ESSAY · JUNE 3, 2016

How Jesus Dealt With Distractions

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Because I work from home, I continually deal with distractions. Unread e-mails, sports scores to check, news to read, phone calls to answer, phone calls to make, my wife asking for help, the dog wanting to go out, the dog wanting to come in, the dog wanting to eat, the dog wanting to play ball, the doorbell ringing, mail to sort. The list goes on and on.

They Don't Slip Away

When I have a rapidly approaching deadline and the work is piling up, do the distractions stop? Do they peek in my office, see me hard at work, and slip away as quietly as sunset? No way. It's my responsibility to tune them out and focus on my work. When I do, I'm better able to fulfill my mission.

One Crisis to Another

Imagine what Jesus' life would have looked like if he had allowed himself to get distracted by every religious debate, disappointed follower, unhappy family member, and misunderstanding. He would have spent all his time running from one crisis to another.

Martha and Mary

Jesus never allowed distractions to divert him. One day, he visited two sisters, Martha and Mary. After Jesus arrived at their home, Martha continued to hustle around the kitchen, preparing a meal fit for a king. Meanwhile, Mary sat on the living room floor, listening to Jesus.

Angered that Mary wasn't helping, Martha confronted Jesus, "Don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" (Luke 10:40).

The Gall

I find it amusing that Martha had the gall to rebuke Jesus and tell him what to do. Instead of ordering Mary to help her sister, though, Jesus said something we all need to hear: "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" (Luke 10:41-42).

In that home with those two women, Jesus modeled how to avoid distractions. While praising Mary for enjoying his presence instead of less important matters, he also resisted Martha's attempt to pull him away from what he considered more important.