

March 2025 Marriage Conference 2 of 3

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[0 : 00] Well, what a blessing that first session was. You know, we live in a world that doesn't even know what marriage is anymore. They don't even have a clue.

And they haven't for a long time. And unfortunately, we are inundated so heavily by lies that the truth, we don't realize how watered down the truth gets at times.

We don't really understand what it's done to us until, thankfully, we have God's word that continually holds up that mirror. And we look into it and go, whoa, man, I didn't realize that. Even as Nick was talking about, you know, quote, unquote, taboo topics within marriage.

But they're the very essence and substance of what God has created us out of. I mean, that's who we are. That's what our relationships are. But we act like somehow they're deficient because it's what the world has told us.

So I think the heart of just us being here today, you know, part of me was like, man, it's like asking people to come to church before church tomorrow. But you read in scriptures that said that they were daily with one another in the temple courts.

[1 : 14] They were daily. And it's not about getting our cred up like, all right, you know, I don't have to go to church tomorrow. Listen, all of you come here. You better. You know, it's like we already did this.

So but I think it's it's valuing the things that are eternal, valuing eternal things. We have we live with eternal things in our marriage. We live with something precious and eternal.

And I love what he said about the idea of Ruth had put herself under the wing of her God. Am I willing to look at her that way? It's like, wow, that's pretty cool.

I hope my wife looks at me that way, too. So what am I going to? Five o'clock dinner. Cool. Well, Father, thank you so much, Lord. Thank you for your word that anchors us, Lord, in the truth.

It is the truth. But Jesus, you are the word made flesh who dwelt among us. You are the way, the truth and the life. We don't have to go looking for it, Lord. We don't have to wonder about it.

[2 : 08] You've placed it in our laps, Lord. I thank you that we can gather together, Lord. Again, not to be more holy or anything, Lord. But, Lord, what we want is you and what we need is you and what we really want in our marriages and our homes and our families, Lord, and all our relationships is just you working through them and in them.

So I pray that you'd speak to us through your word. Thank you, Lord, for just a great start, Lord. We know that you are doing eternal work in our heart. We thank you for that. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. So my topic, what I'm going to be looking at kind of is this idea of intent.

So you can call it with intent if you want to. You know, the world says that relationships are something you fall into.

You fall in love, you know. Sounds great. I mean, I fell in love. There's a song, and I really like this song. I think it's a cool song, you know, that has the lines for, I can't help falling in love with you.

Great song, you know. Hey, Lily, play that song for me. Or Kitty, well, play a song. Oh, great song. It's a lot better than just listening to Elvis play. And I understand what he's trying to say, right?

[3 : 19] It's like, oh, I love you so much. Like, I just can't help myself. I just can't help falling in love with you. But it sounds like something you tripped over, right? You know, it's like, man, my life, I was going along, and then I was just like, I fell in love.

Now that's true. I've seen that happen with some people, where it's like they just kind of wake up to the fact that, like, hey, this exists, and I didn't realize that. But if you can so easily fall in love, you can just as easily fall out of it, right?

Well, man, how do you? It's like trying to balance something. I mean, oh, I'm in love, and I'm out of love. The Bible doesn't talk very favorably about falling. It actually looks pretty down on falling.

It says that we fell, man fell in the garden, that we fall into sin. Proverbs 24, 16 says, a just man falls seven times, not in love, and rises up again.

But the wicked shall fall into mischief. They don't rise again. They fall. The Bible seems to indicate that falling isn't the best thing for us. So maybe we don't fall in love.

[4 : 30] Maybe instead we progress in love one decision at a time. As Paul says in Ephesians 5, 2, We are to walk in love.

We're to progress in love. How? Well, as Christ loved us. It's sacrificial. It's kind of like Nick was talking about. That idea of in humility and honor progressing in this thing called love.

A sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. So maybe that song lyric, for I can't help falling in love with you, maybe we can help falling in love.

Because love needs a lot of help. Maybe we do need to help our being in love. So if I can change that lyric, maybe it's for I can help walking in love with you.

And I need to do a lot of help. I need a lot of help. I need God's help to walk in this thing called love. Jesus seems to be someone who is very intentional in his relationships.

[5 : 33] Doesn't seem to just haphazardly have happened into them or fallen into them. Thank the Lord. He was very intentional in his relationships. We are told that Jesus, I can find the scripture.

I just lost it. There we go. In Luke 9 51, it says, And it came to pass when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go up to Jerusalem.

Well, this seems like a good idea. This seems like the good way to turn. No, he steadfastly was very intentional in that. All relationship is intentional.

Love is a very intentional act of choosing someone else, as Nick said, above myself. It's an intentional choice. It's not something I'm just going to like, we've been married a long time.

I'm sure it'll happen. You know, I'm sure that's just by going to church. And, you know, my wife and I both sleep with Bibles next to our bed. I'm sure something's going to happen. It's very intentional.

[6 : 34] Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11 2, he says, I'm jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I've espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

He's saying, look, Corinthians, don't look for anything else outside of this. There's only one place you're going to find this. In the same way that you have one marriage partner, it means you only have one Jesus. Okay?

But he's likening that relationship. And we know that's true. We are the what of Christ. The church is the bride of Christ. Right? We're the bride. Guys get used to being brides. Ladies get used to being sons.

