

Delighting in God

Luke

By Dalton Teal

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Providence Church
2146 Buford Hwy
Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30097

Website: www.providenceduluth.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/providencechurch

Looking at God's word with you and considering what it means to truly delight in God, so let's read our passage this morning and then we will go into prayer. Luke 10:38.

38 Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Heavenly Father, I am humbled to be standing here this morning. We should all be humbled by your word as it reminds us of our sinful condition, it reminds us that we are broken creatures and that we are in desperate need of you. Lord, this morning I confess to feeling worn down and not really knowing exactly what to say. So Lord, I pray that you would speak through me; may I step aside so that your word might be proclaimed that it might build up the body and that we might see what it means to truly delight in you and for you to be the sole focus of our joy. O God, I ask for your help. We need you in this moment. And I pray all of this in Jesus' name, Amen.

Am I okay? Let's go ahead and get that question out of the way while I take a sip of water. That question has been asked to me a lot recently. Excuse me, I used to subtly kick this mat out of the way and now I don't care. I just don't like it. There's a little rubber mat up here. It's not comfortable to me.

Anyway, am I okay? I have been told that my facial expressions can tell a story. I would never be good at playing cards or poker or anything like that because you would know instantly that I was bluffing. Also, you know the gambling thing, but that's a different story. We have played card games before as a family where you're trying to be a specific

character but not revealed to other people that you're this character; we also do this with the young adults as well. And so when we start playing those games, I typically end up with my hat down around my face. If I'm wearing a hoodie, it's up over my head, tied tight and I'm wearing sunglasses so no one can tell what in the world is going on with my face. I'm very honest about where I am. I was born an emotional creature, as my mom tells me. So I will be candid with you. Am I okay? Yes and no. Yes, in the sense that I serve a God that is in control of all things. That carries me and sustains me and strengthens me in every single moment, which is also true for each one of you. But the "no" in the sense of I am feeling worn down. There's been a lot of things that have gone on recently in my own life with family, with family's friends, with other stresses and pressures that leave me saying okay, maybe I'm not all that okay and that is okay because what I have found in my life is that my joy is never circumstantial. It should never be circumstantial. My happiness may be, and we can get into the discussion of what that looks like, but joy is not a circumstantial thing. Our joy is rooted in the eternal God of the Bible who is unchanging, will never fail, never fade away. And so our joy should be the same, never fading and never failing.

When last we met, we looked at the gospel of Matthew and considering anxiety. The title of the sermon was "Do Not Be Anxious, The Great Enemy of Christian Joy." I was actually having lunch this week with Matt Kunz and we were talking about the sermon and he said, "Yeah, you know, you said something about joy but you never really circled back to it." It was intentional because I knew I had two weeks, so I knew we were going somewhere. This morning we're going to be looking at the concept of what it means to delight in God or, in other words, to have joy in God. Now I will confess this is going to be a little more topical than usual. Our main focus passage is Luke 10, the verses we just read, but at the very beginning we're going to kind of move around a few different places so that we can lay the foundation of the concept of Christian joy and what is tied into that, and then we will come back to this passage and look at the example of Mary and Martha.

I asked a question when last we met and I am hoping for the same answer: what is the chief end of man? I know I'll get it from Sally. To glorify God and enjoy him forever. We were created for a purpose. We were created for a purpose, and that purpose is the glory of God, that everything that we do and think, the way that we interact with other people is all done for the glory of God. But then there's that second part of it, to enjoy him forever, to delight in God forever. So to summarize, we were made by God to enjoy God so that we might forever glorify God, but there is a problem in all of that. Our sin disrupts this. Our sin disrupts the ability to glorify God. Our sin disrupts the ability to enjoy God. You see, in Adam and Eve, when the first sin was introduced, all of mankind was plunged into sin. So we no longer live for the glory of God and for God, but we live for the glory of man and of self.

And we saw this really play out two weeks ago when we were considering the concept of anxiety. Anxiety is one of the great enemies of Christian joy. It focuses on self. It focuses on me. What am I worried about? I'm worried about where I'm going to get my next meal. I'm worried about my next job. I'm worried about this that and the other and

everything we're doing is focusing on self rather than on God. We saw as Sinclair Ferguson pointed out, the problem with the anxious person is not that they think negatively about life, it's actually much more radical than that. The anxious person thinks untheologically about life. You see, anxiety attacks the mind. It causes us to think the way that we weren't designed to think. We think anxiously about all of the different problems that we have in life rather than on the sovereign God who reigns and rules over all. So what was the remedy to anxiety that we looked at two weeks ago? Right thinking. We need to change the way that we think. We need to change the way that we interact with the world and the way that we approach the world. Namely, we need to think biblically.

So Jesus provided two great examples. The first one was consider the birds. Consider the birds for a moment. They don't sow and they don't reap and they don't gather into barns. They're really not doing much of anything and yet scripture says that God provides for them abundantly. And then he says, consider the lilies. Consider the flowers of the field. They do nothing, they just sit there. They don't gather yarn. They're not sewing and knitting clothes together and what Jesus said is God has arrayed them with beauty that Solomon couldn't even imagine. In each instance you see two different things that really aren't doing much of anything, and yet God is providing for them abundantly. We see two reminders from this. God provides abundantly, how much more will God provide for us, his beloved creature? We considered the fact that we were created in the image of God for the glory of God, that there is a special relationship between God and man, and so if he would care so much for the grass of the field that one day is there and the next day is thrown in the fire, how much more will he care for us, his beloved creation?

Flowing from that thought, we concluded with a few more considerations. Consider first how big God is. We looked at the truth that God is far greater than we could ever comprehend, far more lovely, far more massive, that he holds the entire expanses of the universe in the palm of his hand. And so we serve a God that cannot be overcome by these little things that we are worried about.

The second thing we considered is consider the fact that God is sovereign, that God rules and reigns over all things, that before the foundation of the world God has had a plan for each one of us. He's got a plan for each one of us and not a single person in this room will live a moment longer than he is ordained or a moment shorter. So consider the sovereignty of God when you are anxious.

The third thing that we considered, consider how loving and gracious God is. Not only do we serve a massive and holy and all-powerful God, but we also serve a loving and gracious God that has chosen to interact with his creation in a very special way. He has not left us to our own devices and our own strength but has worked in his creation.

Which drives us then, finally, to the last thing that we considered, which is the gospel and the cross. You see the greatest concern for every man should be his own sin. We understood the idea that if there was anything we could be anxious about, it's our sin problem because there's nothing we can do to fix that problem, and yet God being so

gracious and so kind and loving, sent his Son to die on the cross for us, defeating sin and death once and for all.

So in all reality there is nothing to be anxious about as we saw. You see the remedy to anxiety is kingdom-mindedness, thinking according to the word of God and submitting to his will. To think with a kingdom mind is constantly dwelling on the things of God and joyfully submitting to his ways. And in the words of A. W. Pink, "Do what God hath commanded and let God do what he will."

So this is what we saw when last I was up here preaching and now that we have waged war against the anxiety that robs us of the right joy that God is owed, now that we have attempted to put it to death, we must now consider what it means for a Christian to enjoy God or, in other words, delight in God. We are to joyfully delight in God. So let's open with a question: what is it that you would say would leave you feeling satisfied in this life? Consider for a moment the answer to that question. Now I know many of you are contemplating the right answer that we're going to see in this sermon and the Sunday school answer that you would typically give. What is it that would leave you satisfied? Of course, we're going to answer the Lord, his word. Right answer but is that true for your heart? You see, the heart is deceitful. The heart often leads us away from the ways of the Lord, and if we're not careful, we become satisfied in other things.

So would you say you'll be satisfied when you finally get the job that you always wanted? That question is a lot more for the younger people in the audience that are starting to cut their teeth in whatever industry they're looking to go into as they work further and further up the corporate ladder or whatever it looks like for you. Are you saying, "Okay, I'll finally be satisfied when I get this promotion"? Let's consider something else: will you be satisfied when you finally have the husband or the wife that you have always been praying for? For the single people in the room, is that where you say, "Okay, I will finally be good in life. I will finally be satisfied in life when I get this person." Will you be satisfied when you get that promotion that you've been passed over for many years? Will you be satisfied when your financial situation changes? Will you be satisfied, and this might strike a nerve here, will you be satisfied when you finally have everything that your parents wouldn't give you? What is it that you say is going to leave you most satisfied?

I'm assuming everyone is familiar with Jim Carrey, but we're going to go here anyway. Jim Carrey, famous comedian. I bet you didn't think you'd hear about him this morning. Well-known comic actor. Right, he has been in so many different movies that are designed to make you laugh, to give you this feeling of happiness, this feeling of joy. He is well known for his many onscreen antics, his ability to completely reinvent himself for every single character, and for his strange and yet somewhat hilarious facial expressions. That man can move his face in the weirdest of ways. And what he has accomplished in his career is honestly quite astounding. If it was a mid '90s to early 2000s comedy, he's in it. He has been nominated for numerous awards. He has won numerous awards. And he has an estimated net worth right now of about \$180 million. So if you look in his field, he is accomplished. He is well known. He has done all sorts of what he would say

wonderful things. Financially, he's good for the next two lifetimes if he had family that he was giving this money to. So everything that you would say would leave him feeling satisfied and yet that is not the case.

Jim Carrey is very well known for being extremely unhappy in life. In fact, he has actually come out in saying he struggles greatly with depression. In an interview several years ago, Carrey made this comment, "I guess just getting to the place where you have everything that everybody has ever desired and realizing you're still unhappy, and that you can still be unhappy is a shock when you have accomplished everything you ever dreamt of and more, and then you realize it's not about this. And I wish for everyone to be able to accomplish those things so that they can see it." And he's not the only one, right? If you look at Hollywood, all of these people that have amassed this great success that so many of us would say we not necessarily look up to but we would aspire to have what they have, they have all of this great success and yet so many of them are just absolutely miserable. Miserable in life. All the accolades, all the attention, all the finances, everything you could ever imagine, enough money to never have to worry about anything ever again, and yet none of them are joyful, none of them are happy, and quite frankly, none of them are satisfied. So again, I ask you: what is it that you would say will finally leave you feeling satisfied?

Now two weeks ago, we briefly touched on this very issue when considering the words of Jesus out of Matthew 6:19, "Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth." This is not what this sermon is about, but it does help us to understand that the things of this world are going to fail us. The things of this world will last for a moment but he says, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures where moth and rust will destroy." But this morning, instead of looking at the negative command of "do not" as we saw two weeks ago, "do not lay up for yourselves treasures, do not be anxious," I want to consider what we should do. So what do we do? If we are not to live for the things of this world and we are not to be anxious, what is it that we must do instead? My argument and the argument from the question of "what is the chief end of man" is that we are to ultimately glorify God by delighting in him or enjoying him forever, and for us to find true and lasting joy, we must learn what it means to delight in God.

So what does it mean to delight in God? What is joy? What is joy? I think joy and delight are closely related. To delight in God is to take joy in God, to find him as the sole source of all of your joy. We're not talking about momentary happiness. Happiness is a feeling that is typically fleeting and dependent upon circumstances, but joy is lasting and eternal. So what is joy? What does it mean to have joy? What does it mean to delight in God? Many have devoted their lives to answering that question. Too often, joy is confused with happiness. We think that in order to have joy, we must have the things that we want. Right, so I will be joyful when I don't have to worry about my finances. I will be joyful when I have that car that I always wanted. I'll be joyful when all the problems that are happening around me are no longer happening. But this is not joy. What you're thinking of is this concept of happiness, a fleeting emotion. If life is going well, then most people that think joy and happiness are closely related, life is going well and you have joy, when

life is not going well you don't have joy. But this is a shallow and honestly unbiblical understanding of joy.

To connect joy with circumstances would place you at odds with the biblical authors, namely the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul wrote in prison in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." Now if anyone in the world had the right to look at circumstances and say, "I am not going to be joyful," it's probably Paul. Paul rejected by his own people. Paul who was shipwrecked. Paul who was beaten and mocked. Paul who was stoned to death, almost to death on multiple occasions, and who is now imprisoned, is writing the words, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." There are so many characters in the Bible, so many different people in the Bible that share the same sentiment of Paul in saying rejoice consistently. Rejoice always. Have joy always in the Lord, and we'll look at several of those characters in just a moment. But it's important that we understand that joy is not circumstantial. Joy is not based on what you have or what you do not have. It is not momentary. Joy is eternal and eternal joy can only be found in the eternal God of the Bible.

So with this in mind, what does it mean to have joy? What does it mean to have joy? What is joy? I have simply defined it as an eternal and supreme satisfaction in God. Joy is an eternal and supreme satisfaction in God. Question: what does it mean to be supremely satisfied in God? I think the answer to that is to see him as greater than any other thing, and to turn to him alone as your source of strength, salvation, and joy.

Let's go back to the concept of satisfaction for a moment. Right, we looked at just a few moments ago, "I will be satisfied if I have this or I will be satisfied if I have this," and you'll notice the world was actually constructed and operates in such a way where they know that you will not be satisfied. Right, we think of products that you see on TV, for instance. You have a 30-day money back satisfaction guarantee, but let's go to the very first part of that. It says 30 days. They're only guaranteeing your satisfaction for 30 days, and then the rest of that's out the window. Right, because the world looks at satisfaction and says there's always something else. There's always something more. Be satisfied in this for a moment and then when you're not satisfied, you can move to the next thing and to the next product, and you have this closet full of a bunch of junk that you don't even remember you have any more that you were going to say that's going to satisfy me, and then you watched the next infomercial, and there's something else.

We were made to be satisfied in something eternally and yet we pursue all of these vain things to feel satisfied. So if we want eternal and true joy, and we believe that joy is eternal in a supreme satisfaction in God, there is only one source of that satisfaction and that is the God of the Bible. You see, we see him as greater than anything else. We looked at this two weeks ago, God is far greater than anything we could ever imagine. God is far greater than this creation that we look at and say that is beautiful and massive and overwhelming. and yet it's nothing to him. You see, God is the greatest of all things. And I really don't know any other way of telling you that God is great other than just saying read his word. It's right there. God is greater than your life. God is greater than your spouse. God is greater than your children, and for the grandparents in the room who

are absolutely in love with your grandchildren and think they're the greatest thing ever, God is greater than them. God is far greater than any other thing. He is indescribably beautiful. He is far more lovely than we could comprehend.

And so when we try and place our satisfaction in something else, we're robbing God of the joy that is rightly owed to him but we're also saying, "You're really not that great to me," if we're being honest. "You're really not that satisfying to me. I need something else to add into this. I'll have a little bit of you and then I'll have a little bit of this, and that equation means I'll be happy, I'll be joyful." Again, it's at odds with the Bible. As one author writes, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him."

There are several examples in the Bible of those that were most satisfied in God. You look at David in Psalm 22:36, "The afflicted will eat and be satisfied. Those who seek him will praise the Lord." Psalm 107:9, "He satisfies the longing soul and the hungry soul he fills with good things." Now you're going to start to notice a trend with the people that I'm bringing up. Their life was not all that easy and yet over and over again, they're talking about the satisfaction they have in God. David, a man that though he was anointed as king and set apart by God, is constantly on the run from his enemies, lived a very difficult and tough life, and yet in every single moment where he talks about the Lord, he talks about him as supremely satisfying, that you could set everything else aside of being a king and what he had with that, all he wanted was the Lord.

I'll give you another example. We think about Job. Right, Job's a man that had everything and then nothing in the blink of an eye. He had a large family, a lot of property, a lot of things that he owned, a lot of servants, and all of that was taken away from him, and yet throughout all of it, you see specifically at the very end of the book of Job in chapter 42, I believe, God answers Job in a moment where he is feeling very weak and broken. After answering him, he says, "I have uttered what I did not understand, things that were far too wonderful for me which I did not know," and in that moment he shuts his mouth and realizes, "I don't need any of this. I don't need any of this because I'm satisfied in God."

