

## Luke's Gospel: Son of Man, Seeker of Men.

### "Are you a Distracted Disciple or a Devoted Disciple?"

**Passage Background:** *Bethany*. See note on [Mk 11:1](#); a village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem and the final station on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. It was the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus ([Jn 12:1-3](#)).<sup>1</sup>

#### Luke 10:38-42 (NKJV); **Mary and Martha Worship and Serve**

<sup>38</sup> Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. <sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

<sup>41</sup> And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. <sup>42</sup> But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

### "Are you a distracted disciple or a devoted disciple?"

1. **The tale of two sisters: M\_\_\_\_\_ and M\_\_\_\_\_** (v. 38-40).

- The setting of the sisters: Bethany.
- Mary was probably a social extravert who loved to be with the people in the town of Bethany. *Mary was a "devotion first" kind of person.*
- Martha was probably a hard-working introvert who spent much of her time making sure her house was in order. *Martha was a "duty first" kind of person.*

2. **Martha the D\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple** (38-41).

- Martha did many things well.
- Martha messed up in one area: She was so busy \_\_\_\_\_ that she didn't take enough time for \_\_\_\_\_.

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<sup>1</sup> Quote from NIV Study Bible.

- 1) Martha had her values out of order: The Word of God should always take precedence in one's life and ministry

Matthew 4:4; But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' "

- 2) Martha missed out being with Jesus because she was too busy and distracted trying to DO for Jesus.

*What happens when we do ministry at the expense of our relationship with God?*

- B\_\_\_\_\_ -One of the main reasons why people burn out in ministry is that they are giving out more than they are receiving. *When your output exceeds your intake, you are heading towards burnout.*
- F\_\_\_\_\_ -When you are spending more time serving God than being with God, it is easy to start doing ministry in your own strength-your flesh.

- Listen to the Dairy of a Distracted Disciple:

"Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

- The distracted disciple **begins** to *question God's goodness* in the midst of their busyness. -*Lord, do You not care...*
- The distracted disciple **begins** to *look down on others* who appear to be serving less than they are. -*That my sister has left me...*
- The distracted disciple **begins** to think they are *all alone* in their devotion to God. -that my sister has left me...*to serve alone.*
- The distracted disciple can **grow bossy** towards others. *...Therefore tell her to help me."*

3. *Mary the D\_\_\_\_\_ Disciple* (v. 39-42).

- **Both disciples were devoted, but Mary was devoted to the right thing first:** Her relationship with Jesus took precedence above her ministry for Jesus.
- Martha was doing what was culturally expected and Mary was doing that which was frowned upon on this culture.

**Cultural Background:** 10:39 *sat at the Lord's feet.* People with larger homes (as this one must be to host Jesus and his disciples) could sit on chairs or recline. To sit at a teacher's feet, however, was to take the posture of a disciple ([Ac 22:3](#); Mishnah 'Abot 1:4). Although women could hear Torah taught in the synagogue or occasionally even listen in to a teacher's lectures, they were not taught by rabbis in their schools. Boys were schooled in reciting Torah; girls were not (despite some rare, exceptional women who learned Torah in a family setting).<sup>2</sup>

**Cultural Background:** 10:40 *distracted by all the preparations.* Because women were expected to fulfill domestic responsibilities, Martha's behavior fits the cultural expectations, while Mary's violates it.<sup>3</sup>

- Notice that Mary is doing the listening while Martha is doing the talking here in this story!
- Devotion leads to adoration and worship—Mary anointed Jesus in John 12 with very costly oil of spikenard—anointing Jesus' feet and wiped His feet with her hair. She also got criticized in this story by Judas Iscariot for her excessive devotion.
- Martha, Martha—Jesus affirms and respects her service while also teaching her that His Word should be valued above that which is temporary.

**Application:** The importance of spending time with Jesus every day. If you would not go a day without food, why would you ever go a day without spending time with Jesus!

4. **The take away truth from this story: Choose to be WITH Jesus before you attempt to do anything FOR Jesus (v. 42).**

<sup>2</sup> Quote from NIV Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

- One thing is needed—focus on that which is eternal first before you focus on that which is temporary.
- Mary has chosen the good part—being with Jesus and listening to His word.
- Being with Jesus is something that can never be taken away from you! It's an eternal investment in your present and your future.

**Quote:** God created us to enjoy a deep and intimate relationship with Himself, and while works of service are important, they must never eclipse the fellowship He wants to experience with each of us. -Charles Stanley

- A similar scene happened in Acts 6 where there was complaining over serving tables vs sharing the message of Jesus

Acts 6:1-7; Now in those days, when *the number of the disciples was multiplying*, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good reputation*, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; <sup>4</sup> but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

<sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude...<sup>7</sup> Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

**Application:** Practical Tips for being devoted without being distracted by your devotion:

- ✓ **Daily time with Jesus**—Be sure to spend quality time with Jesus every day.
- ✓ **Identity**—Never find your identity in what you do. Your identity is always in who you are in Christ, not what you do for Him.
- ✓ **Seasons of rest**—Always remember that it is okay to take short seasons of Sabbath for rest, renewal, and deepening your relationship with God and others.
- ✓ **Serve out of the overflow**—Now that you are spending quality time with Jesus daily, your identity is in Christ alone, and you are taking time for rest and renewal, serve Jesus out of the new overflow—overflow of passion, purpose, peace, and joy!

**Sermon in a Sentence:** Who I am **IN** Jesus is always more important than what I do **FOR** Jesus.



**Action Steps:**

1. Spend quality time with Jesus every day this week.
2. Identity-check your identity. Is your identity in your job or in your relationship with Jesus?

**Make a decision this week?** Please let us know on your Connection Card.

Preview for next Sunday: New Christmas Series:



**December 2<sup>nd</sup> - Mary: A Song of Hope**

**Luke 1:46-55**