself in the same position as the lion?

**\*If that's you today listen good to Jesus' reply:**

* 42 but ["**only one thing is needed**"].
	+ Jesus is saying that Martha's problem is not an issue of too much work. It's an issue of **disorder** in her heart. Her work was trumping her worship.
	+ The one thing that is needed is... JESUS.

**\*What's the answer? How do we escape Martha's madness?**

* Mary has **chosen** what is **better**, and **it will not be taken** away from her.”
	+ If you've ever wondered about Jesus' priorities here is a quite explicate statement: worship is more important than work.
	+ That's not to say that the Christian life doesn't involve work but rather that the work is not to take the place of the worship.
	+ **What's the answer?**
	+ Jesus tells us what Mary did.
	+ Mary made a CHOICE.
	+ She chose to focus on Jesus in the midst of a busy ministry season.
	+ This is painful and counterintuitive at first but once you return work and worship to their rightful place you will experience the peace in the storm.
* **Psalm 27:4** **One thing** have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after: that I may **dwell** in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to **gaze** upon the beauty of the LORD and to **inquire** in his temple.

**MUSIC BEGINS TO PLAY**

**CLOSING:**

* What are the "many things" that you are "worried & upset" about today?
* What will it mean for you to "sit at Jesus feet and listen to his word"?
* How will this message change your day, week, year?

Are you weary today after a long tiring season of hard work? Take encouragement from this eternal promise:

**Isaiah 40:28-31** Do you not know? Have you not heard?The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly, Yet those who **wait** for the Lord **Will gain new strength**;

They will mount up with wings like eagles,

They will run and **not get tired,**

They will walk and **not become weary**.

**Extended time of worshipful response**

**Dismiss**