Let's look at the words of Jesus in Matthew 4. We see the temptation scene. Right, Jesus goes out into the wilderness. He's not been eating. He's focused on praying and preparing for his ministry. The devil comes to him to tempt him, saying, "I know you're hungry. I know you haven't eaten. If you would command it, this rock will turn into bread and your stomach will be satisfied." And then he gives these words, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." And what he's actually doing is quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 which the entire verse says, "and he humbled you," God speaking to Israel in the wilderness, "and he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord."

So what God is saying to Israel in Deuteronomy 8 and what Jesus is saying to the devil in this temptation scene is food will not satisfy me the way that God will. The word of God is the only thing that will truly satisfy me, the only thing that will leave me feeling like I

am completely and totally satisfied and happy and delighting in the Lord. John 4:34, Jesus said again that the food, his food was to do the will of the Father. I know that's a lot about satisfaction. We'll get to the point in just a moment. In each instance, satisfaction is not found in self. Right, when we looked about the idea of anxiety, you're looking at self, trying to make things work for yourself. "I want. I need. I'm worried about." And then we turn away from that and we look to the Lord and anxiety is put to death, but in order to find true joy, you have to also turn from trying to be satisfied in those things that you can get. Keyword "you," the things that you pursue, the things that you want. Because for David and for the other Psalmists and for Job and even the words of Jesus, the only thing that will satisfy you forever is God, and it emphasizes the truth that joy is found in God alone.

So how do we achieve this supreme satisfaction? Now that we know we need to be satisfied in God, how do we achieve this satisfaction? The simple answer is you love God which feels like kind of a cop out. Right, you were probably looking for something a little bit more. If you're saying, "I need to do this. What do I need to do next?" Love God. Baseline bottom line, this is the only thing that we need to do to be satisfied in him. We are to love God.

Let's back up for just a moment and look at the parable that's just before this passage. We're in Luke 10. We're going to look at verse 25 and read this parable. "And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? How do you read it?' And he answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live.' But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' And Jesus said to him, 'You go, and do likewise,'" other.

Now what we see playing out in this passage is the concept of what it means to be a neighbor, what it means to be a neighbor, what it means to love others before yourself, but the driving point is in verse 27. In order to rightly love your neighbor, in order to love them above all else, you must first love God even more. You are to love God with what he lists off are four different things. Love the Lord your God with your heart, and with your soul, and with your strength, and with all of your mind. It's actually referencing in Deuteronomy 6:5 that you are to love the Lord your God with essentially every fiber of

your being. So to truly be satisfied in God, to truly enjoy God and to truly take joy in him, you must love him but not love him in a shallow and superficial way. I love God on Monday and Wednesday and Friday or on Sunday and Wednesday, but the rest of the time I love other things. No. You are to love God with every single fiber of your being.

He lists off the entire person there. Love God with all of your mind. All of your mind. You are to love him with your thought life, that your mind is centrally focused on him day and night, you dwell constantly on him. You are to love God with all of your strength. That means that every action you do and every ounce of strength in your body is devoted to serving God. Love him with all of your heart. All of your affections should be aligned with a right love for God. Love him with your soul, meaning that you look to him as the only source of salvation, you trust in him alone. Right, so every fiber of your being is to love God but in order to love God, you must know him.

