

SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

(Luke 10:38-42)

We live in a fast-paced, hurried world. The holidays can make it worse.

How can we survive the holidays? Follow the M & M rule:

DON'T LET PREPARATION SEVER CONNECTION

A case study on distracting preparation and life-giving connection...

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

- **Preparation is important, but dangerous**
- **Connection is essential, but difficult**
- **So, use preparation to strengthen connection**

QUOTES OF NOTE

Our lives often seem like over-packed suitcases bursting at the seams. In fact, we are almost always aware of being behind schedule. (Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New*)

What a circus act we women perform every day of our lives. It puts the trapeze artist to shame. Look at us. We run a tight rope daily, balancing a pile of books on the head. Baby-carriage, parasol, kitchen chair, still under control. Steady now! This is not the life of simplicity but the life of multiplicity that the wise men warn us of. It leads not to unification but to fragmentation. It does not bring grace; it destroys the soul. And this is not only true of my life, I am forced to conclude; it is the life of millions of women in America. (Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *Gift from the Sea*)

I find He never guides us into an intolerable scramble of panting feverishness. (Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion*)

We are indeed caught in a web of false expectations and contrived needs. Our occupations and preoccupations fill our external and internal lives to the brim. They prevent the Spirit of God from breathing freely in us and thus renewing our lives. (Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New*)

Jesus does not respond to our worry-filled way of living by saying that we should not be so busy with worldly affairs. He does not try to pull us away from the many events, activities, and people that make up our lives. He does not tell us that what we do is unimportant, valueless, or useless. Nor does he suggest that we should withdraw from our involvements and live quiet, restful lives removed from the struggles of the world. Jesus' response to our worry-filled lives is quite different. He asks us to shift the point of gravity, to relocate the center of our attention, to change our priorities. Jesus wants us to move from the 'many things' to the 'one necessary thing.' (Henri Nouwen, *Making All Things New*)

The endless cycle of idea and action,
Endless invention, endless experiment,
Bring knowledge of motion but not of stillness,
Knowledge of speech but not of silence,
Knowledge of words, and ignorance of the Word.
(T. S. Eliot, *Choruses From 'The Rock'*)