

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Blessed Be Your Name, Great Are You Lord, Build My Life, It Is Well with My Soul

WELCOME

How long do you think can you sit still in silence with no gadget in hand, or watching anything on TV? How about keeping New Year's resolutions? What was the longest time you were able to keep yours? Why do you think this is so?

WORD

READ LUKE 10:38-42

³⁸ Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." ⁴¹ But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; ⁴² but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Blessed Happy New Year! This month, we are starting a new series called "WANTING THE ONE THING".

Most of us make New Year's resolutions, and almost always, fail at these resolutions by February. We overestimate the power of our will. It's one thing to be driven by a goal, but we tend to forget that our everyday habits established by a "system" or a step-by-step process of getting to our goals is an important part in achieving them.

As we set our goals this 2020, may this new series remind us of the importance of having that ONE THING central in our lives: our pursuit of an intimate relationship with GOD. We shall learn from the story of Mary of Bethany, who in the midst of the busyness of preparing meals, chose intimacy with Jesus Christ, listening to His valuable lessons as she sat at His feet. She chose to KNOW God more by hearing from Jesus Christ.

What does it mean to sit at the feet of Jesus? Based on the story of Mary, we see four important components of a committed attention on Christ:

1. FOCUS

As we read the passage, we discover the family of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. When Jesus and his disciples came to visit, Martha decided to serve them, but Mary chose something else. She sat at the feet of Jesus. In their culture, it was not normal for a woman to sit at the feet of a man, much more a rabbi. Why did she do it? The Bible tells us she did this to listen to the words of Jesus.

Mary wanted this intimate moment with Jesus because she yearned to learn from Him. **Jesus corrected Martha's attitude (v41-42)**, who while serving, began to complain that Mary left her to do the work. **Mary wanted to have an undivided focus to Jesus.**

When you don't sit at the feet of Jesus, you will be like Martha: distracted and too engrossed in tasks. Serving God

is not bad, but when you serve Him out of duty instead of love, you will begin to focus on complaining about and comparing yourself to other people.

Hebrews 12:2 reminds us to "**fix our eyes on Jesus**" — underscoring the very importance of our attention, desires, and focus to be directed to Christ. Where are you focused on today? Are your eyes set on problems, tasks, or other people? Seek to draw near to God and focus on Him!

2. INTIMACY

Mary's posture before Jesus reminds us of the importance of intimacy with Him. When we focus on trying to control people, and attending to multiple duties, we miss out on our intimacy with Christ. If you fix your eyes on people, you will be stressed. If you keep looking inwards, you can will be depressed. Learn to sit at the feet of Jesus and exercise intimacy with Him and all worries will melt away.

When we allow God to minister to us, as we learn to trust and cling on to Him, we can be sure that anxieties will not bother us because the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds in Christ (**Philippians 4:6-7**).

Intimacy with God will help us attain peace. As we become intimate with Him, we will realize that intimacy with God involves LISTENING to Him as well.

3. LISTENING

Mary pursued the ONE Thing — how? She chose to be intimate with Jesus Christ and LISTENED to His words. In other passages in the New Testament, we discover that Mary had a "system" of being at the feet of Jesus which enabled her to build intimacy with Him.

A "**system**" enables us to develop a habit. We can focus on a goal, but if we don't focus on the activities that we do in order to achieve the goal, we will never reach our goal.

WORD (cont'd)

The same goes with our relationship with Christ. Do we systematically read His Word? Do we listen to God when we pray, or do we just utter requests without even intentionally seeking to hear from God?

How does God speak to us? He speaks to us through His Word and sometimes God uses other people to speak to us (small group sharing, Bible study insights from others). We have a system that God has given – small groups, Sunday Services and even our personal quiet times with God. Small things like 10-15 minutes a day of Bible reading compounded over time will surely have a great impact!

When we hear from God in our inner being or from others, it is important to countercheck it with His Word. Read the Bible every day! Listen to God's Word for you and get to know Him more. The more you understand Him, the more your desires will be in accordance to His desires and plans for you.

4. WORSHIP

Understand also that sitting at the feet of Jesus is an act of WORSHIP. Life is about choices and **v.42** emphasizes that Mary made a choice to sit at the feet of Jesus and worship Him by devoting her best for Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. **Self-Check.** How was your intimacy with God the past year? How was your attitude while serving Christ in 2019?
2. **Setting It Right.** What “system” need to be in place in 2020 so you will not be too busy “serving” and missing out on “sitting at the feet of Jesus”?
3. **Living It Out.** What do you think is the most valuable act of worship that you can offer Jesus this year? What do you think will it cost you?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray that others will see your intimacy with Jesus and that they will desire to know Jesus more the way you do. Ask people at work, home or school how you can pray for them during Prayer and Fasting week.

Show consistent kindness to those around you and find opportunities to tell them about the gospel this year!

Other gospel accounts of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus are available for us to learn from. In **John 12:1-2**, we witness this small family again with Jesus, and each of the characters worshipped Jesus in unique ways: Martha served joyfully, Lazarus reclined at the table with Jesus — and six days before Jesus was crucified, Mary did something astounding. **John 12:3** shows us Mary's appreciation for Jesus as she lavishly poured down costly perfume on Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair. We also take note of Judas in this story, who due to his personal agenda, focused on the “wastefulness” of such act. He eventually chose to betray Jesus for so much less cost. Let us be mindful that though we may serve God like Martha, or follow Jesus like Judas, we can still miss out on that ONE THING that we ought to pursue like Mary did.

The promise of Jesus for Mary in **Mark 14:9** was that Mary's act of worship will be remembered everywhere the gospel is shared — and is being fulfilled even now as we learn and teach others about how to be laser-focused on the ONE THING this 2020 — sit at the feet of Jesus to pursue intimacy with Him!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants
- A God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends