

# LUKE I Martha and Mary Text: Luke 10:38–42

—Bill Turner

## *The One Thing that Changes Everything*

1. I procrastinated studying & was late for a final—I had a reoccurring dream for yrs
2. Our Personality... Our Priorities... A Guiding Principle give by Jesus
3. Martha and Mary are both amazing women, but we tend to take sides

## I. THE PERSONALITIES: Our Personality Perspective

### A. MARTHA AND MARY BOTH LOVED THE LORD

1. **MARTHA Loved the Lord—she’s opened her home and is serving the Lord**
  - a) Later after her brother Lazarus had died—Martha gave the great confession
  - b) That Jesus is the Christ the Son of God (John 11:20–27)
2. **MARY Loved the Lord too—she’s sitting at feet of Jesus w/ full attention**
  - a) MARY is the one who later breaks open a bottle of expensive perfume and pours it on Jesus feet in an act of selfless devotion (John 12:1–8)
3. **MARTHA and MARY BOTH Loved the Lord...**

### B. BUT THEY HAD DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES

#### So their Love for the Lord was Expressed in different ways...

1. In **MARTHA** We See Her DEDICATION—in working and serving Jesus
  - a) There were probably other disciples in the house with Jesus
  - b) so Martha is cooking and cleaning and serving the Lord and His people
  - c) This is Her Spiritual Service unto the Lord
2. In **MARY** We See DEVOTION—in her sitting, listening, learning from Jesus
  - a) His time is drawing near to be rejected and arrested—tried and crucified
  - b) While Martha is Serving the Lord—Mary is Listening and Learning from the Lord
  - c) This is Mary’s Spiritual Service unto the Lord
3. They **BOTH Loved the Lord—But Showed it in Different Ways**

### C. DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES OFTEN DISAGREE don’t see the same way

1. **Some Are Always Active & Busy—And Speak their Mind!**

**Other People Are More Quiet and Introspective** [CHART: Scott Hafer, adapted]

MARY (John)	MARTHA (Paul)
Contemplative	Active
Word	Work
Type-B	Type-A
Presence of God	Presents for God
Relationship	Responsibility
Full Heart	Full Schedule
Devotion	Dedication

2. **Even the Apostles Had Different Personalities** (and they didn't always agree)
    - a) With **Martha**—I think of **Paul**—**Dedicated and Driven** worker who won't stop  
–and later became frustrated with John Mark for Not Keeping Up (Task Oriented)
    - b) With **Mary**—I Think of **John**—the **Devoted disciple** who stayed at foot of the cross  
–Then cared for Jesus mother Mary in her later years (Relationship Oriented)
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## II. THE PRIORITIES: Our Priority Perspective

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### A. MARY IS SITTING AND LISTENING TO JESUS (v.39)

1. She's not being lazy or unhelpful—she prepared along with Martha...  
But she *“also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.” (v.39)*
2. The word 'also' indicates she had been helping Martha...
3. But Now She is sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to the word of God

### B. MARTHA WAS DISTRACTED WITH MUCH SERVING (v.40)

1. Have you ever tried to do too much — in too short of a time?
  - a) It's Frustrating—especially if you feel like it's all on your shoulders
  - b) Trying to do too much in too little time all by yourself
2. Martha is being hospitable & trying her hardest to make everything perfect
  - a) But with her house is filled with guests and Mary is not helping!
  - b) Martha was Feeling Overwhelmed and got upset
3. It is NOT WRONG TO WORK HARD FOR JESUS – that was good.  
Her problem was that she became DISTRACTED FROM JESUS.
  - a) She was distracted with much serving—and distracted from Jesus.

### C. MARTHA REAL PROBLEM WASN'T MARY—IT WAS MARTHA

1. Martha calls Jesus “Lord,” (v. 40)...  
–But then in the same breath rebukes Him: “Don't you care?”  
–Then Gives Him an Order! “Tell her to help me!”
2. Martha is focused on What Martha Thinks is Best—her own agenda,  
–Then wants Jesus to Get on board with the Program  
–And Use Jesus to Get Mary on board with my agenda.
3. Martha's real problem was not Mary—Martha's Problem was Martha  
She had become distracted and had taken her eyes off Jesus.

### D. PRIORITIES ARE A PROBLEM FOR US TODAY

1. There are Many Cranky Crabby Christians—>They serve the Lord...  
–They serve the Lord... But they're FUSSY & Irritated About It  
–And They're Going to Let You Know About It!  
–Because You Need to Get On Board with the Program!
2. It's easy to look at all WE do for God and for others....  
and then criticize others who don't seem to do as much.

