

What Is Practical About Jesus? Episode #213

It's a Faith Friday episode of the Ray Edwards Show, so if you're looking for the business of copywriting and marketing podcast, that's on Mondays. Then on Wednesdays we do deep dive conversations like this week we were talking with Pat Flynn about this new book, *Will It Fly*, an awesome book you should get, especially if you're a business person thinking about starting a new venture. It's Faith Friday, maybe you're a new pastor thinking about starting a new church. This episode is about spiritual matters and I already set up the subject and that's what we're going to explore today.

Spiritual Foundations

I don't know if you've ever heard this saying, but there is one that goes like this... he's so Heavenly minded he's of no earthly good. It's referring to a person who's so focused on spiritual matters and Heaven and angels, God and Jesus, that they're no good to any of us here on earth, because their heads in the clouds and I think that's a total misconstruing of the facts.

People know that I am somewhat preoccupied, some might even say totally obsessed with Jesus. I think that's a good thing. People say, Ray, you should have some balance in your life you're out of balance. You have over emphasis on Jesus and His grace and His goodness and how you're righteous because of Him. Really? You think so, let's see what the book has to say about it, because in the Gospel of Luke 10 there's a little passage where Jesus comes to visit the family that He loves so much.

It's the family of Simon, Mary, Martha, Lazarus and most believe that Simon the Leper is the father of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, and you know Lazarus was the good friend that died and Jesus sat outside the tomb and raised him from the dead by saying, Lazarus come forth and Lazarus came out of the tomb.

As an aside, I wonder about that, if I'm dead and I'm with God in paradise, don't call me back I don't want to come back if I'm there. I realize you may be sad because I'm gone, but you'll join me soon enough.

Let me set this up first. So Mary and Martha are there at the house and Jesus shows up. Mary immediately goes to greet Him, she sits in the main living area with the men as He's teaching. She sits at His feet and listens to His teaching, while Martha is in the kitchen preparing the meal for the men. This is how it worked in that society. It wasn't permitted for women to sit and talk with men or learn from men, as if she was as equal as a man.

Jesus didn't buy into any of that. His ministry was filled with powerful women. He put them in positions of authority and I believe that's the way He intends it to be. Mary knew this. Martha, on the other hand, was upset because her sister wasn't helping in the kitchen with the woman's work, which was important and needed to be done. I'm not saying that nobody needs to do that, but here's what happened.

Luke 10:41-42 – Martha went to Jesus and said, would you please tell my sister that her place is not here, she needs to come help me in the kitchen? Jesus answered and said to her, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things, but one thing is needed and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.

Let's think about the situation. Martha was hung up on the practical. She was filled with anxiety and was worried about, as Jesus stated, many things. Does that sound familiar to you? Are you often worried about many things? I know this is something I have struggled with and still to this day can find myself creeping into worrying about many things. Jesus said only one thing was needed.

What is that one thing? It's not a mystery and we don't have to be theologians to figure it out, it's clear from this story it was to sit at Jesus' feet and keep your eyes, ears and your heart set on Him. Listen to what He's saying and what He's telling you to do. Watch how He's behaving.

For those of you who don't believe and don't understand that Jesus is alive today and He's active in our lives, those of us who believe, that we could feel and perceive Him moving in our life as a real personality, a real being. I'm not talking about imagination I'm talking about reality.

That sounds like nonsense to you, but here you are listening to this show, almost as if you're standing on the edge of a swimming pool, sticking your toe in the water to see how crazy the water is. I encourage you to just jump in. You can't swim unless you get in the water.

So the question is, is it practical to be obsessed with Jesus? When I say practical I'm getting right to the nitty-gritty.

- Does it help you?
- Does it pay your bills?
- Does it put a roof over your head?
- Does it fill your bank account?
- Does it help you not be sick?
- Does it help heal your body?

Think about it. In the Bible, what do we know happened to people who were at Jesus' feet, who listened to Him intently, who tried to do everything He said, who learned from watching Him and modeling His behavior, what did it do for them?

For Peter, it allowed him to walk on water.

For James and John, it filled them with so much confidence because they had seen the miraculous happen at their hands, because Jesus empowered them just as He empowers us, to bring the realm of the supernatural into the natural world.

They saw so much demonstration of power that when Jesus was snubbed by the people in the city they were passing through, they said to Jesus, would you like us to call down fire from Heaven, like Elijah did and burn them to a crisp? Many people when they read this or when they hear preachers tell it they say that Jesus was scolding them like He was angry. You don't know what spirit you're of, and you don't know of who you are, and He did say those words but I rather believe He was laughing.

What's interesting about that story isn't that they were trying to get His permission to do it, it's that they assumed that they could. Think about that. So it did that for them.

What did it do for Mary? The whole story is in Gospel Luke 10 and as I mentioned, Mary was sitting at the Lord's feet when He came to visit and Martha was in the kitchen serving, getting food together and making sure everyone was taken care of, that the men were taken care of because that's what the women did in those days. Martha was the older sister so she was the one who was responsible, mature. She was probably running around like crazy, making sure everyone was taken care of and Mary was just lounging around with the men, more with Jesus.

