

Our Lord and Martha and Mary Luke 10:38-42

by R.A. Torrey

Jesus teaches that prioritizing relationship with Him is the one thing needful, and that serving Him without listening to His words can lead to distraction and worldly-mindedness.

Scripture: Luke 10:38

Topics: "Discipleship", "Prioritizing Christ"

Description

R.A. Torrey explores the contrasting attitudes of Martha and Mary in their service to Jesus, emphasizing that while Martha was busy with tasks, Mary chose to sit at Jesus' feet and listen to His teachings. Torrey highlights that Martha's distraction with serving led to anxiety and a lack of spiritual focus, while Mary exemplified the importance of prioritizing communion with Christ over mere service. Jesus gently rebukes Martha, reminding her that the one thing needful is to be occupied with Him rather than being overwhelmed by many concerns. The sermon illustrates that true discipleship involves both active service and meditative listening, with Jesus affirming that receiving from Him is more valuable than working for Him. Ultimately, Torrey encourages believers to seek a balance between service and spiritual nourishment.

Transcript

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Martha Occupied for Jesus, Mary Occupied with Jesus, vv. 38, 39 What is the certain village mentioned in v. 38? (John 11:1.) In whose house? What other scenes in our Lord's life occurred in that house? (John 11; 12:2; Matt. 21:17.) How did He come to be in that home? Did it pay Martha to have Him in her home? (John 11.) Can we have Him in our homes? (Rev. 3:20.) Will it pay? Why is it that men do not have Him in their homes? (Luke 2:7.) What was it very likely that made Martha ready to receive our Lord into her home? (Matt. 26:6.)

Who else was at the home? What did Mary do? Is that a good place to be? Did Mary ever get down at our Lord's feet again? (John 11:32; 12:3.) For what purpose was she at His feet in this lesson? Is that a good place to learn? (Compare Acts 22:3.) For what purpose was she at our Lord's feet in John 11:32? Do you suppose she would have been at His feet for help at such a time if she had not first been at His feet for teaching? For what purpose was she at His feet in John 12:3? As she sat at His feet what privilege did she enjoy?

Did Martha hear His word? Why not? Does it ever occur today that men and women are so taken up with working and worrying for our Lord that they miss the privilege of hearing His words? Is that wise? (Mark 4:19.) With how many things was Mary occupied? With how many things was Martha occupied (v. 41)? What was the result (v. 40)? What is the exact meaning of the word translated "cumbered"? (See margin Revised Version.) From what was she "distracted"? By what? Whom was she serving?

Are men nowadays ever distracted from the Lord Himself by their "much serving" of the Lord? Would He rather we should be occupied with our service of Him or with Himself? What prompted this much serving? Does our love ever become alloyed with selfish pride in our service of the Lord? Was there any need at this time of this much serving? Is the much serving which we oftentimes allow to crowd out communion with our Lord Himself generally needed? Are we to understand that Mary never served?

Was she serving Him now? Which of the two was really ministering the more to our Lord's enjoyment in that home? Which serves our Lord better, he who works most for Him or he who receives most from Him? (John 6:28, 29.) 2. Martha Sharply Rebuking Mary and Jesus, v. 40 What at last was the effect upon Martha of her much serving? Toward whom did she display her irritation? Are we ever tempted to get cross with our Lord in our much serving? What does that show? Did He care that Mary had left Martha to serve alone?

Was it Mary's fault that Martha was serving so much? Was it our Lord's fault? Whose fault was it? What did Martha think Mary was? How did she reveal her own selfishness? Had it ever occurred to her that she was selfish? Is that form of selfishness that bustles around in many kind activities and then talks about how much it has done and how little others are doing, at all common today? What did Martha request our Lord to do? What was the manner of the request? Was she most concerned with the comfort and pleasure of her guest or with her own comfort? 3.

Our Lord Gently Rebuking Martha, vv. 41, 42 Did He bid Mary help Martha? Are we to infer that He wishes His disciples to be always sitting at His feet and never ministering for Him? (John 20:17.) What did He say to Martha? Is there any great harm in being anxious about many things? (Luke 8:14; 21:34.) About what sort of things was Martha "anxious and troubled"? About what ought we to be anxious? (Phil. 4:6, R. V.) Did our Lord rebuke Martha for serving? Not till when did He rebuke her?

After rebuking her anxiety about many things what did He say? What is the one thing needful? (John 17:3; Luke 18:22; Ps. 27:4; 73:25; Mark 8:36; 1 Cor. 13:3; Gal. 5:6; 1 John 5:11, 12.) Who had chosen the one needful thing? How was her wise choice to be rewarded? Did any one wish to take that good away from her? Can that good part be taken away from any one who makes choice of it? (John 10:28, 29; Ro. 8:35, 39; 1 Peter 1:4, 5; John 4:14; 5:24.) If one chooses worldly goods can that be taken away? (Luke 12:20, 33; 16:2, 25.)

Were Martha and Mary both disciples? Were they both loved by the Lord? (John 11:5.) What two types of discipleship do they represent? Does the true disciple display the active type of discipleship or the meditative? In whom do we find the most perfect combination of the two? (Acts 10:38; Mark 1:35; John 4:33, 34.) CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. Our Lord

Entered the home Martha opened, 38; spoke the word into the heart Mary opened, 39; did not rebuke Martha for serving, 40-42; did rebuke Martha for worrying over her service, for her fault finding, for her

worldly-mindedness, for serving when she should be listening, 39-42; praised Mary for her choice of the one thing needful, protected her in the enjoyment of her wise choice, 42; desires that we be occupied with Himself rather than with our service for Him, is more acceptably served by the one who receives the most from Him than by the one who works the most for Him, 39-42.

2. Martha

Opened her door for our Lord Jesus to enter, 38; allowed her heart to be closed by earthly cares against the entrance of His work, 39; worked hard for the Lord she really loved, was made cross by her much service, distracted from the Lord Himself by her much service for Him, her loving service greatly alloyed with pride, sharply rebuked Mary, sharply rebuked the Lord, wished Him to note how much she was doing and how little Mary was doing, endeavored to instruct Him as to what He should do, 40; anxious and troubled about many things, but forgetful of the one thing, 41, 42: remembered the cravings of her Lord's hunger, but forgot the cravings of His love, so busy with earthly cares she had no time for the Saviour's words, so busy with working for Him she had no time to listen to Him, imagined the Lord would be better pleased with a good dinner than with a good learner, 39, 40; served at the wrong time--when she should have been listening, 39-42; served in the wrong way--with worry, 41; self-consciousness, irritation, fault-finding, without consideration of whom she served, with needless effort, 40; was gently rebuked by the Lord, 41, 42.

3. Mary

Sat at the Lord's feet, heard His word, was occupied by naught but the Lord Himself, had rest while Martha had worry, had praise while Martha had reproof, chose the good part, the good part eternally secured to her, 39-42.

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