



- What should be the greatest season of the year, bring us joy and warm our hearts, instead often brings stress and heartburn, headaches and depression.
- The stresses that plague people this time of the year are rooted in 3 basic sources:
 1. Time
 2. Money
 3. Emotions
- There's a story in **Luke 10:38-42** that shows how busyness and stress gets in the way of what matters most.
- Characteristics of the stress prone:
 - Plans days unrealistically
 - Always in a hurry
 - Make no plan for relaxation
 - Feel guilty about doing anything other than work
 - See unforeseen problem as a setback or disaster
 - Are always thinking about several other things when working

1. Set Realistic **Expectations** for Yourself.

A. You can't do it all.

- ◆ Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.
- ◆ By focusing on those things of lesser importance we miss what is the most important.

B. We need to sort through the "good" the "better" and the "best".

- ◆ Jesus told Martha, "only one thing is needed... and that one thing was a spending time with Jesus in a personal and intimate way.

2. Remember **Why** You Are Doing **What** You Are Doing.

3. Don't Wait Too Long to **Place Your Trust in Jesus**.

A. Be careful of missed opportunities.

B. For some Christmas just reminds them that there is something missing.

📖 Hebrews 9:27

4. Decide to Do Something This Christmas to **Make a Difference**.

A. Don't just survive Christmas, thrive this Christmas!

B. Some ideas on how you can make a difference:

- ◆ Mend a quarrel... forgive someone who has treated you wrong.
- ◆ Tell someone that may *not* know how they have blessed your life.
- ◆ Turn away "holiday wrath" with a soft answer.
- ◆ Visit someone who is lonely.
- ◆ Surprise everyone and apologize if you were wrong.
- ◆ Be especially kind to someone with whom you work.
- ◆ Give as your gifts this Christmas as God gave to you in Christ, without obligation, or reservation, or a hidden agenda.

Next Week: *The Magi's Great Adventure!*