She was listening to what He said, watching His face and drawing life from Him. She was resting. She wasn't running around frantically. After a while, Martha was so stressed out she got really upset and she came in and said, Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone, therefore, tell her to help me. Luke 10:40.

She was angry at Mary, but I think she was angry with Jesus, because she was telling him what to do. Now who's being presumptuous? Jesus responded again, I don't believe in anger I believe in love, just like with James and John, I don't think He was angry with them I also don't think He was angry with Martha. He said, Martha you're worried and troubled about many things, but just one thing is needed and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.

This is astonishing because in that culture what Martha was saying was right. Martha was in the right, but Mary was in relationship with Jesus, a right relationship with the Lord. That makes Him happy. Jesus, at the time this story was written, was God in human flesh and if God shows up in your house the best way you can serve Him isn't to bring him bread and wine, it's to sit at His feet and draw life from him. That's what gives Him joy. It's for that purpose that He came to be with us so that we could be with Him forever.

When you come into His presence and you draw life from Him, He is pleased just as He was pleased with Mary.

There's a book called *The One Thing* that I really like. For Christians I believe there's one universal answer, and for non-Christians too, I invite you to participate in the answer. The question the book asks is, what is the one thing that such, by doing this, everything else in your life could be rendered easier or even unnecessary? For believers, those who follow Jesus, the answer to that question is obvious.

The one thing, such that by doing this one thing everything else in our life is made easier or even unnecessary is Jesus and just being in His presence. It's not in serving Him. Not to be worried about many things. The one thing is to sit with Him, to keep your eyes on Him, to listen to Him with your ears and your heart, to draw on Him. He supplies through his grace. It's the hardest thing for us to do sometimes to sit and be still, to be in God's presence. In fact, there's a popular saying, 'don't just do something sit there.'

A lot of us are confessed believers. We say that we believe Jesus is the Son of God, that He became God of the flesh, became a human, died as the sacrifice for our sins, was buried and then resurrected, raised from the dead, conquering death in the grave ascended to be with the Father and making it so that we could come into Heaven and be in God's presence forever, for eternity.

We say those things and yet it's so easy for us to get all troubled and worried and busy about many things, probably good things that need to be done like paying the mortgage, doing your job, taking care of the kids and the household, but the one thing is Jesus. The one thing is to rest, to be at rest and that doesn't mean to be inactive. It means not to be worried about many things and if you do that one thing, when you're doing it you won't be worried about anything else. If you're not doing that one thing you'll be worried about lots of stuff, many things.

You might ask then, how do I do that because Jesus doesn't come to my house for dinner? Well, in fact He does. If you're a believer in Him, He lives inside of you so He's with you even when you're having dinner or watching TV. So He's already there with you.

How do you do this one thing?

How do you keep your eyes on Jesus? In this time, for most of us, we don't see Him with our physical eyes or hear Him with our physical ears, so how do we behold Him?

How do we watch and listen to Him? Through His word, the Bible, through reading about Jesus and watching what He does in those stories. In vividly seeing those pictures in our minds and in our hearts, feeling those emotions, and putting ourselves in that place. And then by listening for what God is saying to us through His word, not only through the Bible but through anointed preachers, teachers and pastors. Through our time in meditation

and prayer we can actually hear His voice. These are the practical ways we do this.

It's so difficult for us to stop or slow down and do the one thing. My recommendation is that you make it the first thing you do when you wake up. This is what I do. When I wake up every morning the first thing I do is pray and thank God for another day, welcome His presence into my heart, into my mind and welcome the Holy Spirit. Benny Hen wrote a book called *Good Morning Holy Spirit*, because that's how he woke up, saying good morning Holy Spirit.

Then I read my Bible, I read about the Lord and what He's done and what He's doing. I listen for His voice and journal about it. I meditate and listen to worship music. I physically worship and I may even dance. You can do this as well and you don't have to have a chapel or candles, you can do it in whatever time you have available, but make this the one thing you do. Make it your first thing and then make it a thing you do during the day.

Ask yourself or ask the Lord, what are you doing right now? Where's Jesus in this situation? What's He thinking right now? How's He moving in this meeting, this traffic jam? Put yourself at the feet of Jesus. Be obsessed with Him and you'll find His grace overflowing in your life, practically. You won't have to worry about many things and things will be taken care of for you.

When Peter was in the midst of the storm at sea and He was looking at Jesus and focused only on Him, he walked right across the water. It's when He started looking at the storm that he sank beneath the waves and the Lord reached down, pulled him up and rescued him.

So we can choose to focus on the one thing, to focus on the Lord, to take comfort in and rest in His finished work and remember the Bible says that as Jesus is now in Heaven, so are we in this world. There's something for you to contemplate and think about as we close today's Faith Friday.

There's the one thing. Jesus is the one thing that such, that by focusing on Him and being in His presence, everything else in your life becomes easier or perhaps even unnecessary.

I'd love to hear what you think, so go to the show notes and leave your comments - RayEdwards.com/213.

We'll be back with the business edition of the Ray Edwards Show on Monday.

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Until then, I pray that God will bless you and will keep doing things for you that are bigger, better, more magical and wonderful than you can think, ask or even possibly imagine. Peace to your house.

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