I think about the example of a couple that first meets. They meet for the first time. Now we hear about love at first sight and it may or may not be out there, we can have a conversation about that at a different time. You meet your one-day future husband or future wife, I can guarantee you right now your first words to them were not, "I am deeply and madly in love with you and will lay down my life for you." Show of hands anyone that may or may not have said that. Now I'm saying first meeting. I'm not talking about you've been talking for a while and then you go on a date. I am talking about you laid eyes on them and those were the first words. Anybody said that? I'm up here crossing my fingers. I was really hoping I was right there. Right, you wouldn't say that. But as you get to know this person your love for them increases. You get to know their likes and dislikes. You get to know their family, which may or may not cause different types of love. It might cause love to go back. I don't know. You get to know the way that they approach the world, the things that they love to do, the things that they don't like to do. And the more you get to know them, the more that you love them. Now consider for a moment a couple that's been married for over 50 years. Your love for one another is far greater than it was the first time you met. Far greater because you've learned one another, you've gotten to know one another.

So in order to love the God of the Bible, we must know him. We must seek him in his word. We must desire daily to have communion with him in prayer, to gather with his saints, his people, to tear through his word as he has revealed himself to us. You must constantly pursue God to rightly love him. You do so, as Roman says, through the renewing of your mind, seeking to understand his greatness, daily devouring his word and dwelling on it constantly. You want to love God? Spend time with him. I had a professor that once said that our theology, our understanding of God, drives our doxology, our worship of God, which then drives our duology, our obedience to God. To love God, you must know him. To worship God, you must know him. To serve God, you must know him. And to enjoy God, you must know him. If you do not know the God of the Bible, you cannot have joy in him.

We looked at all of the different parts of the person that we are to love God with, but I want to say this type of love is not actually possible in our own natural state. To truly

love God with every fiber of your being, to see him as vastly superior to everything else there ever was, and to serve him sacrificially because of our sin is not possible in and of ourselves. You see, our sin separates us from loving God. We love self and creature more than the Creator. So what do we do? You see, God loved us. God loved us by sending his Son. Christ came in our place, he laid down his life on the cross where we rightly deserve to be because our sin, the consequence is death. He paid the price for our sin and accomplished salvation for all of those that repent and believe in him. It is only when we repent of our sins and turn away from who we once were trusting in Christ to save us that then we are able to love God and therefore able to enjoy him. What you love the most will be the ultimate source of your joy and if it is anything but God, your joy will be momentary. I don't care how great the thing that you say you love is. Whether it's your family, your friends, your car, whatever it is, it will fail you. But God will not. Again, eternal joy is found in the eternal God alone.

Now I want to bring us back to our passage that we started with. When you first look at it, you don't really see the concept of joy playing out here, but I want us to dive deeply into a quick character study of these two main characters, Jesus being the ultimate character obviously, of Martha and Mary. Now we see Martha and Mary several times in the gospels. They are sisters to Lazarus. Jesus had a profound love for this particular family. We see in other places when Lazarus dies, Jesus begins to weep. He weeps for the loss of his friend, even though we know just a few verses later he raises Lazarus from the dead. He interacts with Mary and Martha on multiple occasions, but in this particular scene Jesus has entered into a village and he has gone into Martha's home and her sister Mary is there. Now typically when Jesus went into homes he would sit, reclined at table and would teach, which is what we find him doing here. He is reclined at table. The disciples are there with him. There are likely other people that are in the room and he is teaching them. We don't know necessarily exactly what he is teaching them about, but we know that he is instructing.

For Martha and Mary, typically in the ancient Near East, what their task would have been is to keep the home, to make sure that everything is in line, to do the chores to make sure that Jesus could focus on teaching, or whoever was in their home had everything they needed. They were to be hospitable. But we see two different things playing out here, two different things. You have Martha serving vigorously, doing everything you would say she's supposed to be doing, and then Mary who is not helping her sister. Not helping her sister. Her sister is doing all the work. Her sister is getting frustrated about it. And then you have Mary on the other side of it who's just sitting there, and we're going to unpack that a little bit more as we go through here. But I want to remind you of what we just heard. What are the two great commandments? Anytime I ask an open-ended question like that, I'm looking for an answer. Are there any kids in here that are in my class? Out of curiosity, does anyone know what rule number 1 is? I see some of you back there. Does anybody know what my rule number 1 is? We are to love, who? They don't want to say anything. Rule number 1 in my classroom, does anyone want to guess what that is? Love... Love God. Thank you, there we go. Love God. Rule number 2, love... Love others. You see, there's my classroom showing up. I love it. Two great commands: love

God, love others. You must love God first and then you will love others. There we go. I'm getting you all there. So two great commands, remember that.