You are the sons of God. You know, that's who we are positionally. Right? And that's the relationship and how we look at it. Jesus was very intentional in his love for us. In Philippians 2, he says, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation intentionally.

Excuse me, intentionally. Took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[7 : 42] Jesus is an example of a relationship lived with intent. Right? How many years was Jesus on this earth? 30-ish something, 30, 33, right?

How much of that time was spent in ministry? Three years, right? But what did he do that entire time in his ministry? It was all about what?

Relationship. He was very intentional in relationships. Jesus lived his life with intent. Ephesians 5, 31 says, for this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh.

In God's eyes, in God's economy, a new creature. Something brand new that now exists as one. And he says, this is a great mystery. In Ephesians 5, 32. But I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Oh, so the mystery of two becoming one, that mystery that happens in a marriage relationship, that's to reflect the fact that Jesus now has brought us into a relationship and made us one.

[8 : 46] Jesus spent three years intentionally being about relationship. Never once do we read where he said, all right, guys, this has been good. We've had a week of this. I gotta get home and do some work. I gotta get back to work.

You know what? We need to make this delivery from here to there. You know what? I hear this is taking place. Let's go and be part of that event. I really wanted to see that person in concert. Let's go and do that.

Anything wrong with those things? No. But Jesus' entire world that we are privy to was an intentional world of relationship. Jesus was intentional with his time, with his direction, and his location, wasn't he?

Let's turn over to Luke chapter 10. This is where we're gonna anchor ourselves. We're gonna pick up down in verse 38. We're gonna do all of five verses.

There's a lot in these verses. Jesus is about his ministry with the 12. He's just sent out the 70, and they've returned with joy because the devils are subject unto them through his name.

[9 : 57] He's interacted with the Pharisees. He's interacted with this lawyer. And he tells the parable of the Good Samaritan. And he tells the parable of the Good Samaritan.

And after that, he continues on his journey. And we pick up in verse 38 of Luke chapter 10. And it says, Now it came to pass as they went. Well, who's they?

It was probably Jesus and his 12 apostles, right? As they went, that he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. Now we just saw how Jesus, Paul likens Jesus as to that husband he's espoused us to.

So we're going to look at that, knowing that we also have the marriage relationship, which is a picture of Christ in the church. That's what we're going to look at, that picture. So that means, if my marriage is to reflect my relationship with Jesus and the church, right?

That's what my marriage is supposed to look like. Well, then I can go to look and see how Jesus related to the church to find out what my marriage should look like. It doesn't work the other way around.

[11 : 01] Well, my relationship with my wife is exactly how Jesus treated the church. No, I go and I find, how did Jesus treat the church? What is that interaction? I'm not saying in any way, shape, or form as we go through this, that Mary and Martha are Jesus's wife.

Okay? We're just looking at this as an example, as an illustration of the relationship. That they are in the sense that they're the bride of Christ because they put their faith in him. And they, like us, become part of that relationship.

So Jesus enters in. He enters into the city and he enters with intent, with his time, direction, and his location. It wasn't like, hey, we ended up in Bethany. What a surprise. You know, he knew where he was going.

It was purposed to be in a certain place at a certain time. It's like, all right, it's time for me to be there and that's where I'm going to be. I'm not going to be somewhere else when I know that's where I needed to be.

And what does Martha do? Well, it says that Martha received him into her house. Well, who else lived with Martha? Martha and Lazarus, her brother. But this seems to be, it's her house.

[12 : 01] Is Martha the oldest? It seems to belong to her. She seems to be the one. This is her house. Martha received him into her house. Martha received Jesus what? As an honored guest.

Jesus, it was an honor to receive Jesus in. Oh, Jesus is coming to my house. Martha was intentional. As Jesus was intentional about his time, direction, and location. Martha's intentional about receiving Jesus into her space, her place, and her time.

Jesus is entering in. She's receiving him into her place. This is Martha's place. It's Martha's space and it's Martha's time. I don't think they texted back then, right?

Don't think they had Twitter either. Send this dove to, right? I don't think she knew he was coming. It's kind of, Martha, Jesus' disciples just entered the village of Bethany.

They're headed this way. You know, she was very intentional in receiving him. Jesus was willing to enter into a space that was open to him, right? What do you see Jesus not doing? Not kicking down the door.

[13 : 07] Now say, Martha, I'm coming, whether you like it or not. We know that Jesus responds to invitation. Revelation 3.20, we read, Behold, I stand at the door and knock.

If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him. He with me. And kick down the door. Say, I'm coming in. Honey, I'm home. Right?

So Jesus is initiating here in his entering in, and Martha is responding to that. We're going to see later as Martha initiates in Jesus' response. But the reality is, all relationship of any type or form,

whether marriage or parent, child, all relationship is initiation and response. Someone in the relationship has to initiate, and someone in the relationship has to respond. If nobody initiates and no one responds, you know what that is? Strangers. Not a relationship. If there's no initiation and no response, in your marriage and in your home, you know what you are? Strangers. Living together.

[14 : 18] All relationship is initiation and response. In the marriage relationship, each spouse bears responsibility to initiate and respond within their roles. I have a responsibility for the role I'm in to initiate and to respond correctly according to that role.

Now, what might that look like? Let's say initiating, responding outside my role. Where's my wife's role? Where's her domain?

And all of yours may be a little different, but as Paul says to Timothy, hey, teach the women that they should guide the house and bring up the children. The responsibility primarily that falls on my wife is the boarding of the house.

