



MARY AND MARTHA SERVICE AND DEVOTION

INTRODUCTION

Mary and Martha were sisters and devoted friends of Jesus. Despite their close friendship with Him, they recognized Jesus as their Lord and Master and desired to give Him their best.

When Christ came to visit them, Martha focused on her service to Him which caused her to be very agitated and perplexed. Mary's focus was Christ. He brought peace to her soul.

Jesus lovingly taught Martha the importance of living a balanced life of worship and service. Her faith grew to a greater understanding of who Jesus was through a family crisis. In Mary's life, we learn the importance of sitting at the feet of Jesus and putting Him first in our lives. She is an example for us to follow through her surrendered love and worship.

There are both spiritual and practical lessons to learn from the lives of Mary and Martha. Ask the Lord to personalize this lesson for you, and to show you how to be a woman that will serve Him and sit at His feet.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? (John 11:40)

Names Given to the Sisters

Mary
Sister

And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet . . . (Luke 10:39). The name *Mary* in Hebrew means - bitter. Miriam and Mara are also derivatives of this name. In the Old Testament, *Marah* is the name given to the first camp set up by the Israelites in their journey in the wilderness, because the waters were bitter (Exodus 15:22, 23).

Martha
A certain
woman

. . . a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house (Luke 10:38). The name *Martha* is the feminine form of *moro* or *more*. The word *moro* means - lord or master. This same term is found in the word *maran* as in the word *Maran-atha: The Lord cometh*.

SECTION I – Two Sisters, Two Personalities

READ Luke 10:38-42.

OBSERVE the ministry of Jesus and the different personalities of Mary and Martha as you answer the following questions.

1. Who received Jesus into her house (v. 38)? _____
2. What is said about Mary (v. 39)? _____

3. What seemed most important to Martha, and what effect did this have on her (v. 40)? _____

1

What complaint did Martha bring before the Lord about her sister? _____

PERSONAL

When have you felt like Martha? _____

EXAMINE the circumstances, what causes you to be anxious? _____

How can you change the way you serve the Lord? _____

¹ cumbered about: to drag all around; distracted with care.

4. How did Jesus respond to Martha (v. 41)? _____

2

3

When Jesus said *Martha, Martha*, He was trying to emphasize a point. There are other times when Jesus used a double address, such as in Luke 13:34, when He sadly said, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, expressing His deep sorrow over Jerusalem because they had killed many of the Prophets sent by God. Also in Luke 22:31, Jesus caught Peter's attention by saying, *Simon, Simon*, and warned him that Satan had requested to sift him as wheat, but He had prayed for him that his faith would not fail.

5. What did Jesus say to Martha about Mary (Luke 10:42)? _____

6. What was the *one thing*⁴ that is needful *that good part*⁵ Mary chose (Luke 10:39)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

READ Psalm 27:4-8.

What is the *one thing* that David desired of the Lord (v. 4)? _____

Why (vv. 5, 6a)? _____

How did David seek Him (vv. 6b-8)? _____

PERSONAL

With whom do you identify more, Mary or Martha? Why? _____

² careful: anxious about; take thought.

³ troubled - Greek *turbazo* disturbed: from *turbe* (Latin *turba* a crown).

⁴ one thing is needful: one employment; one requirement or business is necessary.

⁵ good part: good portion or participation.

We all need to balance our life with both Mary and Martha's positive traits.

LOOK DEEPER

How does Matthew 6:33 and 11:28-30 help you to put your labor for the Lord in better perspective?

SECTION 2 – A Family Crisis

READ John 11:1-7.

1. Who was sick (v. 1)? _____

Where was he from? _____⁶

2. What had Mary done in adoration to the Lord (v. 2)? _____

How was Lazarus related to Mary and Martha? _____

The reference in John 11:2 to Mary, is found in Mark 14:1-9: A beautiful lesson to be studied in SECTION 4.

3. What was the message Mary and Martha sent to Jesus (John 11:3)? _____⁷

4. What did Jesus say when He heard about Lazarus' illness (v. 4)? _____

⁶ Bethany - Greek *Bethania* date house: two miles east of Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Jesus ascended to heaven from the hills of Bethany.

⁷ Lord - Greek *kurios* master: owner; one who has supreme power and authority.

5. What was Christ's relationship to this family (v. 5)? _____

6. What did Jesus decide to do (v. 6)? _____

7. Who went to Judea⁸ with Jesus? What did they fear (vv. 7, 8)? _____

PERSONAL

In what specific trial or difficulty in your life are you waiting for the glory of God to be revealed?

LOOK DEEPER

Do you feel God is not answering your prayer fast enough? READ and MEDITATE on Psalm 40:1-3, Isaiah 40:28-31, and Micah 7:7. What ministered to you from them?

8. What characteristics or attributes of Jesus can you see in John 11:1-7? _____

⁸ Judea: fifty-five miles north to south and east to west, extending from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea, with its northern boundary at Joppa and its southern a few miles south of Gaza; named Judea after the exiles from Babylon who returned there from the tribe of Judah.

