

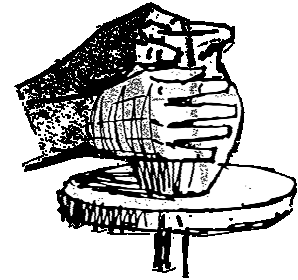
His Workmanship: Westside

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.”
—Ephesians 2:10

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Isaiah 64:8

Mothers Who Choose the Best, by Robert Massey

Today's mothers have no easy task. Mothers now are probably as busy as at any other time in history. Expectations for women have changed. Today, a woman is expected not only to cook the bacon, but also to bring it home. Even though she may work 40 hours, she is still expected to be the housekeeper. She is expected to cook the meals, wash the clothes, and take care of the children. Her day is often from sunup to long after sundown. She may be expected to be the “super mom”—the woman who attempts to have it all: a great career, a beautiful house, well-behaved children. Regardless of time schedules and calendar organizers, there are still only 24 hours in a day. With all that is expected, many women try to cut corners in order to make for time for a busy day. The problem with this is that the spiritual life is often what gets cut or overlooked. Many women (and men as well) fail to make time for God. If they focus only on the material and neglect the spiritual, they will not be fulfilled and happy. And “*If momma's not happy, nobody's happy.*” Today's women, through motherhood, have the greatest opportunity to mold the future. But what future? What mold?

Scripture never mentions either Mar-

tha or Mary as being mothers. However, Martha and Mary were women who faced decisions that were important, with results that had eternal consequences. Martha received Jesus into her house. No doubt Martha wanted everything to be just right; she was busy, working, while Mary, her sister, was listening to the words that Jesus taught. Jesus told Martha that Mary had chosen the better part. Luke mentions them only in 10:38-42 and shows three differences between them. Though today we're looking at women, and particularly mothers, this text applies to everyone, so see where you fit in, remembering that Mary chose the better part, the one (and by implication only) needful thing.

I. **A difference in focus.** Each woman had a different focus. A focus is “*the point where reflected light rays come together, the center.*” Here *focus* means what they were concerned about, what was the center of their lives. Luke tells us that Martha was concerned about serving. She was excited. Jesus was coming to her house. She wanted everything to be just right. Jesus was the honored guest, and it was customary to prepare a meal. She was busy serving the Master.

We all know people who spend all

their time being busy. They serve on every committee at work or volunteering. They take pride in being busy. They even accept every task in the church. They organize Bible school and home studies, they teach Bible classes, they lead service. If there's work in the church, they do their best to do it. They do all this work, yet they never find the time to develop a closer relationship with Jesus. Did you know that you can be too busy for the Lord? He knows that being busy isn't necessarily being fruitful or productive—and He wants us to be fruitful.

Serving the Lord, being involved in His work is good. God has a work for every single one of us. Classes need to be taught, and work needs to be done. Only 10% of any group's attendance is active in performing the work of that group. No wonder so many people suffer burnout. With so few people working, some people do the work of 3-4 and get too busy to develop a closer relationship with God. They're having to do their job plus someone else's. But the only way to avoid burnout in the Lord's work is to be close to Him. Martha's service was a good thing. The problem was in “*distraction*” and in “*much serving.*” Martha was distracted by serving. The Greek word here for serving is *dia-*
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“One thing I have desired of the LORD, that I will seek: to dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His tem-

konia. Our word “deacon” comes from this word. Serving is a good thing, but Martha had allowed it to become the center of her attention. She was encumbered, or burdened, with much serving. The key word is *much*. All her energy, all her attention, and all her focus was on serving. Some might attempt to psychoanalyze her and say that perhaps she suffered from low self-esteem and was attempting to over-compensate by her serving. Others might say that she was a “type A” personality. Theologians might say that she was “works based,” a person who thinks that she can please the Lord by her works. We don’t know any of this. But we do know that she was not focused on the best thing, and that was Jesus, the Christ.

Think what a tragedy it is to have the Lord of the universe in your house and be too busy to hear what He has to say! There are people who sit in assemblies every Sunday in the presence of the Lord whose thoughts are 10,000 miles away. They’re too busy to hear what the Lord has to say. And this is not just confined to “church work.” Some parents who labor hard on the job, working to build a future for their children, working to build a good home for their families, never give thought to the spiritual needs of their children. Thank God for every mother who takes the time to teach her children about the Word of God and for every father who pays enough attention to the Word of God that he can teach it to his children. *“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him,”* Jn 6:27. Jesus said not to put all your energy into what is only temporary. Some parents work and lay up for their children, but when they are gone, their

children waste everything in just a short time. It not appreciated but is taken for granted. But the Word of God—which produces enduring faith—lasts through eternity.