If I'm to push into that and say, hey, I'm going to initiate in your role and say, honey, I wouldn't do the laundry like that.

I don't like the way that you organize your grocery shopping. I know. First of all, that'd be really weird because you know, it's not, but that would be initiating outside my role.

[15 : 21] Right? Initiating within my role is to say, hey, honey, how can I bless you and help you within your role? And then her response to that.

Her initiating within my role? Right? Well, you know, you know what, babe? I don't think that's really the direction the Lord wants our home to go. I know, I know you're thinking that God's calling you to move and to change jobs.

I don't think so. And I don't want you to do that. Well, I mean, I want to, I want you to be happy. I don't want to, right? And you can see the friction that can happen when you initiate outside your role.

And then we have to respond. We have to respond in relationship. And man, we know what it's like not to respond well, is it? I know what it is to respond very poorly within my role and to respond poorly when she in love is trying to assist me in my role.

So Jesus comes into Martha's space. And here's some characteristics of Jesus entering to Martha's space as we observe this text. Jesus entered into Martha's space by responding by responding to openness.

[16 : 26] Martha was open. She wasn't putting up barriers. He didn't push in. He didn't force. He entered into her world. Wasn't just, hey, I'm here. You know, I'm here.

I'm home. But he entered into her world. He knew when he was wanted. He stood at the door and knocked, right? He knew when he was wanted. Martha didn't say, Jesus did.

It's not, it's not happening. Go find someone else's house. And he honored Martha's time in generosity by entering in to where she received him.

And then responded to welcome. So, well, how's that different than responding to openness? Well, Jesus could have entered into a situation that, where there was openness. But beyond that, that next step, that love that pushes us into an expression of what?

Kindness. You know, the scripture says that we will enjoy the riches of Christ's kindness for eternity. It doesn't even say the riches of his love. It says the riches of his kindness.

[17 : 27] What is kindness? It's just expression, the outworking of love. Everything Nick was talking about. So Jesus enters into this space. He doesn't push his way in. He's not demanding. He's entering into someplace he knows he's welcome.

Well, Martha had to do what? Well, she had to be willing to receive him. She had to allow for interruptions. This was not on her schedule. This was not her plan. This was not how her day was going to go. You know, we had this joke that because of, you know, where I work, I'm out in the field a lot on different construction sites for quality and control and stuff.

And if it rains, you know, Aaron and I joke because his business stays afloat by rain. Works on cars that have leaks as a water doctor. Mine gets shut down because of rain.

And sometimes like, boom, I'm home in the middle of the day. And that, it totally interrupts the flow of the house, the homeschooling and everything that's happening. And it's not like, I'm not welcome there, but recognizing, hey, I'm now entering into your world.

I'm in your space. Martha had to have her schedule changed. She had to be open for a visit. She had to be intentional in her openness. She's like, yeah, yeah, Jesus, find some place to be over there.

[18:41] She had to use her space and her place for the comfort of another, even if it meant her discomfort, even if it meant she was no longer comfortable. She's going to, hey, I'm going to, I'm going to make you comfortable.

I want you in this space. You know, I wasn't looking for this right now, but hey, I'm going to, I'm going to welcome this and I'm going to be open to this. Verse 39, and she had a sister called Mary. It's funny, Martha and Mary both are the same, like name. They're both derivatives of Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. Now there's a word in there, that word also.

So, okay, well Mary also sat, oh, so maybe Martha sat at his feet too. Well, no, as we keep reading, we're going to find out Martha was on her feet. She wasn't sitting at anyone's feet. So the indication here is Mary was also helping Martha prepare for Jesus and get everything ready.

Mary also was doing that, but now she's sitting at Jesus' feet. What does that mean? I mean, like, are we going to go into some weird thing here about like wives, you know, during the next break, sit at your husband's feet and, you know, and show them honor?

[19:49] Well, if you remember in the Roman culture, they would eat, not like we do, sitting at a table, like in chairs like this. There's what's called a triclinium. It would look like a big U and it'd be a table that would then have benches coming out from it or couches and you would lay, well, you'd lean on your left side if you're, well, some of you are left-handed so that'd be kind of, you'd have to read on your right side.

I guess we'd face each other then. But you'd lean on your left side, the table would be out here and you'd be eating, right? And so your feet are kind of kicked out behind you. So I think the idea here is Mary has come in, Jesus is here speaking with Lazarus, the apostles, and whoever else and here comes Mary to sit at his feet.

Or it could be they're just sitting around and talking and Mary comes to listen. Or it could be that Mary straight up is just sitting as Jesus is talking to her. Either way, she has stopped what she was doing to come and spend time with Jesus.

Well, that's a little weird. I mean, like, Jesus, you just let her sit at your feet? The culture is different than it is now, but the principle is the same, that God's order is God's means of grace in our life, right?

When God brings his order, it also brings grace into our life. For Mary, as she sat at Jesus' feet, she got to be in Jesus' presence and she heard Jesus' word. You know, we talked about having different roles.

[21:06] The role we play does not in any way diminish who we are. Well, Mary's sitting at Jesus' feet. Would you want to sit at Jesus' feet? I would. I would. Hey, we're going to have dinner in a little bit.

Five o'clock, if Jared doesn't go too long, we're going to go have dinner and Jesus is going to sit in one of those seats and if you put your raffle in, you could sit at his feet. Would anyone want to take a raffle?