So you have Martha is serving vigorously, Mary who seemingly is doing nothing. Now most people will approach this passage and they will do a contrast, the self-righteous versus the righteous, right? Martha is self-righteous. She's doing all of these works to gain attention so that Jesus would see her and know her. And then you have Mary who is righteous sitting at the feet of Jesus. I actually think you might be able to read that in there, but I don't think that that is the appropriate understanding of this text. I don't think that Mary is the righteous person and Martha is the self-righteous the way that most people play this out. It's not an issue of Martha's doing all of these good works and trying to gain favor and Mary is not and submitting to the Lord. I don't think that's what's playing here. I think that this is actually good versus best. Martha is doing what she's supposed to be doing in one sense, that she is being hospitable. She is caring for the people in her home, making sure that they have everything that they need. Where she goes wrong is misprioritizing her love. She is putting others before the Lord. Right, so she's focused on serving other people, of giving other people what they need while she is in her home while ignoring the fact that her Lord is sitting right there. It's a misprioritized love.

Now I do think she goes wrong in a couple of areas. As Jesus points out, she is anxious. She is anxiously toiling worried about every little thing in her home. So we have that the anxiety is present, her worry is there. That's not right. But again, she is serving people and loving her neighbor as she is called to. But Mary, what does Jesus say Mary has done in verse 42? She has chosen the good portion. She has chosen the good portion. You see, what Mary realizes that her Lord is right there, right there, and instead of being distracted by all of these other things, her focus was one thing and one thing only and that was on Jesus. All she wanted in that moment was what Jesus was saying.

And so she sat at his feet, which would have literally been the place of a student learning from a teacher. She is sitting at the feet of Jesus, hanging on every single word that comes from his mouth. Martha was focused on neighbor, but Mary was putting her love for Jesus above everything else, and let's notice just how much she is loving Jesus in this moment. Verse 39, Martha had a sister. Her name was Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. That doesn't seem like a lot but for her. to be sitting there and hanging off of every word that came from the mouth of the Lord is incredibly powerful. Incredibly powerful. She is not distracted at all. She knows that she is only going to have Jesus for a little while. Whether a little while in the home or a little while on this earth, she knows that he is not going to be there for long and so she wants everything that he has to say. Nothing else mattered to her. She was choosing the best portion.

We can get in trouble by loving people more than we love God, by misprioritizing our love. You see, it's right that we love other people. You love your spouse. You love your child, your grandchildren. You love your friends. It is good to love and serve those people but where we get in trouble is putting them where they shouldn't be, before God. You see, I see so many couples when they're dating or as they're in their early years of

marriage, prioritizing their relationship with their significant other over their relationship with God. In all reality, that is idolatry. When we place our love for people over our love for God, we are placing them in a spot that only God can control, only God can hold. We are called to love God above all other things. We are called to love him even more than every other person that we could ever love.

The story of Martha and Mary is a story of true and deeper love. Right, this is just one small example, one small example in the scriptures of someone who literally could not get enough of her Lord. So do you want to enjoy God? And if the answer is yes, you must love him. You must be satisfied in him. Mary is doing that. She loves Jesus so much, in that moment all she wants is him. She loves him so much that all she wants to do is listen to him. To love God, you must first place your faith in Jesus. You must first place your faith in Jesus as your Lord. This type of love is only made possible through Christ. And true love for God leads to true joy in God.

