

Sermon Title: **Mary and Martha, Friends of Jesus**

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Scripture Reference: **Luke 10:38-42**

Thesis: **Mary and Martha** were close friends of Jesus and because of this closeness, they witnessed Jesus' power over death;

Purpose: **Mary and Martha** teach us how to be friends with Jesus.

Key Word: "**Jesus' Friendship**"

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I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **Luke 10:38-42**

A) The Setting:

1) **What kind of Friend is Jesus to You?**

- (a) Better yet, let me turn that question around;
- (b) What kind of friend are you to Jesus?

2) **What does it mean to have Jesus as a friend?**

- (a) Would you say you are close as a friend with Jesus or are you more . . . just acquaintances?
- (b) Does your friendship depend on how much Jesus does what you want Him to do?
- (c) Or is your friendship unconditional?
- (d) As we continue our summer study on women of the Bible our next subjects were truly friends of Jesus, Mary and Martha.

3) **It is the last year of Jesus' earthly ministry.**

- (a) It is probably Fall as Jesus and his disciples have come to Jerusalem.
- (b) Often when Jesus came to Jerusalem he stayed with His friends.

4) **To give Martha her due, I believe she was the oldest as she takes the lead inviting Jesus into her home where she lived with her sister, Mary and brother, Lazarus.**

- (a) I will elaborate a little more about why I think that a little later.
- (b) But for now, we need to read the scripture story in **Luke 10:38-42**.

A) *Sermon Prayer*

B) (The Hook)

1) **Martha and Mary are such a great study of contrasts that work together.**

- (a) Mary focuses on being with Jesus while Martha's focus is on service to Jesus.
- (b) Martha often is remembered for being the doer who did not take time to sit with Jesus.

2) **On one occasion, she was busy preparing to feed her guests and was a little exasperated with Mary for not helping.**

- (a) When she asked our Lord to tell her sister that she should help;
- (b) Jesus refused stating that Mary had chosen what was better.

3) **Being and doing often come into conflict; so, which is right?**

- (a) Is Mary being focused on Jesus right because Jesus said she chose what was better?
- (b) Or is it more important to be doing for the Lord; putting action behind your words?
- (c) Which is a better way to show our friendship to Jesus?

TS: **So, let's begin with a look at . . .**

II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Martha and Doing for Jesus**

1) **While it does not come right out and say it in the scriptures, I would say that Martha was the oldest.**

- (a) Martha shows all the signs of being a first-born child.
- (b) She is the one who invites Jesus into her home the scripture says.

- 2) **Usually this is the responsibility of the oldest son in a Jewish home.**
  - (a) That would have been Lazarus unless he was not able to fulfill that duty.
  - (b) Since we never see or hear of Lazarus in a leadership role I think there is good evidence that these unmarried sisters are taking care of their brother.
- 3) **Also, the way that Martha takes charge and takes the responsibility to be a good host is characteristic of the oldest child.**
  - (a) First-born children tend to feel the responsibility of caring for the rest of the family.
  - (b) And so, in our scripture reading we see Martha taking on her role as head of the household.
- 4) **Jesus and His traveling disciples are guests and Martha is busy with preparing to feed everyone.**
  - (a) Martha is busy serving her Lord to the best of her ability.
  - (b) After all, the scriptures say that we should be a good host to strangers for we never know if we are taking care of God's angels. (**Hebrews 13:2**)
  - (c) And James wrote in his letter that we are to be doers of the Word, not just hearers only. (**James 1:22**)
  - (d) And yet, Martha is often remembered for Jesus' rebuke that Mary has chosen what is better?
- 5) **It is not that Jesus didn't love Martha or that Martha lacked faith.**
  - (a) In John's Gospel, it is Martha that comes to meet Jesus when he arrives after her brother's death. (**John 11:20**)
  - (b) It is Martha that stated that she believed that whatever Jesus asked of the Father, He would give it. (**John 11:22**)
- 6) **Martha just didn't believe that Jesus was going to raise a decaying body from the dead on this day.**
  - (a) For when Jesus order the gravestone removed, she reminded Jesus that the body would now have an odor.
  - (b) Of all the things Mary had witnessed Jesus do, this was by far the most extreme.
- 7) **Martha was one of those people who are so involved in doing the work for her Lord . . . that she did not have time to spend in the presence of Jesus.**
  - (a) Jesus told Martha to leave her sister alone because she had chosen what was better.
  - (b) So, what did Jesus mean by that?