I would. Man, I'd want to. I want to sit at Jesus' feet. I don't want to do that. Are you crazy? Could you imagine being able to tell your kids and grandkids and your friends that I sat at the master's feet?

I was there. I heard him say this and I saw him look like that. I was there. I was there. Jesus took on a different role but it didn't diminish who he was.

Mark 10 45, for even the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and give his life a ransom for many. Did it diminish who he was because he took on this role?

[22:03] This role of subservient, this role of serving, this role of humility, the role of, as Nick said, submitting ourselves one to another? Well, Hebrews tells us that Jesus, he submitted himself, he came a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death but then he was what?

Well, he was crowned with glory and honor that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man. When we walk in God's order, it automatically elevates who we are.

Mary sat at Jesus' feet and now for all of time and eternity, she has those wonderful words written, Mary also sat at Jesus' feet. The role we play does not diminish who we are as men and women with two different roles.

You know, in the garden, when Adam sinned and the Lord came and pronounced the curse on them, he didn't pronounce a curse. He just defined the curse that was already there. Adam brought a curse upon himself and God came and he did what?

He spoke his word into the situation and as God spoke his word and then he spoke redemption and salvation that would come through that curse. The curse put boundaries, God's word, I'm sorry, put boundaries on the curse.

[23 : 12] God's word protected Adam and Eve by giving them roles. He said, hey, I can't just leave you guys. Oh, you'll tear each other apart. Oh my word. Adam, this is what you're going to do.

Eve, this is what you're going to do. I don't want to do that. Okay, tear each other apart. Knock yourself out. Walking in God's order will always elevate who we are because his roles never diminish.

The world says, oh, just like the falling in love thing. Oh, fall in love. Fall in sin, walk in love. Right? Jesus here in this situation in his role as we're looking at him as an example of the husband and this goes back and forth either way in relationships.

We are going to specifically look at him right now as the husband in that example. Jesus was a busy man, very busy man. He had an eternal purpose and he had only so much time to accomplish it, didn't he?

I got, I got stuff to do and I'm not just doing this for myself. It's not because my wife can tell you it's not so we can be filthy rich. Filthy sometimes, not rich.

[24 : 19] He was willing to use his precious time to invest in relationship. It was, he had a work to do, he had a purpose to accomplish, it was a valuable thing but he chose to invest that precious time in relationship right now.

You say, man, but there's only some, yeah, but Jesus took three years to do that, remember? I've only got so much time in the evening. By the time I get home, you know, it's just all I can do to get in the door and my weekends, I mean, we gotta go to, I mean, we get to go to church on Sunday, sorry.

We gotta go to church on Sunday so it only gives me Saturday, I mean, I don't know if I have time for that and you don't understand that I love my wife but sometimes she just wants to talk and she doesn't want me to talk and I have to listen.

Second Corinthians 9, 8 says, and God is able to make all grace abound towards you that you always having all sufficiency and all things may abound to every good or you could put every valuable, eternal, precious, purposeful work, God will give you that.

As Jesus enters in, he had the, believe me, he had the busiest schedule of all of us and he prioritized relationship. Jesus was intentional to be there and he also was there, right?

[25 : 45] I don't know what she's talking about. I come home every night and we're together. She's on her phone and I'm on mine. It's great. And then we watch something on TV and then we go to bed in the same bed in the same room in the same house.

I mean, I am there. Jesus was intentional to be there when he was there. When Jesus was there, man, he was there. Jesus was intentional to be present.

He was there. He entered into her world but then he was also engaged with what was happening in her world. He was conversant, guys. He was conversant. Conversant isn't listen and go, hmm, hmm, hmm.

He was conversant. It also doesn't mean my fault. Dominate the conversation. Talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, you know, honey? Talk, talk, talk, talk, talk, you know, honey? Conversant.

And he was still. He's sitting there. She's at his feet, right? And he's very focused at this time. Jesus was intentional in his role to do what?

[26 : 49] To speak life into that relationship. What is Mary doing? She's sitting at his feet. She's hearing him speak life into the relationship. Husbands, God has given us, guys, the role to speak into the relationship.

Who spoke into Adam and Eve's relationship in the garden? Did Adam? No, the serpent did because Adam wasn't. It is our role to speak life-building words, words that are worthy of being received.

She wanted these. She wanted to hear from him. And it's our responsibility to speak into the relationship the words of Jesus. John 6, 63 says, it is the spirit that quickens.

The flesh profits just a little bit. Nothing. The flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. Well, that's relationship.

That's communication. It's not just cohabitation. It's not just living as strangers. You see, Martha and Mary, both of them considered Jesus a man whose presence and whose words were worth receiving.

[27 : 54] They wanted to receive them. Martha's like, yeah, please, I will stop. Yes, come into the house. I'm gonna, yes, Jesus, I'll make you a meal. Please come in. His presence and his words were worth receiving.

The man's presence in the home should be intentional. There should be, there should be an intent there. I want to be here and I am here.

I am present here in your world, Martha. Wife, I am here. I should also be welcome, right? Behold, I stand at the door and oh, I'll go, I'll go somewhere else.

It got slammed in my face, right? He needs to be welcome. Why was Jesus welcome? Man, because they, they respected his presence. They respected his word.

