

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2024.**

**Don't be distracted.**

**Luke 10:38-42.**

Have you ever had someone come up to you and say: "have you got time for a chat?"

How do you respond: not that person again; I have so much to do, don't need this interruption; can we make a more suitable time, or yes let's sit down.

I can just imagine Martha's feelings when Jesus was their guest. I must cut the veggies, wash the pots, dust the floor, cook the meat, blah, blah, blah.

And here is Mary – how can she just sit there, not lifting a finger to help – can't she see I am so stressed trying to get everything done.

I wonder this morning; do you resonate with Mary or Martha?

Martha was doing her very best to do the right thing and yet, she still missed out on doing the best thing – which was listening to Jesus.

If you grew up with siblings, you may find this a familiar thing – Martha was the older of the 3 – Lazarus next and then Mary. Sometimes, the older brother or sister tended to take charge. I am the youngest of 4, and believe me, I experienced that many times. So, for Martha, this was the pattern in her life. She was used to being in control.



Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were remembered for their hospitality, and this takes on added significance when we note that hospitality was a social requirement in their culture.

It was considered shameful to turn anyone away from your door. Martha worried about details. She wished to please, to serve, to do the right thing.

Perhaps, as the oldest, she feared shame if her home did not measure up to expectations. She tried to do everything she could to make sure that wouldn't happen.

As a result, she found it hard to relax and enjoy her guests and even harder to accept Mary's lack of co-operation in all the preparations. She didn't realize that in her desire to serve, she was neglecting her guest.

Jesus did not blame Martha for being concerned about household chores. He was only asking her to set priorities. Service to Christ can degenerate into mere busy work that is totally devoid of devotion to God. Martha was helped to see where her priorities needed to change. The personal attention she gave her guests should be more important than the comforts she tried to provide for them.

Listening to Jesus is surprisingly hard to do, when so many other choices are buzzing around you.

Are you so busy doing things for Jesus that you're not spending any time with Him? Don't let your service become self-serving.

The other thing that is often overlooked in this scripture, is the fact that Mary was permitted to sit at Jesus' feet to learn. In those

days, women were expected to serve domestically and were forbidden to learn as disciples from a rabbi.

Jesus validated Mary's desire to be His disciple.

If you are a follower of Jesus, listening to Him means hearing Him say that He sees you as perfect, because of His death.

He sees you as His own brother or sister and His love is unconditional. It doesn't depend on anything you achieve or don't achieve.

**What things do you want to get done today?**

**Place those choices next to "Listening to Jesus."**

**Which wins your heart and why?**

**What else becomes more important in your day?**

**Which grips your heart most?**

**Which feeds your soul?**

I will hand out a piece of paper with Psalm 1:2-3.

You will notice there are blank spaces. I have taken out the words: who, whose, that person or they and I want you to write in your name instead. Once you have done this, we are going to read it all together.

The more we delight in obeying God the more fruitful we are.

If we want God's blessings, we must make friends with those who love God and His word.