II. A difference in fellowship. Now notice Mary, who was sitting at the feet of Jesus and heard His word. Mothers, are you hearing His Word today? Are you taking the time to listen to Jesus? Are you focused upon Him? Mary was focused on Jesus and His Word. She chose the better part. She literally sat down right in front of the feet of Jesus. She wanted to get as close to Him as she possibly could. She didn’t want to miss a word of what He was saying. She knew who He is. To be at someone’s feet is a place of closeness. She was tied or anchored to Him, resting at His feet. Are you close to Jesus? Are you this close? Today you are as close to Jesus as you want to be. You may give excuses, but Jesus desires for you to be close to Him. If you are not as close to Him as you want to be, or as you used to be, guess who moved? You have been called into fellowship with Christ. *“God is faithful, by Whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,”* 1 Cor 1:9. Mary knew that to receive fully from Jesus, she must shut everything else out and focus on being close to Him. You see, it all comes down to priorities. For Mary, fellowship with Christ was the priority in her life.

Unlike Mary, Martha was not in a specific location. *“But Martha was encumbered about with much serving,”* Lk 10:40. She was probably here and there: frantically fluttering in one place and then in another within the house. The Greek word *perispao* literally means “dragged all around,” “drawn away,” “encumbered/burdened,” or “distracted.” She was letting her tasks draw her away from Christ. Remember, she

was the one who received Christ into her home. She was the one who welcomed Him, yet now, other things had become more important, and she was drawn away from the One she needed to hear the most. How many times do we receive Christ into the home of our hearts, welcome Him, and then allow other things to consume us and draw our attention away from Him? If we are not careful, we will be like the soil that received the seed with joy, yet because we do not take the time to establish and root ourselves in fellowship with Him, the rocks and stones of our lives don’t allow the seed to grow, Mt 13:20. Then we become overwhelmed with our troubles and cares and die out spiritually. This is a grave danger. *“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away,”* Heb 2:1. What must we do in order to drift away? Absolutely nothing. The currents of life, cares, and temptations will naturally cause us to drift away.

A man once bought a boat and kept it in the harbor on the coast of Florida. A hurricane was brewing just off the coast and was about to hit land. He didn’t know what to do. He had made a sizable investment in this boat and didn’t want to lose it, so he asked for advice. A friend who had experience with both boats and hurricanes said: *“Don’t attempt to tie the boat to the dock or anything on land. It will be torn to pieces. Here’s what you need to do—your only hope is to anchor deep. Take four anchors and drop them deep, and the boat will ride out the storm.”* That’s good advice spiritually, as well. If we don’t want to drift away, if we want our lives to mean something, if we want to leave our children an example of what it means to be a Christian, anchor deep in fel-

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God makes my heart clean in 2015 “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” —Ps 51:10

Mary and Martha, from p. 2

lowship with Christ. If we don't center our lives upon Christ, the Rock, we will drift away. “We who have fled for refuge may lay hold of the hope set before us. We have this hope as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,” Heb 6:18-19.

III. A difference in feelings. Notice what Jesus said about Martha in v. 41: “And Jesus answered and said unto her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are careful and troubled about many things.’” Other translations render the Greek words *merimnao* and *turbazo* as “anxious and disturbed,” or “worried and distracted,” or “full of care and disquieted.” (*Turbazo* is the root of our English word turbine, meaning “whirl.”) Notice Martha's feelings. She was upset, anxious, and tossed about. When you don't focus upon Christ, when you don't anchor deep in fellowship with Him, this is the end result. In the old hymn, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” the first verse says He bears all our sins and griefs: “O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.” Martha had the One Who could speak peace to the storm, the Prince of peace, right in her home, but she was far from being peaceful. Her feelings were those of distress, fear, concern. She was agitated. She was looking about at the house and looking at Mary. How many mothers today are filled with fear, worry, and concern, all because they don't focus on the Peacemaker?

Discipleship Here At Home

It's a scary world we live in. We send our children off every day, and we don't know if we will ever see them again. School shootings, kidnapers, drugs, alcohol, assaults, bullying, occult sects can all be found in our society. If we don't want to go crazy, we'd better have the Prince of Peace as our center.

Look at Mary. Luke doesn't say what she was feeling. He just tells us that she was sitting at the feet of the Master. She was focused upon Him and His words. But we know she was feeling peace. How do we know? Because of Is 26:3: “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.” Those who focus their minds on Jesus, who lean on Christ, are kept in perfect peace. Mary had indeed chosen the good part.

Notice what the Lord said to Martha: “One thing is needful,” v. 42. Did you catch that? **One thing is necessary.** Certainly, your days are filled with activities; of course, your schedules are busy. But Jesus said one thing is needed—only one. Martha was busy, but what would it have mattered, in the big picture of eternity, if supper had been late? What if the biscuits had burned? What if the kids had missed sports or piano lessons? And what would it have mattered if she had made everything just perfect and yet missed out on eternity?

Mothers, you may keep an immaculate house, but do you find time for God? You may be successful in business, but it is worth missing out on eternity? You may be reading to your children, teaching them about life, setting aside money for their future, but only one thing is needful, only one thing is necessary—and that's your relationship with God. Jesus told Martha, “Mary has chosen that good part—that part which will not be taken away from her.” She was making plans for eternity. Can your kids say that about you?

