

Sunday Morning Worship at Brentwood, July 17, 2016

Notes for the sermon on The Work of Listening

Ps 15 and Luke 10:38-42 – Sermon Text = Luke 10:39

She [Martha] had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.

[Hymns = 505, 461, 367]

Key ideas



1. In the midst of dutiful busyness, no matter how beneficial that work is, take time to listen to God in Christ through the work of the Spirit. That, too, is important work, especially in a world where so many voices are gripped with fear and clamouring for divisive actions.
2. Know that God takes the initiative in listening to us, with faith and hope in our possibilities for being blessings and love for us in that mission
3. Our listening is a response to God's work of creating, loving, judging and saving, enabled by the Spirit for the sake of the world

So much of the energy and dynamics of the Gospel are captured in these 5 verses – the power of Christ's presence, energized by the Holy Spirit (drawing Mary to listen intently) – the ways that presence changes traditional dynamics of relationships and responsibilities (a woman neglecting her traditional duties to listen to God) – the promised impact of this kind of radical listening (a better way that will reshape the way we see things and live as a blessing)

Where do we find the space for the work of listening, for paying attention to God's desires:

- In regular participation in the worship of the Christian community – God approaches us with a loving invitation to come together and pay attention to our contributions to God's mission – being attentive in worship crucial – what is being heard in music, in prayer, in reflections – an experience of God in Christ through the influence of the Spirit that touches every dimension of our beings – instincts, emotions, and intellect
- In personal prayer and reflection – Memorize & Ponder as one way, but many others – as in community worship, listening for God's will – that the creation will be blessed
- However and wherever the listening takes place, God is striving to use it to turn our attention into intention – our interest into involvement – we worship, learn from, have fellowship with, and serve a God who has a mission – blessing the creation – living our whole lives so it flourishes – and in its flourishing, we find our own