

## THINGS WE LOVE: JESUS

*She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. (Luke 10:39, NIV)*

I PLAY ENOUGH GOLF AS A GUEST AT OTHER CLUBS that I have learned to be mindful of the cell phone policies at each place. Some clubs don't want to see you using your phone anywhere but your car. Others have designated areas, both inside and outside, where it's acceptable to talk on the phone. Now, with the proliferation of smartphones, even these rules have been modified. You can do quiet things—check your email, find the score of the big game, text your spouse that you'll be playing nine more—with your phone in hand.

But may I just say this: *What have we done?*

I was competing in a casual tournament recently when the best player in our group was standing over a short putt, one he would nearly always make. Just as he began his setup, another player's phone rang. Then in fumbling around, the culprit added another technological interruption. It was the ultimate double whammy. The player missed his putt. I don't need to tell you that he was not happy.

It used to be, for so very much of my golf-loving life, that when you came to play, you came to play. You checked out of your other world. If someone desperately needed to get a hold of you, they'd call the pro shop and a staffer would come find you. It was allowable, but rare.

You'll find some interesting assessments out there about what our smartphones are doing to us, yet I would suggest that it's really nothing new. Since Mary and Martha, we have been a people prone to accomplishment—or at least the appearance of it, with our calendars and to-do lists and now phone apps and business on the go. A pastor I know told me his small group had outlawed the personal pronouncement of "I'm so busy." Their reason: We all are!

What the account of Mary and Martha reminds us is that busy is always calling. And it will draw us from more meaningful attentions. I would go so far as to suggest that golf is one of these attentions, for it provides the quiet and the companionship we often need. But far above this is the attention we should be showing to Jesus. Love, you have likely heard, is spelled T-I-M-E. This is no less true with our Lord. We might express our love to him best when we jettison the routine for the sake of his extraordinary presence.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2017 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/goSaS0xiEvc>.

**Opening questions** Are you someone who separates from life when you're playing golf, or do you stay plugged in? • What distractions in life keep you from true focus on important issues or even people?

**READING** Romans 8:35-39; Luke 10:38-42; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4

### The unshakable love of Christ (Romans 8)

What strikes you most strongly from this description of the love of Christ? What response should this kind of love elicit from us? Does it do this for you personally?

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### Knowing what matters (Luke 10)

Our central passage today explores the difference between what matters and what doesn't. How balanced would you say one's life should be in committing to "getting things done" and "doing important things"? How much of your attention does Jesus get in a typical day?

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### Unwavering devotion (2 Corinthians 11)

What was Paul's great concern in this passage? What sorts of things regularly threaten to pull you from "sincere and pure devotion" to Christ?

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