They respected who he was. A man's presence in the home should be Christ-like. We don't have any other words to speak into the family, into our wives, into the relationship if it's not Jesus' words.

[28 : 58] I mean, well, honey, I read this thing today on the fridge at work and it said, what do we have apart from the words of Christ? Apart from God's word.

We are not Jesus, husbands. As we, if you're sitting there now, man, this is great, but that's Jesus. Jesus in the home does that. I'm not Jesus. I'll just be Lazarus and sit there and listen. You know, I'll just pay the bills so Jesus can be in the home.

I'll be one of the other disciples. We're not Jesus. But the more time we spend at Jesus' feet, the more time we spend with Jesus, it's a lot easier to speak and act like him.

the more that we're with him. What are our wives, what do they have to receive from us? What am I giving into this relationship in my role and that responsibility to initiate and to respond?

If I'm not spending time at Jesus' feet and in Jesus' presence, if I'm not welcoming him into my heart and my relationship with him, I'm probably not going to be able then to do that in the marriage as well.

[30 : 03] And then what's going to happen? Well, I'm not going to be very intentional because I'm not going to have anything I can give. Right? What can I be intentional about? Hey, honey, let's go play pickleball. You know? Okay, that's fun, but it ends and then you're in the car together.

Good game. It's like, hey, what about the heart? What about, man, I don't got anything to say to that because I haven't spent enough time with Jesus.

Wives, Mary here recognized that her place, she recognized her place in the relationship and she considered it a joy. She considered it a joy to have this place in her relationship with Jesus.

She wanted to be there. I want to be at a place where I can receive from Jesus. I can hear Jesus. I can honor Jesus and I can be a part of what Jesus is doing.

What did Jesus not say? Mary, Mary, talk with the guys, Mary. Later. You know, we'll talk with it. No, she was a part of that. She was there. Was she pushing into his role and dominating that?

[31 : 12] No, not at all. Not at all. It's a beautiful picture. Mary saw in Jesus more than just a man. Didn't she? Well, yeah, he was God.

Yes, he was. But she saw him as a man placed in her life by God. She recognized this man has been placed in my life by God. This man specifically.

We have a unique situation within our marriages that is found nowhere else in the world. Nowhere else. Can you say, this person was placed in my life specifically by God to complete me, to make me one.

God took that oneness and he fractured it with Eve. He took it out of Adam. He took Eve out. He said, this is no longer one. When you come back together, Jesus says, a man shall leave his father and mother and the two shall be one.

He said, there's oneness now. There is wholeness. How can you not respect that? How can you not honor that? How can you not love that? Either part of their relationship. Mary saw Jesus as a man placed in her life by God and she was very intentional in her relationship with him.

[32 : 21] Mary was intentional to do what? To be where Jesus was. Wives, to be where your husband's at. Are you where he's at or are you all about where you're at? Man, especially if he's willing to enter in.

There's not a lot of people who do come home every night. I work with them. They stay at the office and they do after office stuff which seems really lame.

They drink alcohol and paint paintings. And all I can think is, what's that painting look like by the time you're done? And then the next morning you're like, whoa, it's supposed to be a lighthouse. They do all kinds of activities apart from their homes. They send their kids out. Summer vacation comes and they are in rec programs as quick as they can get them out of their hair. She was where Jesus was.

Mary was intentional to receive from Jesus. She was willing to hear what Jesus had to say. Like, you know what? I'm not dealing with that right now. You know what my days have been like? Martha has been on me all day.

[33 : 26] She was willing to listen to Jesus. She was very intentional to treat Jesus with honor. And she left everything else for that moment. For that moment when a relationship happens. You know, there's moments in our lives where God begins to work and he works more strongly than at other times.

There's times where like growth is happening exponential and you know it. I remember when we did youth ministry. I would tell the youth all the time. Man, when God is working in your life, run with that. Work with him.

Grow. It was like, boy, every time I open my Bible, it's like he's speaking to me and it's so fruitful. But then open your Bible a lot. Then I'd be like, man, that one time this week was so good. No.

Grow. Grow. She was willing to leave everything for that moment. And when God gives us those moments, when he gives us these moments, leave everything else. Leave it. You know what?

I don't, I can't fix that. And I don't know, I don't know how to take care of the Marthas in my life. I don't know, but I know that you and I are here right now and I'm going to be very intentional about being here with you. Mary had prioritized Jesus' words, Jesus' presence, Jesus' time, and Jesus' relationship.

[34 : 32] Are we willing in our marriages to prioritize each other's words, our presence, time, and relationship? Wives, your husbands will never be Jesus.

Anybody realize that yet? And they say dumb things sometimes. Very well-meaning sometimes. Very well-meaning. Sometimes they don't mean anything.

They just don't know what to do, so they say something dumb. But if you honor them as you would Jesus, it'll be that much easier to see and hear them, or see and hear Jesus through them.

If you choose to honor your husbands as you would Jesus, it'll be so much easier to hear and to see Jesus through your husbands. But if your husband has to be Jesus, you're never going to be able to honor him.

And you're never going to be able to see him in a way that you can receive from him. If you have a standard, if you have an expectation of what he needs to be, instead of like what Nick was saying.

[35 : 38] Man, and I'm not just, because I'm the husband, I'm not like trying to be like, hey, it's just husbands. Well, good. But it is in our culture right now to destroy, undermine, and reject God's order of men and women.

