

From the August 4, 2010 Issue

Let's Be Distracted by Jesus and the Trinity!

When was the last time you were so distracted by Jesus, the Pearl of Great Price, that you “sold everything you had” to be with Him, even as He is already with and in you (Col 1:27)? When were you so distracted by Jesus recently that you missed out on work, or overtime at work? Missed supper? Missed TV? Gave your family inheritance to the body of Christ (John 12:1-8)?

For some of you, when was the last time your heart burned for relating with the Trinity like it burned in fellowship with others about the Kingdom, the “Place of Safety,” or the “Wonderful World Tomorrow”? Burned with delight for Jesus like it used to burn with delight about the Sabbath...the Holy Days...the Beast of Revelation... the European Union?

When is the last time you stood up to your boss to defend your time off to spend with Jesus and His Body on a Sunday (which is still your right and privilege under the laws of the United States, if you live there)? And NOT because it was required as church law or legalism, but because it was required by you in your Union and Adoption with Christ AND the fact that you WANTED to be with Him and His Body on earth (because you have learned by relating with Him that you just can't or won't do anything apart from Him and other like minded believers!)?

My point is not that I, you, or we should return to former ways or feelings as we experienced them in the past, or to try to drum up this zeal—because, honestly, we can't! My point is to help us question our obvious lack of passion for the Person of Jesus Christ and the Trinity in His Church as contrasted with our desires for other things! I want to help us question how we can know about our union and adoption with God in Christ (the Pearl!) and still be barely breathin', still missing something (Someone?)!

This lack of passion is not something that I am making up. It is what I experience, through constant conversation and observation as I relate regularly with the Body of Christ, especially other pastors. Everyone in the Church that I know and speak with regularly seems to be noticing a malaise in the Church combined with a lack of vitality and life that we know, tacitly, should be seen and experienced in the Church. The one thing I DO notice in these conversations is that despite the fact that Eternal Life is what we are promised and rewarded with in our Adoption, and even though Eternal Life is primarily relational (John 17:3), many of us keep searching for some thing, or some purpose to do, rather than some Persons to relate with.

Through the witness of the Spirit in scripture we can see that unusual and radical things tend to accompany Personal Fellowship with Jesus or at the sight of Jesus Himself! Below is one of many examples I think we ought to consider at a time like this, considering that the Adopted Life is primarily about relating with the Trinity and Humanity (Luke 10:27) even more so than understanding and explaining doctrine (John 9:39-40), or even finding more programs and principles to apply. Consider Luke 10:38-42:

38 Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. 39 She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. 40 But

Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; 42 there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Hmmmmmmmm.....

MARTHA	MARY
LUKE 10:38-42	LUKE 10:38-42
Martha was SERVING	Mary was SITTING
Martha was WORRYING	Mary was WORSHIPPING
Martha was HURRYING	Mary was HEARING
Martha was busy with the WORK	Mary was attentive to the WORD
Martha was troubled about many things	Mary was concerned about one thing
Martha was trying to UNDERTAKE	Mary was trying to UNDERSTAND
Martha was OVER-OCCUPIED	Mary was OCCUPIED WITH CHRIST
Martha was LABORING	Mary was LEARNING and LOVING
Martha was ENERGETIC	Mary was ENJOYING the Lord
Martha was BUSY and BOTHERED	Mary was BLESSED

(Source: Middletown Bible Church in Middletown, CT.)

I don't know about you, but even though I KNOW and believe that both of these ladies are Adopted, Included and doing in the service of Jesus, Mary's distraction with Jesus sounds more like the kind of renewal I think the Church is REALLY looking for. I KNOW it's what I am looking for!

As a pastor friend of mine said recently:

Isn't it interesting that the times we feel most refreshed and energized in the Lord is when we are spending time with him on a sabbatical rest or retreat where we are not busy except with the Lord in prayer? And when we look back on it, it was the negative consequences of other distractions that finally drove us there to the quiet times for renewal?

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I told him I thought he was preaching Gospel, literally the Person of Jesus Himself!

I personally think that the Church is really looking to be more involved with the Trinity! Not just talking about Jesus and the Trinity, or having Jesus and the Trinity in our Mission Statements, or doing something for Jesus and the Trinity, but actually spending MUCH time relating with Jesus and the Trinity and especially together as the Church in prayer. Hey, if we can't pray together, what in the world CAN we do together!? When we proclaim to people that relating more with Jesus is what you are looking for, and that actual fellowship with the Trinity is the Reward you are desiring, they are like "What?! Are you kidding me? I want to know what Jesus wants me to do! I want to know what thing/s He is going to give me! I want something more than Christianity 101, I want the deeper things!"

And the Truth is, there is no deeper thing than Jesus! There is no greater reward than the Trinity Himself! There is no greater thing to do than to embrace, speak to and relate with Jesus, the Pearl, and His Father in the Communion of the Spirit. Our overlooking and rejection of that "simple" and "basic" truth is only an admission of how far off-track we have gotten from the Gospel—God the Father, Son and Spirit Himself, and where we really need to go to work in the grace of the Trinity!

We've tried every other kind of distraction and what has that led to but MORE weary tiredness and lack of vitality? Why not try being distracted by JESUS and see what happens? Maybe the real work we need to engage in as a Church is the kind that looks radically different and "lazy" to the untrained eye. The kind of work Mary got engaged in by being fascinated and distracted by Jesus, the Person Himself.

~ Tim Brassell