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help

- **Ed Fink**—prostate cancer; treatment for brain tumors
- **Judy Strand**—recovering from heart valve surgery at home
- **Kaylee Chavez**—age 10, PRAISE—spinal fluid no cancer cells; MRI clear; treatment continues
- **Rod Green**—recovering from severed thumb
- **Pat Wilkes**—surgery recovery for torn shoulder tendon
- **Bill Dennis**—home following rehab on infected knee drainage; pseudo-gout
- **Sandra Perry**—possible kidney failure, may need dialysis or transplant; heart valve issues recently diagnosed; neuropathy from diabetes
- **Debbie Chilson**, a sister-in-law of **Rob Bender's** brother, is hospitalized with internal bleeding.
- **Sylvia Chapman, Brett's** grandmother—third stage pancreatic cancer; chemo
- **Brittany Tope's** mother—breast cancer; broken ribs healed; doing better
- **Kim Howell's** niece **Tonya Robison**—delivered 32-week, 2 lb, 5 oz **Malachi Taylor Robison** several wks ago; in NICU in Louisville, KY
- **Kenny Boyd's** coworker **Kim Phillips**—asks our prayers for heart problems
- **Rick Robbins**, friend of Howells—brain surgery

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

- **Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr.; Pat Wilkes**—asthma
- **Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease; her medication is being changed over the next few months, so she is home in early evenings with one of her parents
- **Jonathan Hadders**—RA
- **Kirk Johnson**—MS
- **Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;
- **Virginia**, macular degeneration; high bp
- **Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
- **Judy Sartin**—rotator cuff injury; spinal stenosis; arthritis
- **Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness
- **Bereaved Cheryl Reames and Giles Free** recently lost their father and mother, respectively. Please ask God to comfort them.
- **Returning Tiana Smith** is back from Hong Kong and will be married to Luke Gillian in July.

Beginning Wed, 5/27, through 7/31, Payton Miller will work with Westside. Jim will mentor Payton.

Vacation Bible School June 8-11, 9-11:15 am, ages 2 to 12. Teen volunteers needed. **God is with you!** **DANIEL's Courage in Captivity!**



Exposing current thoughts & trends *religious freedom*

Marriage Rulings Threaten Dissenters, by Travis Weber

If the Supreme Court alters the law concerning "same-sex marriage" later this year, it will be even more important to protect those who do not believe such relationships can be marriages at all from being forced to violate their beliefs. These would-be dissenters must be afforded the right to disagree and the freedom to live by their religious convictions. The American public overwhelmingly supports this idea. Recent nationwide polling says that 81% of Americans believe government should leave people free to follow their beliefs about marriage as they live their daily lives at work and in the way they run their businesses.

Yet around the country, these dissenters are being told by tribunals and courts that they have no such rights in the face of statutes modifying the law's treatment of homosexuals, and thus, gay marriages. In almost all of these cases, small-business owners are happy to serve everyone who walks in their door; they just don't want to be forced to violate their religious convictions by being conscripted to participate in a specific ceremony they view as morally wrong. For example, they are happy to sell a cake to a gay customer, but they don't want to be forced to create a wedding cake for a gay wedding. There is a substantial difference. These businessmen don't want to be forced to take part in dedicating a marriage unto God that they believe violates God's commands against homosexual conduct. The issue is what the dissenters believe. If they are forced to create a cake or flowers *specifically to celebrate* a same-sex wedding ceremony, they are being forced to violate their consciences regarding what *they* believe to be morally wrong.

We do not have to agree with dissenters to support legal protections for their views. We might support legal protections for conscientious objectors to a military draft, even though we might not hold the same conscientious objection. Likewise, we should be able to support the right of those who, having moral qualms about same-sex marriage, desire to opt out of situations forcing them to approve of such marriages, tacitly or overtly. Their legal right to dissent must be protected. So far, it has not been. One necessary protection for these dissenters are state Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRA) similar to the one signed into federal law by President Bill Clinton in 1993. RFRAs simply protect sincere conscientious objectors of all religions from over-intrusive government regulation burdening their religious practice. RFRAs are not a "blank check" for doing anything one wants in the name of religion. There is no record of RFRAs being used to avoid nondiscrimination laws. Such a problem just doesn't exist.

On the other hand, many same-sex-marriage advocates believe they have a "blank check" to root out anyone with dissenting opinions—even those held in private. Yet the public record is clear: business owners are shunned for nothing but their beliefs, and public officials are fired for their religious views on marriage, even when the government—by its own admission—does not possess one allegation that the business or official ever acted in a discriminatory manner. Americans increasingly have little trust in their government and want its intruding tentacles out of their personal lives when it comes to telling them what to think about marriage. We must protect the rights and views of those who dissent.



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<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Westside-Church-of-Christ/276475819148309>

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class, "Marriage Boot Camp: Basic Training in Communication,"** Jim Reingrover *Please pray for marriage in the US, for our marriages, and for those seeking marriage to find faithful partners*

- **Sermon, "The Difference a Mother Can Make,"** Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon, singing

Feeding on His Word Reading

Everyone is invited to an open Bible reading of Exodus 1-20 next Sunday evening, May 17, at 4 pm, light supper after, at the Reameses' house. See Joel Walker for schedule.