Does your life look like Mary's? Do you delight in every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord? You see, the question of joy is related to love. As we saw in the very beginning, what is the thing that you will be most satisfied in? And I would ask you to actually analyze that this week because you'll figure that out really quickly by what you spend the majority of your time on. What you spend the most time on will reflect the thing that you love the most. So for some of our students in here, do you love sports more than you love God? Do you enjoy sports more than you enjoy God? We spent a lot of time on the ball field when I was in middle school and high school. That's what we did. We spent time on the ball field, practicing constantly, even when we didn't have practice, we were practicing. And for me it quickly became that thing that made me the happiest. I ended up playing golf in high school because I was small and overweight, just to be honest. Baseball was not great for someone that's small and overweight, so I played golf instead. If I had a good round, I was happy. If I had a bad round, the golf club was on the ground and I was very unhappy because for me, the delight of my heart was how I did playing this sport. Let's ask it another way. When things are going well at home are you joyful? When things are going poorly, do you find yourself not being so joyful, not delighting? And we could go on and on and on about all these different examples but what I want us to understand is that we must love God above all else. We must give as much time to the Lord as humanly possible. Then and only then will you truly delight or have joy in God.

Do you delight in every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord? Do you? A lot of us struggle to find time during the day to read God's word. We're so busy. We live in a busy world where we're constantly pulled this direction and that direction and that direction, and before you know it, you've gotten to the end of the day, you're exhausted and you have no time, as you say, for God's word. What that tells me is that you do not truly delight in the word of God. I understand busy seasons. I understand that you can get pulled in a lot of different directions. But if you do not prioritize God and his word, if you do not delight in his word, and if you are not like Mary who hangs on every single word that comes from the mouth of the Lord, you will not have joy. Bottom line. You need God's word. You need it more than you could ever imagine, and more than I could ever

emphasize up here. I could say over and over again how much you need God and try and drive that home and it still would not scratch the surface of how much you need his word each day.

For Jesus, the Son of God, his food, his satisfaction was being obedient to the words of God. Is that true for you? Are you ultimately satisfied in God? Are you ultimately taking joy in him because you realize every other thing will fail you? I want us to understand something very interesting in the Bible. Christian joy is often attached to suffering. I find it very fascinating. As I start to read more and more of God's word and dive deeper into particular passages, you see more often than not joy connected to the passages on suffering. So we're going through 1 Peter, Pastor Ty is going to be preaching through 1 Peter, multiple times in that you see rejoicing in suffering. You see David suffered greatly, talks about rejoicing in the Lord. Psalm 42, the sons of Korah in the midst of great suffering, delight in God. Paul, Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice always; again I will say, rejoice."

So all these people that are suffering are also saying rejoice in God and are honestly, I kind of figured out a little bit why this morning because when we're suffering, God is stripping away everything that we put before him. When we suffer, God is removing those things that we hold onto a little too tightly and he's leaving you with only one thing and one thing alone and that is him. You want to know why biblical authors and characters in the Bible are able to rejoice in suffering? Because they see God as all there is. Everything else pales in comparison to the God that they serve. You see, true Christian joy is only found in God. So when he allows us to suffer, he is allowing us to see that all the more clearly, that God is all there is.

I want to finally point out that joy is a fruit of the Spirit. Love, joy. It is a fruit of the Spirit. It is a proof that God has sent his Spirit because of the salvation that he has given you and he is working within you. Joy will only come through the Spirit's work.

And the last thing that I want to point out as we close, is this is a requirement to be a disciple of Jesus. This is not an option. This is not a, "Well, you can try and figure out this joy thing, but you don't have to have it down." No. Joy is a requirement to be a disciple of Jesus. You must delight in God. You must see him as far greater than any other thing. You must love him more than you love any other thing or any other person. And you must delight in him, delight in his word constantly. You see, as disciples we are to be beacons of joy in a joyless world. We are not to reflect of how great we are but how great the God that we serve is, so that the rest of the world would know us by the joy that we have in our God. May we go from this place delighting in him, joyfully following him all of our days.

Let's pray.

Father, I thank you for this time that you have given us. I ask that you would use the ramblings that you've just heard for your glory. Father, I pray that we would be a people marked by joy, that in the midst of good season and in bad we would understand that joy

is only found in you and is rooted deeply in our love for you. God, send us out from this place joyfully submissive to you. Help us to follow you all of our days. And may we live in such a way where the rest of the world sees how great you are. Help us, O God, I pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.