

S I M P L I F Y

Perfectly Yourself Chapter 7

Unburden Yourself: Simplify

SYNOPSIS

Simplify your life to create clarity. Clutter, congestion and confusion distract us from the most important things in life. In Luke 10:41-42, Jesus is visiting his friends, Lazarus, Martha and Mary. Martha is doing all the meal preparations, Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet listening to him. Martha asks Jesus to tell Mary to help her and Jesus responds, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."

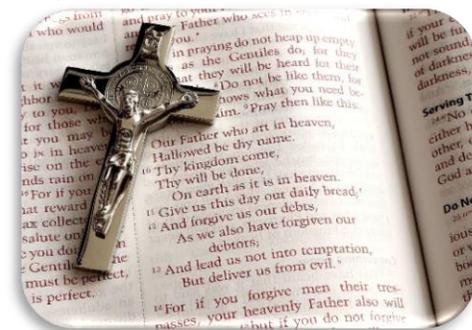
We tend to complicate our lives, often because we haven't spent time to determine our purpose in life and our core values/virtues. We tend to make decisions in the midst of multiple competing influences, missing the opportunity to listen to Jesus through prayer and scripture reading to gain clarity, direction and peace in our decisions. We schedule time for a variety of activities/appointments in our day. Have we scheduled time to be with Jesus, to allow him to transform us into the person we are longing to be?

DISCUSSION

1. Read Luke 10:41-42. Martha was "worried" about many things. What do you think were the "many things" Martha was worried about? What do you worry about? What benefits do you think Mary had from listening to Jesus? How do you take time to listen to Jesus? What are your thoughts about prayer and gaining direction and clarity or purpose in your life?
2. What are my motives in my work, activities, the way I use money, the things I own? Why do you buy things? Is your identity linked to your money and possessions, or from who you are and your purpose in life? Do you seek happiness through things, or through making a contribution to the lives of the people around you?
3. Of the Practical First Steps discussed (p. 164), which three are most needed in your life? Which one could you start on first?

REFLECTION

Mary chose the better part. Be kind to yourself and take time to choose to spend time with Jesus. Gain clarity about who you are, the motives that determine choices you make, your purpose in life and your core values. There are thousands of people and activities competing for your time. Don't lose your time to the distractions, first spend time in silence and prayer and gain insight to doing the most important things, not all the things that appear urgent at the time. Are there things in your home you aren't using that could be donated/given to someone else in need?



Other scriptures to consider

Matthew 6:33 - Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you.

1 John 2:15-16 - Do not love the world nor the things of the world; If anyone loves the world the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world.

Philippians 4:8-9 - Finally, brothers, whatever is pure, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.