

What Distracts You?

Luke 10:38-42

Introduction

As we mentioned in the Catechesis Minute, the Law of God hinges on the First Commandment, to have no other gods. The Catechism says this means to *fear, love, and trust in God above all things*. The explanation of all the rest of the Commandments begin *we should fear and love God so that we* Keeping the First Commandment is pivotal to keeping the rest. Our fear, love, and trust in God is what motivates us to follow the others. Our life depends on keeping the First Commandment.

The Problem with Sin

The problem is that, because of our sin nature, it's impossible for us to keep any of the Commandments. The only Person to ever live a sinless life is Jesus Christ. However, *all those who have faith in [Jesus] by the power of His Spirit willingly strive to keep these commandments (Explanation to the Small Catechism, p. 60)*. While we know **1 John 1:8**, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*, we also know Jesus' words in **John 14:15**, *"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* This is what causes frustration in our lives. We know we cannot keep the Law perfectly, yet we want to try because we love Him, and we know He wants us to.

Satan, the Great Distracter

Satan knows this and uses it to his advantage. He knows he doesn't have to tempt us to some gross sin. All he must do is keep us distracted from the truth and purity of God's Word. And he's good at his job. Satan, the father of lies, the great accuser is also the great distracter.

The World, His Toolbox

And he has plenty of resources. This fallen world is his toolbox. He has a myriad of toys he can use to distract us. With Martha, it was her desire to serve. What's wrong with service? Part of my job as a pastor is to encourage and inspire people to serve in the church. Martha wanted to serve Jesus. She wanted to meet His physical needs, to see that He was fed and cared for. But that was her focus. All she could see when she looked at Jesus was a guest to be served. This focus caused her to miss out on the "one thing that is necessary" and to be frustrated when Mary wouldn't help her. As Christians, we serve Jesus, but our service doesn't define us. For example, I am a pastor. That is my role in the kingdom of God; that's how I serve Jesus. But what defines who I am is that I am a child of the King.

Our Sin Nature, His Playground

I'm sure you've heard the saying, "idle hands are the devil's playground." But what he really enjoys is our sinful nature. He has all kinds of fun on that playground. Not only did he have Martha distracted by her service. He had her all worked up about it. Jesus said, "*Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things*" (**Luke 10:41**). She was anxious and troubled. Have you ever been anxious about anything? If the devil can keep us worked up and anxious, there is no way we can focus on the "one thing that is necessary."

Means of Grace

So, how do we find the “one thing that is necessary?” We find it when we turn to the Gospel. We are supposed to live according to God’s Law, but we can’t. Our only hope is the Gospel. Jesus Christ died to set us free from sin and the tyranny of the Law. We don’t have to be distracted or anxious because He died for us. So, what’s the answer? The Means of Grace. God has given us Word and Sacrament to bring us to Himself, to show us the one thing that is necessary.

The Word

In His Word, God shows us our Savior as well as His will for our lives. He speaks to us, calming us down, and showing us the one thing that is necessary.

Holy Baptism

At Holy Baptism, He gives us His Spirit, who works faith in us to be able to stay focused on the one thing that is necessary.

Holy Communion

Through His body and blood, received at Holy Communion, Jesus continues to forgive our sins and strengthen our faith. It doesn’t make life easy, but it does make it possible to live for Him, to focus on the one thing that is necessary, putting God first.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
