

MARY AND MARTHA

Luke 10:38-42

38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.

40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,

42 but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

(NIV)

At His Feet Doing Nothing

Mary sits at his feet and looks to be doing nothing of worth. Just listening to someone speak when there is work to be done. At that time it was the main course.

It is ok to serve at times. At other times it is more necessary to sit at the feet of Jesus. But to those who have no real interest in doing that it seems to be a waste of time when so much needs to be done.

It is sometimes necessary to get up and do something.

Josh 7:6-11

6 Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the LORD, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads.

7 And Joshua said, "Ah, Sovereign LORD, why did you ever bring this people across the Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? If only we had been content to stay on the other side of the Jordan!

8 O Lord, what can I say, now that Israel has been routed by its enemies?

9 The Canaanites and the other people of the country will hear about this and they will surround us and wipe out our name from the earth. What then will you do for your own great name?"

10 The LORD said to Joshua, "Stand up! What are you doing down on your face?"

11 Israel has sinned; (NIV)

1 Sam 16:1

1 The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king." (NIV)

In John we see Martha serving with no problem. The problem arises when those who want to spend time with Jesus are viewed by those who don't as time wasters.

It can also come out in criticism of one person's freedom in worship by another who thinks they are going over the top. A David and Michal situation.

There is also the problem of the soul and the spirit of an individual. The soul that is so easy distracted at times when the spirit wants to be seated at the feet of Jesus.

Why are we so easily distracted? Because all too often the soul does not see any tangible results from the time that the spirit spends at the feet of Jesus and wants to turn to what it sees as more interesting things. Such as thinking what colour to paint the dining room next time or whether it's best to cook the turkey for 2hours or 3.

Looking at it from Martha's point of view it is "Mary how could you just sit there and let me do all this work. Lord surely can't you see that someone has to do all the work instead of just sitting around".

Looking at it from Mary's point of view it is "Martha how could you be busying around in the kitchen when we have Jesus in our home. What an opportunity to sit at His feet and I'm not going to waste it".

On the face of it, sitting at the feet of Jesus looks like a person is not doing anything.

At His Feet in Prayer

What's the most difficult meeting to get off the ground and keep going in any church. Why, it's the "Prayer meeting"

John Wesley says “God will do nothing but in answer to prayer”

God has set up a system where he will act in the affairs of this life in response to the prayer of His people. We are told to pray without ceasing, to ask seek and knock. We see Jesus himself given over to prayer. The more prayer there is, the less evil there will be in the world. Martha spent so much time on things in the house which were not really essential at that time and lost for herself time to spend close to Jesus. Likewise we need to consider carefully those things which fill our time. These meetings here will be only as good as the prayer which supports them. Prayer is where the action is based. Service is only the gathering of the fruit of prayer. No prayer . No fruit. Easy as that.

God has promised to answer prayer but why is it that He sometimes doesn't seem too? Is there something in the way? The following three things could be considered:-

Pride.

Satanic opposition.

Unbelief.

At His Feet in Praise

What counters unbelief? Praise! God inhabits praise.

Where God is, things happen. What is it that is that is so different about the meetings where God is pouring out His Spirit? It's the praise. The less we

praise, the greater will be our lack of faith. Heaven praises day and night. Holy Holy Holy. Satan and the demonic hate it. Praise is faith building.

I have no problem with praying and commanding the demonic to leave a place such as this but I'm not always certain that the words themselves do what we think. However, I believe that a huge offering of praise in this place does dispel satanic forces.

What can sometimes be a most difficult thing to do. Praise! What reflects in our midst what resounds through heaven continuously and makes satanic powers shake with fear? Praise. Who will try then to put a gag into our mouths when there is an opportunity to praise the Lord.

One thing is needful more than anything that we might sit at His feet. Be in His presence. Talk to Him and praise him. There is so much that will try to distract us. Usually things which have not great importance. We have a choice to go for the thing of greater importance