

Luke 10:38-42 (ESV)

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."

Key Point: We can be distracted by many things, even good things, but fellowship with the Lord should always be our top priority.

- I. Martha gladly receives the Lord, but then sets about the important tasks of making ready for the feast.
  - a. Note that these tasks aren't unimportant, but they take the whole of Martha's focus and she becomes overwhelmed.
  - b. When Martha notices that Mary is not assisting with the preparations, it furthers Martha's anxiety and leads to conflict.
    - i. Martha becomes preoccupied with not only what she's doing, but with what others aren't doing.
    - ii. This is neither helpful nor edifying to Mary or to Martha.
- II. Mary forgoes helping with the preparation, instead choosing to hear from the Lord.
  - a. There are things that should be done, but Mary is fixed on sitting at the Lord's feet.
  - b. This causes conflict with sister Martha, who is toiling away making preparations for the meal.
  - c. Jesus calls Mary's decision the good portion and reminds Martha about the priority of good things.
    - i. Cf. Mark 14:3-9, the woman who anoints Jesus' feet.
      1. People get indignant about the great thing that could have been done with the ointment.
      2. Jesus responds that there will be opportunity for those good things, but choosing the best thing is a short-lived opportunity.
    - ii. This is a common refrain of people not getting to the heart of the matter.

1. The rich young ruler didn't understand what kept him from following the Lord truly. (Matt. 19:16-22)
  2. The recipient of the parable of the Good Samaritan didn't understand what it meant to truly love his neighbor. ( )
  3. Martha doesn't fully grasp that dinner can wait while the Lord is speaking.
- III. When we have an opportunity for fellowship with the Lord, we must put that as the priority over other things, even if those other things are also good and important.
- a. As humans, and particularly as humans in the digital world, we have a tendency to get overwhelmed and distracted by a great many things thrown in our faces.
  - b. Not all of these activities are bad, yet they can still divert our attention from the good portion of fellowship with (and hearing from) the Lord.
  - c. Some folks give Martha a bad rap and hold Mary up as an example, but the reality is that it is necessary and good to be both Martha *and* Mary at the appropriate times.

#### APPLYING THE WORD

1. In what ways am I choosing the good portion, and in what ways am I concerned with other things?
2. What things in my life can distract or overwhelm me so that I miss the good portion?
3. What **good things** in my life can sometimes get in the way of the best thing?