TS: **So, let's turn our attention now to . . .**

B) Key Point #2: **Mary and Being with Jesus**

- 1) **Mary is less concerned with preparations as she is sitting at the feet of Jesus.**
  - (a) Mary is out with the other disciples soaking up every word that Jesus has to say.
  - (b) She has a very perceptive spirit as she seems to understand better than some of Jesus' other disciples.
  - (c) It was Mary who later took a very expensive perfume to anoint the feet of Jesus.
- 2) **When Judas objected stating that was a waste of money that could have been used to sell to give to the poor.**
  - (a) Jesus told him and others who dared to agree to . . .
  - (b) **"Leave her alone, Mary has kept this for the day of my burial. For the poor you have with you always."** (**John 12:7-8**)
- 3) **Does this mean that Jesus did not have compassion for the poor?**
  - (a) No, he recognized that in Mary's heart that she understood what he was saying about having to go to Jerusalem to die.
  - (b) She expressed her love by anointing Jesus' feet.
  - (c) The poor will always be among us no matter how much we try to eliminate poverty.
  - (d) But time with Jesus is precious; it is something to be cherished and protected.

- 4) **Mary is an excellent example of those who are good at practicing being in the presence of Jesus.**
  - (a) Mary was living in the moment and did not want to let it pass her by while she was serving.
  - (b) For she was feeding her soul on the Words of Jesus and taking them to heart.
- 5) **So, does this mean that being in Jesus is better than doing for Jesus?**

TS: **This leads us to our third point, for I believe there has to be . . .**

C) Key Point #3: **A Balance Between Being and Doing**

- 1) **We all have different personality traits.**
  - (a) Mary and Martha were obviously very different: and yet, they also had much in common.
  - (b) This reminds us that regardless of our traits we are able to love and serve Jesus in our own way.
  - (c) Jesus loves you and values you as well.
- 2) **There is room for different personality types in the Kingdom of God.**
  - (a) God made us different and we should not get upset when someone doesn't prioritize things the same way we do.
  - (b) We should be careful not to try and force others into our mold.
- 3) **Instead we need to open ourselves up to listen and learn from each other.**
  - (a) God does not give anyone all the answers.
  - (b) We need to keep the view that we are better, stronger when we can take each other's view and work to find consensus together.
- 4) **Martha wanted to meet Jesus' physical needs.**
  - (a) Mary wanted to feed her spiritual needs and do something nice to show Jesus she understood what he was teaching.
  - (b) Both could help each other to learn better what it means to be a friend of Jesus.

TS: **So . . .**

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

- A) **What does it mean to be friends with Jesus?**
  - 1) In today's culture of activity, it is easy to be a Martha; being those who want to see action; let's get it done!
  - 2) And it is true that we need to take time out of our doing to practice a time of being in the Spirit of Christ.
  - 3) But I believe that there needs to be a balance of the two.
- B) **If we want to grow in our relationship with God and Jesus through the help of the Holy Spirit, then we need times of just practicing being with God.**
  - 1) We do this by spending some quiet time set aside to be in God's Word.
  - 2) Soaking it in and letting the Holy Spirit reveal deeper meanings.
  - 3) Also, spending time praying and praising, listening for God's Spirit and praying for others and our church family.
- C) **But if we just withdraw and spend time being with Jesus and never doing anything with what we learn we are missing a great blessing.**
  - 1) Being with Christ will prepare us for the times of doing for Christ.
  - 2) It is in the times of being that we are guided and equipped for the action of doing.
- D) **A church is truly blessed when there is a deep belief that Christ is in our midst, guiding, directing, and blessing.**
  - 1) There is an expectation that Jesus is in our midst and that something wonderful and mystical will happen in the worship meetings, classes and small meetings.

- 2) They may not know what that will be; but there is a belief that it will be special, magic and powerful.
  - 3) For we are the Body of Christ.
- E) **Jesus is not a dead God, He is alive and to be friends with Jesus is to have a real relationship with the living God.**
- 1) If we are truly friends with Jesus we need to come to worship with an expectation of being in His presence.
  - 2) We should come with an expectation that God wants to bless us and use us to do the work His Spirit directs us to do.
  - 3) But we need to be asking for it and looking for it.
  - 4) **God's power is no less than when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.**
    - (a) But we cannot tap into the power if we don't spend time being with Christ.
    - (b) But when we experience God's real presence; we have to be doing to find His blessing.

IV) Invitation: **Let us Pray!**