

Genesis 18:1-10a
Psalm 15
Colossians 1:15-28
Luke 10:38-42

Sermon July 21st, 2019

God Breathes Balance into Our Lives

Martha's story is one many of us can relate to. For example, it's your turn to host the big Christmas gathering this year, or if you are uncomfortable imagining Christmas in July, imagine a family reunion. You want to make sure all your guests are happy with tummies full. You are running around picking up empty dishes. Refilling drinks. Checking in making sure everyone has what they need. You realize as everyone is finishing off their desserts that you have not even touched your dinner. Your spouse is laughing it up with some of your relatives. Your adult children are sitting there on their devices. You want to scream out until you realize that you never really asked for help in the first place. You didn't think you had to. And maybe there is a small part of you that is envious, and sees the value in taking a break to enjoy the company that is present. However, you care too much what people will think of you if you don't host to the best of your ability. Then again actually spending quality time with your guests listening to what they have to say may turn out better than you think.

There are times where we feel overwhelmed by all the tasks we have to do. For example, you get up in the morning and open up the google calendar on your device. You take a deep breath knowing that today is going to be a long day. You reach out for your morning caffeine fix to energize you for the journey ahead. Then off you go. Go, go, go. Checking each item off as you complete another task. By the time the sun sets you have dozed off on the couch, too tired to make it up the stairs to sleep in your cozy bed.

There are times where we feel overwhelmed by all the responsibilities that come with nurturing the many relationships we are in. For example, you need to sit down and connect with your spouse about something important. It should only take fifteen minutes. Two hours later you realize you need to call back a friend that you are planning to hang out with this weekend. Then as you are on the phone one of your children remind you that you need to take them to their practice. Another one of your children is ready to go to the playground with you. Oh, don't forget to call your Mom and Dad to check in to see how Mom is healing from that broken hip. Wait, isn't this the night you were supposed to meet up with your boss to go over those numbers. I think we get the picture. Life can be overwhelming.

In our gospel this morning, Jesus comes to visit Martha and Mary. Martha is busy completing all the tasks needed to be a good host. Mary chooses to rest at Jesus' feet

and hear what he has to say. When Martha gets frustrated and wants Jesus to tell Mary to help out. Jesus uses this as a teaching moment to remind Martha that there are times where we need to rest. Where we need to sit and listen. Jesus commends Mary for making rest and discernment an important part of her daily routine.

Now, Jesus isn't mad at Martha. On the contrary, Jesus preaches hospitality as one of the most important practices of his movement. Jesus is trying to remind Martha that she doesn't always need to be go, go, go. Sometimes it is good to stop and listen. To take a break and enjoy the company that has come to visit. This is just as important in being a good host.

As we bask in the summer, we remember the importance of taking time to rest. We take vacations to reconnect with family and friends. We use this time to create space in our lives to reconnect with God. We discern and reenergize so once again we can handle the fall busyness we know we will face.

In our gospel this morning, Jesus challenges us to stop and listen. To make rest a part of our lives everyday. Not just in the summer time.

For example, when we gather in church on Sunday morning we are taking a break from all the noise and busyness we encounter in the world. We come, we sit, we stand, we worship. We take time to listen and discern what God is saying to us. This time of rest and worship also helps us see what God has been up to in our lives this past week, and empowers us to be Jesus' hand and feet in our daily lives this upcoming week.

When we stop and intentionally find a quiet place to pray we are resting and listening for what God has to say to us. When we pull out our bibles we usually do this first thing in the morning or right before bed when things have settled down so again we can listen to what God has to say to us.

Now, on the other side of the coin, like Martha who can't take a moment to sit down, if all Mary does is sit and listen, then Mary too is missing the boat.

The story right before the one we hear today is the good Samaritan story that you would have heard last week. Luke shares these stories back to back to show us that we need to live in balance between doing and resting and resting and doing. In the Good Samaritan story, the Lawyer is encouraged to go and do. He sits to listen to Jesus teach him who his neighbor is. Now it is time to go and do. For Martha, it is time to sit down and listen. She has done her part to provide for her guests.

Sometimes it is hard for us to discern when to go and do and when to listen. Yet, the most important thing to remember is to find a good balance between the two. If we just went to church every Sunday to listen, but then didn't feel impacted by these words to

go and do then people wouldn't experience God's love through us. If we just prayed and didn't act on what God is saying to us then would anything change? If we read our bible only to go on to live life like God isn't there, then why read the bible? If we just do, do, do without rest or discernment then we may be doing things that are self-motivated or we may burnout.

Through the life-giving waters of baptism, Jesus calls us to rest, to discern, and to go and do. Or in other words, God breathes into us a balance in our lives through the Holy Spirit. So, that we can live the life God has called us to live. One that experiences God's love, and one that shares God's love. This is the covenant we make with God as we gather at the font.

Let us pray, God of sabbath, thank you for breathing balance into our lives. Give us the wisdom and patience to stop and listen. Empower us through this rest and discernment to go out into the world reflecting your love to all we encounter. In Jesus name we pray, **Amen.**