### **3. Are You Worried and Troubled Over Many Things?**

- a) I remember telling a dear 90 yr old elderly Christian woman about all the things I was worried and troubled about at the time... —**She said, “Your Not Free.”**
- b) I can still see her expression of compassion — and of sadness for me
- c) I was worried and troubled over so many things—I was NOT Free

### **4. SIGNS YOU ARE NOT FREE — LIST...**

- Need for Worry and Fear Over the Cares/Concerns of the World
- Need for Control over Others
- Need for Perfectionism [unrealistic Expectations of Self and Others]
- Need for Approval [When we live for others acceptance / we die by their rejection]
- Need for Virtue Signaling: [trying to prove how virtuous one is to others]
- Need to Blame or Accuse Others [to attack others rather than face own failures]

### **5. Martha’s problem was not Mary—Martha’s Problem was Martha**

**She had become distracted and had taken her eyes off Jesus.**

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## **III. THE PRINCIPLE: The One Thing That Changes Everything**

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### **A. THE ONE THING THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING**

- 1. Jesus gives a principle to Martha and to Us (**v.41–42**)
- 2. There are a Million Things in Life to Worry About—  
but only one thing Necessary—to Hear the Word of God
- 3. Martha was serving tables—but Mary was listening to the Word of God

### **B. WHY DO YOU WORRY? (Matthew 6:24–30)**

- 1. No one Can Serve Two Masters... But We All Have Tried...  
And it only resulted in Conflict, Fear, Worry, Anxiety, Stress
- 2. When you loose your peace or joy in Christ—then ask yourself why?
- 3. It is Usually because you are worried and troubled over many things  
and have lost your focus on the ONE thing!

**INFORMATION PYRAMID: Data / Information / Knowledge / Understanding / Wisdom.**

We spend much of our time Drowning in a Data Dump of Information (Ps 119:99-100; Prov. 9:10)  
But Wisdom from Above is given by God through His Word, not through worldly ideologies

### **C. KEEPING GOD FIRST IS THE ONE THING THAT CHANGES EVERYTHING**

- 1. (**Matthew 6:31–34**) To Seek FIRST God’s Kingdom and HIS Righteousness
- 2. Not My Own Self-Righteousness with is nothing but a pile of filthy rags
- 3. But His Righteousness that made our robes white by the blood of the Lamb
- 4. I’m NOT Worthy — But Worthy is the Lamb that was slain for my sins

### **D. THE PRINCIPLE THAT BRINGS PEACE**

- 1. There’s a Million Other Things to Worry About—But only 1 thing necessary
- 2. Focusing On God First Above All Else (**Isaiah 26:3**)

- a) When Lisa's grandfather was dying, he didn't want to listen to his old music,
- b) He didn't want TV or books of fiction or any of the things he enjoyed before.
- c) He only wanted to hear the Bible read to him. Nothing Else.
- d) He Just Wanted the One Thing that Mary wanted—to sit at the feet of the Lord and to hear His word.

### **3. This Example Helps Us To See 3 types of Christians.**

#### **1) THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO LIVE DEVOTED (Like Mary)**

Those who know how to serve and also sit at the feet of Jesus.

#### **2) THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO LIVE DISTRACTED (Like Martha)**

Those who serve God with the Best of Intentions,  
but without adding the one thing - a continued focus on Christ...  
so they become Frustrated and Stressed and Critical and Burn Out.

#### **3) THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO LIVE IN DENIAL...**

They're not even in the same house with Jesus,  
because they're too busy for Jesus with their own pursuits.

### **CONCLUSION:**

- 1. I told you My reoccurring dream...** of forgetting of a class I was supposed to be attending and then finally remembering and showing up on the day of the final exam—Totally Unprepared...
- 2. But Imagine living your life so busy and distracted...**  
**that you show up on judgement day totally unprepared!**
- 3. Only Jesus can set you free...**  
**Only Jesus can give you the Peace you seek (John 16:33)**  
**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.**  
**In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer,**  
**I have overcome the world."**
- 4. But You Have to Make a CHOICE—**  
**You Must CHOOSE it the way Mary Chose it.**
- 5. IT IS A CHOICE—IT IS YOUR CHOICE.**  
**He stands at the door & knocks—You must choose to let Him in**
- 6. He did His part—but asks you to do your part**
  - To Hear the word of God
  - To Believe the word of God
  - To Confess Jesus is the Son of God
  - Repent of your sins
  - Baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sin and be raised to new life