You cannot be a strong, God-fearing, respectable, honorable man in this culture anymore. You'll be looked down upon and despised. You cannot be a strong voice for Jesus in your home.

You cannot give strong direction and love for your wife and your children. You'll be despised and you'll be looked down upon. And your wife will be told, rise up against that. Don't do that. But don't do what?

Don't let Boaz love you, redeem you, rescue you, care for you, and feed you. Do that yourself. Husbands, we will never be Jesus.

And our wives, and wives, we will never be Jesus for you. But we have the amazing opportunities we spend time with Jesus and we sit at his feet. Then we can give those words and speak into our marriages the words of Jesus.

[36 : 48] Wives, you can honor your husbands in a way that allows Jesus to be seen and heard in your home. But, in verse 40, Martha was cumbered about, much serving, and came to him and said, Lord, do you not care that my sisters left me to serve alone?

Bid her, therefore, she help me. Surely Jesus will let Mary know where her place is in this relationship. Jesus, you need to tell this woman what her place is in this relationship.

Because she's not listening to me. Put her in her place. Martha expected Jesus to view relationship as she did. Of course Jesus is going to view this relationship as I do. Cumbered there means to be, she was cumbered about much serving, means to be drawn away or distracted.

The thing that she was about, it drew her away. You know, interestingly, nothing Martha was doing was wrong. She didn't do anything wrong. She was serving. Wrong with that.

Nothing she was doing was inappropriate. It was very appropriate. Jesus is there. His disciples are there. It wasn't unnecessary. It wasn't unhelpful. It wasn't unwelcomed. And it wasn't unvalued.

[37 : 53] It was a very valuable thing. Man, to make a space for Jesus, that's valuable. What was Martha doing? And Martha was serving Jesus. Martha was making a home for Jesus, preparing for Jesus, and facilitating relationship with Jesus.

Those are good things. Very good things. I love the good thing I got. I love having a place where I can serve Jesus.

I love there's a home made, prepared, and relationship is facilitated there. I love that. I love that. I don't want to take that for granted. Martha, there was nothing wrong with what Martha was doing here to make this possible.

Martha's problem was not that she served, or even that she validly had a lot to do. She had a lot to do. She's a busy woman. You can tell she's a go-getter. I mean, she's like, Lazarus, I'm going to run the home for you.

He's like, all right. The problem was that she prioritized all those valid things above relationship. They were all valid, but she said, that's the priority and not the relationship.

[39 : 02] She was intentional with her service to Jesus, but not with her time with Jesus. It's very easy if you're Martha to think, there'll be time.

There'll be time to hang out with Jesus. You know, I'm doing all this stuff. Yeah, he's still in there. I mean, there'll be time. We got plenty of time. In our marriages, they're not going anywhere.

Where are they going to go? We got lots of time to work on this. We'll figure that out. There's just so many valid things to do right now. So many things I need to prioritize right now. And they're eternal things.

And they're good things. And they have to do with Jesus. We'll take care of that. There'll be time later. There'll never be time to have relationship. If we want to have relationship, we must take time. We must be intentional about it. There is never time for relationship. And Satan in this world and everything that's very valid will keep you from your relationship. One with Jesus and then with the person he's giving you, your spouse.

[40 : 04] Martha was near Jesus. She was in his presence. She was around Jesus. I mean, she was literally in reach of Jesus. But was she present with Jesus? She wasn't.

She was not present to be part of that relationship. We can take for granted the presence of the one that we are privileged to dwell with.

I can take it for granted that this person, I am privileged to say, God, like Eve, you made me one. Like Adam, you brought this man into my life.

And we can take it for granted because they're not going anywhere. They're there every day. I'm with them every day. I see them. I hear them. I smell them. They're there.

Martha may have thought, well, Jesus isn't going anywhere anytime soon. There will always be an opportunity to spend time with him. When everything is finished, then I'll have time to be with Jesus.

[41 : 04] There'll be time when I get all of this done. There'll be time. You know, Jesus will say in Matthew 7, when the dead are standing before him, many will say to him in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not done a whole lot of valid things that needed to be done in your name?

They were good things. They were eternal. They weren't about the world. These were good, valid things that I needed to get done in my life and home. And then he will profess, I never knew you. We didn't have a relationship.

The whole point is to facilitate relationship. Martha's relationship with Jesus revolved around Jesus' ability to meet her needs. Jesus, you're in my home. Jesus, I'm doing all this for you.

What do you think I'm going to work for? What do you think? It's for you. Now meet my needs. Give and take relationship. I gave. Now let me take.

I gave. Martha's relationship with Jesus just revolved around, Jesus, how can you meet my needs? The problem in the relationship for Martha is never Martha.

[42 : 11] It's never about Martha. It's always someone else. It's always someone else. Do you not care that my sister has left me to do this, to do all this work? That word means to leave behind or to leave alone.

She's just, she's left me absolutely alone to do this by myself. But we will never feel more alone in our relationships than when we prioritize the wrong aspects of that relationship.

Martha's absolutely prioritizing the wrong aspect of this relationship. Am I all alone? Is she really alone? Who's in the house with her? She's got Jesus.

She's got Jesus' people. She's got his words. She's got Mary. They all love her. They're appreciative. But she was prioritizing the wrong aspect of the relationship. Martha was not serving for the sake of relationship.

Right? Why do we serve? Why do we, why do we do what we do for one another? Well, because I don't want to live alone. No. It's for the sake of the relationship.