SECTION 3 – Christ the Resurrection

READ John 11:8-45.

Jesus and the disciples returned to Bethany despite the concern the disciples had for His life. The Jews had thought to stone Him; yet Jesus turned their attention back to the work at hand (vv. 8-10). Jesus had plainly declared, *My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work* (John 4:34). At this time, He was to do a work in the lives of His close friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

1. Jesus delayed going to Lazarus for two days. What happened to Lazarus (vv. 11-15)? _____

9

Why was Jesus glad? _____

Knowing that the Jews sought to stone Jesus, Thomas was willing to die with Him (v. 16).

2. What did Jesus and the disciples find when they arrived in Bethany (vv. 17-19)? _____

There were many there to comfort Martha and Mary. Who were they? _____

3. Who ran to Jesus as soon as He arrived (v. 20)? _____

What did Mary do? _____

As Jesus personally ministers to Martha, we shall see how beautifully He takes her step by step to a deeper understanding of who He is. It is often in a time of crisis that Jesus does the same for us.

4. What was the first thing Martha said to Jesus as she ran to meet Him (v. 21)? _____

5. What was the second remark made by Martha to Jesus (v. 22)? _____

6. How did Jesus respond (v. 23, 24)? _____

What did Martha believe about the resurrection? _____

⁹ sleepeth - Greek *koimao* to put to sleep; to slumber; to de cease; be dead.

7. Who does Jesus say He is (vv. 25, 26)? _____

8. Martha's faith was being strengthened by the LORD, what profound statement of faith did Martha pronounce (v. 27)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

Who alone can reveal to man that Christ is the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:13-17)? _____

READ John 20:31. Why did John write the Book of John? _____

PERSONAL

How has the Holy Spirit revealed to you that Christ is the Son of the Living God? _____

Martha went and called Mary secretly.

9. What title did Martha ascribe to Jesus (John 11:28)? _____

10. What was Mary's response (vv. 29, 31)? _____

Where was Jesus? _____

Who followed Mary? Why? _____

11. As customary with Mary, what did she do at the first sight of Jesus (v. 32)? _____

12. WRITE how Jesus displayed His humanity (vv. 33-38). _____

_____ 10

13. What did Jesus say (v. 39)? _____

What was Martha's response? _____

14. What would enable the sisters to see the Glory of God (v. 40)? _____

15. WRITE the Lord's prayer to His Father in heaven after the stone was rolled away (vv. 41, 42). _____

16. What did Jesus cry out in a loud voice (vv. 43, 44)? _____

Lazarus, though dead, resurrected. What was his appearance? _____

What did Jesus command? _____

17. What was the result of Lazarus being brought back to life (vv. 45, 46)? _____

¹⁰ Master – Greek *didaskalos* instructor: Teacher.

What did others do? _____

SECTION 4 – An Act of Worship

READ Matthew 26:6-13 and Mark 14:1-9. COMPARE them with John 12:1-8.

1. What important feast was about to take place (John 12:1)? _____

Passover¹² is the annual Jewish feast that commemorates the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. God instructed His people to place blood on the door posts of their homes to protect them from the angel of death which God sent to kill every first born to judge the gods of Egypt. This feast would become a symbol of the coming Deliverer and Savior, Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, a symbol of His blood which would be shed on the cross for the salvation of man. Jesus became the last Passover Lamb. READ Exodus Chapters 11 and 12.

2. Six days before the last Passover supper, Jesus visited Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. How did each of them serve their Lord (John 12:1-3)?
- _____
- _____

Martha served. The word *served* means - to be an attendant, wait upon and minister. Martha served without complaint, without frustration, without a word.

3. What was Judas concerned about (John 12:4-6)? _____
- _____
- _____

4. Why did Mary anoint Jesus (John 12:7, 8)? _____
- _____

What did Jesus say about the poor and about Himself? _____

5. What additional information do you find in the following Gospels?

Matthew 26:6-13 _____

¹¹ Pharisees: closely organized Jewish religious group who pledged themselves to obey all facets of the religious traditions. They believed they alone could interpret God and His Word. They bitterly opposed Jesus and His teachings.

¹² Passover: to spare or to skip over.

WRITE out verse 13. _____

Mark 14:3-9 _____

PERSONAL

How do you respond to those who object to your devotion to Jesus Christ? _____

After studying these two women and their love for Jesus, is there an area in your life that is in need of change? What will you do to change your worship of Jesus?

MEMORY VERSE

_____ ? (John 11:40)

Through Martha we learn that serving is necessary but our spiritual worship to Christ must be our main focus. Service alone causes great anxiety and distress. Through Mary, we see a woman who truly believed that Christ was the only One who could master all of life's circumstances; therefore, she made Him the center of all her attention. For her, only one thing was needful and that was to sit at Jesus' feet and anoint the One who would become her Savior, for His burial.

¹³ spikenard: a favorite perfume of the ancients; an ointment preserved in an alabaster box (non-porous rock) to preserve its fragrance; extremely costly as it was transported from India.

NOTES:

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