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Five Points From Martha And Mary



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Five Points From Martha & Mary

Luke 10:38-42, "Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

The familiar passage of *Luke 10:38-42* tells the account of two sisters and their differing approaches to Christ's presence. As we reflect on this Scripture, let us look at five points we can learn from these two women and how these points speak into how we can approach the Savior.

Martha

To begin, let us consider Martha's approach. There are three points in this passage we should carefully guard against:

- Over-commitment in our Responsibilities - "*But Martha was cumbered about much serving.*"- Martha may have completed the tasks that were culturally expected of her, but at what cost? What are we missing in life because of the daily tasks we "have to get done?" Busyness can come in many different forms but often masquerades as "good things." School activities, time with friends, and even some church activities can all fit this description at times. While these things are not sinful and are actually often very good, an overabundance of them in our lives can lead to stress, anxiety and frustration when we feel we are stretched too thin. It is important to step back every few months to reexamine the priorities in our lives in order to reflect if the Holy Spirit is driving our days or just our responsibilities.
- Resentment towards Others- "*Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?*"- Do we ever blame our choice or circumstance on others? If left unchecked, this blame can shift into unhealthy feelings of bitterness and isolation. We may question the "fairness" of our circumstances and ultimately question God's authority. Additionally, do we resent those that choose a different path? It is easy to be judgmental of the way others spend their time, energy or money. We focus on other's choices and feel that they should be doing more instead of monitoring our own heart and motivation.
- Affirmation/ Entitlement - "*bid her therefore that she help me.*" Martha had an expectation that Jesus would see her struggle and redirect Mary to help. Oftentimes, we like others to notice the sacrifices we are making. We may gain our value or worth through people's compliments or feel validated by our works. Sometimes these expectations can begin to emerge as entitlements. Are we looking for someone to "rescue us?" We may have the misbelief that just this one thing will "save" us from our current discontentment or struggle. A "spouse" will save us from the discontentment we feel or a "child" will make us feel complete. Our busyness with "good tasks" will give us a sense of worth and so we overcommit ourselves. As we extend this thinking further, we can even begin to begrudge our brothers and sisters that aren't willing to help as we think they should. Satan would love to turn a blessing, such as a spouse, child, or act of service, into an entitlement and use it as an opportunity to bring hurt or discord.

While Martha's gift of hospitality is never called into question, Jesus does address her heart while serving, speaking to her worry and stress and reminding her that "*one thing is needful.*" He redirects her to choose that "*which shall not be taken away from her.*" **Are we so distracted in our service for Christ that we miss opportunities to spend time with Him?** Cares and concerns will always accompany our day. Let's be careful they don't become the forefront of our lives.

Five Points From Martha & Mary

Mary

Now let us take a look at Mary's approach:

- Be Still- *"And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word"*- Do you hear Jesus speak as you go about your day? Being still in God's presence is not a passive activity. It can take effort to quiet our minds from our daily activities and concerns. It is important to spend time with the Lord every day. Just like an earthly relationship, our relationship with the Lord grows when we spend time in His presence. Consider *John 10:4-5*, *"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."* As we spend time with Jesus, we get to know Him better and are able to discern His voice from others. We should be alert and expectantly listening to His Spirit.
- Heavenly- minded- *"But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."* At the end of our lives, all of our earthly tasks and accomplishments are going to pass away. The only thing that will matter is our relationship with Christ. Are we building up this relationship with Christ and treasures for Heaven or overly focusing on treasures here on Earth? Who is helping to keep us accountable to this standard and calling out our blind spots when they exist?

In summary, Martha completed the tasks that were expected of her, but in the process missed an opportunity to be with Jesus. Let us not get bogged down in expectations and stress, losing sight of the bigger, eternal picture. Let us be willing to step outside of our daily busyness and prioritize the eternal. In order to properly prioritize, we need to sit at Jesus' feet and meditate on His word, enjoying moments with our Savior. Perhaps our daily prayer could be:

"Lord as I go about my day, help me to choose the eternal path that will not be taken from me."