

5 Lessons from Mary & Martha

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Luke 10:38-42

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her to help me."

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

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Lesson 1 – Hospitality

Luke 10:38

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

It is always proper to show hospitality.

Notice that this is not just to Jesus, but those traveling with Him. There were at least 13 and maybe more.

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Lesson 1 – Hospitality

People are often held back from showing hospitality because they feel their house or preparations are not acceptable.

We must remember that we are investing in people! Mary and Martha opened their home to Jesus. We must remember that how we treat the “least of the brethren” is how we have treated Christ.

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Lesson 1 – Hospitality

Hospitality is something you can do right now. You can open your homes and your hearts to the family next door who might not be the best of neighbors. You can invite the couple that sits near you in church, or at the Bible study. You can even invite a coworker.

Hospitality opens the door for opportunities for you to minister in Christ – it is a venue that you can share the Gospel. You can cement a new friendship, encourage each other's spiritual growth, laugh at some dust, and enjoy a little "Jesus" environment together.

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Lesson 2 – Don't Compare

Luke 10:39-40a

And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving.

As the story unfolds, we find Mary sitting with the boys, soaking up Jesus' words. And Martha was scurrying around the kitchen like a whirlwind, checking the food, setting the table, and getting things ready. Martha is on a mission of ministering to the needs of others and will not stop until all of the guests are happily rubbing full stomachs.

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Lesson 2 – Don't Compare

Here is the problem, Martha is trying to serve dinner for thirteen or more people with little or no help! In her busyness (stress) she sees her sister just sitting on the floor listening to Jesus. We can also hear Martha's frustrated thoughts: "How dare she just sit there! Doesn't she see that I'm doing everything on my own?!"

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Lesson 2 – Don't Compare

This is where discontent begins – when Martha compares her current situation or ministry to someone else's, she thinks she's holding the short straw.

This is the same trap you can get caught in. When you look at people with those big, happy smiles on social media or the beautifully "perfect" children or the bigger, nicer house than yours ... discontent comes and perches on your shoulder.

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Lesson 2 – Don't Compare

Comparison is dangerous because we never see the full story. When we look at someone else's life, we only catch a snapshot. And just like the smiling Christmas photo that never hints at the pre-pose disagreement or the toddler's screaming fit right afterward, we miss the rest of the story too.

Truth is, no matter how it looks on the outside, God is at work in every story. No two stories are exactly the same. Comparison didn't change Martha's story; It only stole her joy.

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Lesson 2 – Don't Compare

It should be noted that both Mary and Martha were involved in ministry. Both ministries were important. Martha was meeting the needs of her guests through service, and Mary showing friendship, worship and devotion to Jesus.

When we compare ministries, we fail to see the "big picture" from God's perspective. He has created each of us with talents and abilities. It is God who prepares and calls us into action.

Paul states we are all individual parts that work together to make the body. We must learn to be content with trusting Jesus' work in our lives and not look at what God is doing with others.

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Lesson 3 – When Struggling, Go to Jesus

Luke 10:40b

She approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her to help me.”

When Martha gets disgruntled by her perspective of the unfairness in her situation, she knew exactly who could fix things. Martha marches right up and accuses Jesus of being uncaring and commands Him to make Mary help her!

Comparison leads to being discontent which is often directed towards God.

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Lesson 3 – When Struggling, Go to Jesus
There’s something to be said about knowing who can help. Sometimes we can be tempted to share our problems with other people. We turn to social media, friends, or coworkers when the wisest thing to do is to approach the One who can actually fix things. Martha knew what she was doing.

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Lesson 4 – You Can Speak Freely with Jesus

Luke 10:40b

She approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore, tell her to help me.”

Notice that Jesus doesn’t rebuke Martha for her words. He doesn’t say, “Martha, you do not get to speak to me that way. Don’t you know who I am?”

Jesus accepts Martha where she is, and as she is. He listens to her tirade without batting an eye.

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Lesson 4 – You Can Speak Freely with Jesus

You have that kind of audience with Jesus too. He is an ALL-POWERFUL God who doesn’t get miffed or offended when you come to Him in the middle of an emotional upheaval. He won’t mind if you tell Him exactly what you’re feeling. In fact, He adores you and longs to hear about anything you face. Jesus is your perfect Friend and Brother. He is approachable, loving, and eager to listen. You should read through the prophets and see how they addressed God in their frustration!

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Lesson 5 – Its All About Focus

Luke 10:41-42

And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

After Martha says her piece, Jesus offers her the path to peace. Jesus talks to her and tells her she needs to change her perspective.

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Lesson 5 – Its All About Focus

Jesus reminded Martha (and us) what to be “concerned” with. It is where to focus, and what should take a front row seat in our brains. It is our relationship with Him.

When we focus on Jesus, we discover that we are never truly alone or without help (Hebrews 13:5). We experience that His grace is sufficient for all that we face (2 Corinthians 9:8). We find inner peace and strength to face whatever comes our way (John 14:27). These are the kinds of truth that keep us calm in even the busiest seasons of life.

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Lesson 5 – Its All About Focus

Martha was not wrong in her serving; it was her focus that was wrong.

- ◆ She was focusing on what needed to be done, rather than the one it was for.
- ◆ She was focusing on her own needs and feelings rather than the needs of others.
- ◆ She was focusing on her agenda and expecting everyone to jump on board rather than on Jesus' agenda.

It was a good thing to meet the physical needs of Jesus and the disciples, but Martha's perspective (her thinking) was wrong. This upset her emotions (feelings) which led to a series of wrong choices.

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So What ...

When we find ourselves in similar circumstances we need to :

- ◆ Check our emotions: Why are we feeling this way?
- ◆ Check our thinking: What is the focus of our thinking?
 - ◆ Check our actions: What are we really trying to accomplish? Is this God's direction or ours?
 - ◆ Yield to God and trust Him for help and provision!

Let's throw the front door wide. May we find the joy of inviting people in, and may we cling to the peace of Jesus in the middle of our crazy lives.

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