[43 : 15] Martha was not serving except for personal fulfillment. It wasn't out of love. And Jesus answered and he said unto her, Martha, Martha.

And Jesus repeats that twice. You know, it's just such love. Martha, Martha. You are careful, anxious to promote one's self-interests. Martha, you are, you are so anxious of promoting your own interests and troubled.

You're so disquieted about many, many things because there are many valid, many valid and appropriate things in our life. Many valid and appropriate things that need our attention.

But what can they never replace? Relationship. They're never going to replace that. Both Martha and Mary were intentional in their relationship with Jesus, weren't they?

They both were very intentional in their relationship with Jesus. But Martha had lost sight for the reason for that relationship. She thought that relationship existed for her fulfillment.

[44 : 18] Well, this relationship exists so that I can get done what I need to, so I can prioritize and be intentional about these very valid things. You know, for those of us who have children, what do our children see?

Do they see someone who's anxious, promoting self-interest and disquieted? Do they see a relationship where that's all happening? But mom and dad are together. Mom and dad do valid things and serve the Lord and they're in church and if whatever we're doing is creating anxiety, trouble, or disquiet, or is bringing self-interest into our relationships, into our marriage relationship, that goes under the list of too many things.

You are troubled by many things. How do you know if it's a many thing? Well, is it bringing anxiety? Is it trouble? Is it disquieting? Is it bringing self-interest into your marriage relationship?

Good. Put it under that list of that is a too many thing. That's a Martha list. Is it valid? Sure. Does it need to get done? Mm-hmm. At the cost of relationship? No. Definitely not.

All other priorities and all other values pale in comparison to the one needful thing, which is what Jesus is going to tell us. But one thing is needful.

[45 : 38] Only one. Needful means something that cannot be done without. Only one thing cannot be done without. Only one. Guys, if you didn't get the grass cut tonight, if you didn't get the bushes trimmed, if you didn't get to watch your favorite whatever, are you going to be okay?

Is it a needful thing? Is it something that cannot be done without? Well, sometimes we act that way. No, I need to do this. Honey, I'm preparing a Bible study, so please fulfill all my needs right now so I can feel satisfied and comfortable as I prepare this day.

One needful thing. Ladies, there's many needful things in your life. Many valid things that must be done. Many. Martha's service and relationship with Jesus had become all about her needs being fulfilled.

Her needful thing. Jesus says, no, there's one thing needful and Mary has chosen that good part. It's hard to hear the truth sometime from someone we love whose presence is in our home speaking truth.

It's very hard. Very hard at times to hear someone say, hey, that wasn't a good choice. Here's the one needful thing. Can we get back to that? Now, do you think Jesus said this?

[46 : 51] Mary chose the one good part, Martha. You didn't. That was stupid. That was really dumb. No, we didn't say it like that. He said, Martha, there's only one thing needful.

There's an opportunity for you to choose that one needful thing. And it will not be taken away from her. Mary chose to be intentional in her choice to do what? She was present as Jesus was present.

She was still. She's at his feet. She's still. She's sitting there. It's not like, that was Martha, right? She's everywhere. And, honey, I, and, now we can, either, either one of us can do that, either party in the, in the relationship.

She was intentional to stop what she was doing and be together in that moment and to partake in true relationship. You know what true relationship is called in the Bible? Fellowship.

It's a true relationship. And that takes three people. You, another believer, and your pastor. Jesus. Jesus.

[47 : 52] Mary chose the one thing that could not be done without, the presence of Jesus, his person and his words. Jesus said, there's only one needful thing. Martha chose to be intentional in things that could be done without.

All of those things could be done without. Did they need to get done? Yes. Were they valid? Of course. Were they eternal, needful, and useful? Yes. They were wonderful things. But they could be done without.

But there's one thing that couldn't be. See, the one needful thing in our relationship with Jesus and with each other must be chosen.

We must be intentional about it. It's not going to happen, guys. It's not like, you know what, it's been kind of rocky lately. But I'm sure it'll just work out. I'm sure it'll just fall into it. We'll fall into love.

We'll fall into a solution. We'll somehow. The one needful thing is very good. It's very good. It may be very hard to stop and take part in that.

[48 : 50] It may be very hard to hear the truth spoken to us by someone we love in the presence of our own home. But the one, the amazing thing is it's something we can possess. Jesus said, it's not going to be taken away.

This is something you can hold on to. It's secure and it's lasting. It will not be taken away. The relationships we have with our spouse, you realize in heaven we will know as we are known.

My watch only says 430, so we got a little time left. In heaven we will know as we are known, right? What does that mean? Well that means no barrier in relationship.

As Nick said, there's one relationship, this side of eternity, this side of heaven that we get to experience that with. And that's our spouse. That's the marriage relationship where there are no boundaries and no barriers.

boundaries. We have something that's secure, eternal, and lasting that's going to go with us into eternity. Are we going to be married in heaven? No. We will know as we're known. But the fruit that will come from this one needful thing.

[49 : 50] Mary chose what was eternal, she chose what was personal, and what was possessible. Jesus says in John 15, 13, greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.

The one needful thing in a healthy marriage relationship is to be intentional about prioritizing and valuing what? The time, the words, and the presence of our spouse.

The one needful thing in our relationship with Jesus. Value the time, the words, and the presence of Jesus. Well, it's the same in our marriage relationship. The one needful thing is do I value their time, his time?

