

**Introduction:**

- Funnies:
  - Do you know why skeletons don't fight each other? They don't have the guts!
  - Did you hear that NASA found bones on the moon? The cow did not make it.
- *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."* (Proverbs 14:12, ESV)
  - Every way seems right when it is our way.
  - But we want to find God's ways, so that we find life.
- *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isaiah 55:8-9, ESV)
- God's way versus our way. *"Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.' But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.'" (Luke 10:38-42, ESV)*

**I. God Sets A Table**

A. What does the phrase—"God sets a table" mean?

1. Some of the best things we do in life is eat together.
  - a) Thanksgiving meal -
  - b) Meal with pastors in Russia. (shashlik.)
2. It means He exercises hospitality with His people. He welcomes us. The table becomes a place of relationship. I.e. Who do you sit by at lunch?
3. It means God is a God of resource with plenty to share.
4. It means God's table is a place of royal provision supplied by God. You have to be resting in God to sit at this table!
5. It means that you and I are invited to sit at His table; but we have to make that choice. God will not force us to His table. We have to want it. Our ways are not His ways but they can be!

B. Some scriptures:

1. God is taking care of me. *"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."* (Psalm 23:5, ESV)
2. God is honoring me to sit and celebrate with Him. *"that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."* (Luke 22:30, ESV)

- C. The biggest thing it means to sit at God's table is:
1. God wants to be with us!
  2. God wants to share life with us!
  3. The Sabbath rest or starting the day with rest in the evening is an invitation from God to us that we might share life together. When we are with Him we have access to all that heaven provides!

## II. We Have A Choice

- A. The amazing thing about the story of Jesus, Mary, and Martha is that it leaves us having to make a choice. Will we be a Martha or will we be a Mary? Will we live stressed with distractions or peacefully sit at the feet of Jesus? Will we be drained in all our doing or refreshed in His presence?
1. God sets a table before us but are we willing to come in and sit down with Him.
  2. God sets before us life and death. Are we willing to choose life?
- B. Mary:
1. Mary is sitting at the feet of Jesus.
  2. In fact, the three times that Mary appears in scripture with Jesus, she is sitting at His feet. Luke 10, John 11 and John 12. She intentionally positions herself at his feet. In Luke she sits at his feet and listens, in John 11 she falls at his feet, in John 12 she anoints and wipes His feet with her hair.
    - a) This is the position of a disciple.
    - b) This is a position of submission. Mary is intentional submitting to Jesus.
    - c) It is the position of the lesser to the greater. Reflection of covenant.
  3. This leaves us a question to answer:
    - a) Are disciples to sit at Jesus's feet or serve?"
    - b) "And she had a sister called Mary, who **also** having sat at the feet of the Lord, was listening to his word." (39) 'who also' implies that Martha had been at His feet.
    - c) Disciples are not called to either sit or serve but are called to both sit and serve.
  4. Mary has made the wise choice of choosing to be with Jesus and learn from him.
- C. Martha. Martha and Mary are related. Martha like Mary - was of the mindset that she worked herself to the bone. "To work yourself to the bone" is to work to an excessive or overly intense degree. I.e. You wear your skin off like - Mary. It means to strive, toil, sweat, grind away.
1. Martha was distracted by her many tasks. (vs. 40)
    - a) She was drawn away (from Jesus) and driven about mentally by all the tasks.
    - b) Distractions cause stress because you get pulled in so many different

- directions. Ie. Rubber band. Ie. Stress is a killer just ask Mary.
- c) Distractions make you feel alone, and cause people to be self-focused and self-righteous.
  2. Martha was worried and troubled about many things. (vs. 41)
  3. Because she was worried and troubled about many things she
    - a) Accused Jesus - *'Do you not care...that my sister left me alone to service'*
    - b) Accused Mary - *that my sister left me alone to serve.*
    - c) Then she makes a selfish demand of Jesus, *"Tell her to help me!"*
    - d) Through these accusations and demands Martha is trying to control the situation and to control Jesus! Imagine that...trying to control God.

### III. One Thing Necessary

- A. Jesus lovingly addresses the condition of her heart with *"Martha, Martha!"*
  1. In her mind she sees she has no choice. But Jesus invites her to consider a way of serving free of distractions.
  2. Jesus reminds her she does have a choice. You can serve distracted or you can spend time doing the one "needed" and "necessary" thing from which everything else flows. This is where God wants us church: in the place from where everything else flows.
- B. Jesus commends Mary!
  1. He affirms Mary as his disciple as well as her choice to abide with Him.
  2. Jesus declares that "one thing" is needed as his disciple: Mary chose that.
    - a) Sit at my feet.
    - b) Learn from me... *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."* (Matthew 11:28-29, ESV)
  3. Not long after visiting Mary and Martha, Jesus uses a vine as a teaching illustration in (John 15). Abide in me.

### Conclusion:

- Apart from Jesus, we will not be able to do anything of kingdom value.
- It is to the Father's glory that we bear much fruit.
- Jesus commends Mary for sitting at his feet. And He invites Martha to consider the way in which she serves.
- As disciples, we are called to both sit *and* to serve. We are called both to abide *and* to bear fruit. Michelle Christy, Abide At The Feet Of Jesus.