Do I value their words? Do I value their presence? Well, I mean, we're together. We don't ever talk. It's never about her time. It's only about my time, you know. Song of Solomon.

It's a marriage conference, so we can quote the Song of Solomon here. Draw me, we will run after you. The king has brought me into his chambers. It's a very intentional verse.

[50 : 57] Draw me, bring me, pull me, take me, draw me, bring me in, be intentional. We will run after you. I will intentionally go after. The king has brought me into his chambers.

Our marriages are meant to be lived with intent, to be very intentional about them. It doesn't happen by accident. Being here today, this evening, we are building into our relationship and into our marriage valuable, needful, eternal things.

Everything else can be left. It doesn't mean we leave the kids home and say, you know what, I hope nobody breaks in, I hope you don't starve. This is more needful. No. But you know what's very needful for our children?

The most needful thing for our children? Man, that mom and dad are hearing the words of Jesus and they're in the presence of Jesus and they're valuing the time to do that. And then together as well.

Marriage is a commitment. Marriage is a commitment. It is. It's absolutely a commitment. There are times where you don't feel very loving. There are times where the expression of love is difficult.

[52 : 07] Okay? It can be hard. I remember Nick and I when we were at the church in New York where he's still at there and we were both on the board there. And it was every third Monday you'd have a board meeting.

And there was times where it's like, oh, this is not a good Monday. the four little kids and, you know, and Sue was like, ah. And we had the freedom.

It was like, hey, if you need to stay home with your kids, that's great. I don't think there was one time where my wife said, I need you to be home. She's like, no, go. You know, I got this. Just go. It's okay.

Man, it's a commitment that can be hard, but it's a commitment made in love. Marriage takes work. It takes a lot of work. Intentional work. Intentionally.

We haven't had a heart-to-heart conversation in I don't know how long. I don't remember how to do this. Oh, man. Honey, intentionally push past that awkwardness. Who cares?

[53 : 01] The things which are seen are perishing. Things which are not seen are eternal. Don't worry about that. Right? Marriage is a work of love. It's a commitment made in love, and it's a work of love.

So for us, we need to be intentional about that one needful thing. To value the time, the words, and the presence of Jesus, and then in our marriages, to value the time, the words, and presence of this person that God has given us to be intentional in love with.

Right? Not going to happen by accident. We're not going to fall into it. You know, as we're going to go eat dinner, and it's not like, okay, well, I'm going to, we're going to take care of all this right now. It's just to build. It's to let God build the truths in our lives, the work that he does. And I love the scripture that talks about the sower that he goes out, and he's the farmer sows, and he knows now how it grows, and he does.

I don't know how it works, but I do know if I am intentional to be in the presence of Jesus, valuing his words, and his time, something happens, and my life has changed, and my marriage has changed, and my home has changed.

[54 : 11] And then if I take that and I can look at my wife and say, your time is important, you're valuable to me, I want to hear your words, and I'm going to enter into your world, and I'm going to be there, and I'm going to live there.

And you know what? There's times where there's other valuable things to do, but is it more valuable than right now, this relationship? It's the most valuable thing that we have. All those other things that Martha was doing weren't going to go with her into eternity.

Nick and I were talking earlier, I hope I don't steal your thunder, we were going to use this later, but of what our spouse is going to look like in eternity. And I don't mean look like, whoa, I mean, hey, it's a marriage, we're all right here.

Sorry, but I mean what they're going to look like glorified, sanctified, redeemed, new about everything, and it's like, wow.

And I was privileged to be part of that. I was privileged to help that become what it is. None of us are in that moment going to go, I wish I had spent more time doing other things than building into that.

[55 : 21] That is part of the fruit of our eternity. Father, thank you so much, Lord, for your word, Lord, your word is a lamp into our feet and a light into our path, Lord. It gives us everything we need for the next moment, the next step.

It does not, illuminate the entire journey. It's just the next step, along the path. A lamp into my feet, a light into my path. I don't know, Lord. I don't know how it's all going to play out, Lord.

But I know you've given me one that I can walk through life with and it'll play out with. Lord, you have given us this treasure, Lord, this beautiful thing called marriage, which you tell us specifically, pointedly, and exactly is to represent this beautiful mystery of our union with you.

That you would take us in, unworthy, unwilling, undesirable, that you would say, I'm going to pour out my love upon you. I'm going to draw you into relationship, and I'm going to transform your life through that.

And then that you would put two people together. We're not desirable. Lord, we don't have anything apart from you. How are we going to be able to make this work? You said, hey, I'm going to see you

as valuable.

[56 : 32] I'm going to see your time, your presence, your person, and your words is a valuable thing. I'm going to pour into you, and I want you to do that with this person. Lord, if our marriages are a wreck, I guarantee you, every other part of our life will eventually begin to crumble.

My relationships outside of my marriage, my relationship with my children, and it's not going to be through work or effort. Lord, it's just simply doing what? Going back to that place where I'm at your feet, Lord.

And I'm coming there, and we're coming together just to be at your feet. Lord, I pray that you bless this time now as we just fellowship and have dinner and be in our conversation, Lord.

Lord, as we converse with each other and with our spouses and talk to one another, Lord, just let your gifts be at work, Lord. Lord, as we speak forth truth that would minister to our hearts and lives. And in Jesus' name, amen.