



IN MARTHA'S HOUSE

Luke 10:38–42

³⁸Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰But 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." ⁴¹And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴²But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

—Luke 10:38–42

Read Luke 10:38–42

There's a sickness that often develops in believers. Its symptoms include feeling abandoned, uncared for by Jesus, alone, responsible for serving, anxious, troubled, and worried about many things. If you find yourself with any of these symptoms, you might just have "Martha-itis"!

It can come on suddenly, or develop slowly as you become distracted by serving the Lord rather than being with the Lord and hearing His voice. Serving the Lord is a good thing, but it can become a weight rather than a blessing when we neglect spending time and basking in the presence of Jesus. When this happens, our prayers become more like accusations than requests or declarations of praise.

Too many times we put the responsibility of service upon ourselves. We often feel that if we don't do the job, it won't be done at all, or it won't be done to the high standards we hold. Unfortunately, we prioritize what we are doing for Jesus over simply spending time with Jesus. When this happens, we are susceptible to catching "Martha-itis." Jesus doesn't want us to work *for* Him, but to allow Him to work *through* us. This

requires time spent in His presence receiving His grace, His power, His instruction, and His joy for the mission. Ephesians 2:10 declares, *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.* The good works are not what we do for Jesus, but are preordained and prepared by God for us to simply walk in. Service for Jesus is of no value unless we are doing it with and by the power of Jesus because, *it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure* (Philippians 2:13).

This week's house is in Bethany, a small village outside of Jerusalem. Two sisters lived there, but one sister, Martha, made it a point to invite Jesus into her house. However, it is also in this house that we see the first outbreak of "Martha-itis." While Jesus is present in the house and sharing, Martha becomes overly occupied with serving. This over-occupation makes her resentful of her sister, and even angry with Jesus. When she goes to Jesus, He gently corrects her and commends her sister Mary for choosing the *good part, which will not be taken away from her.*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Mary and Martha were the sisters of Lazarus, the man Jesus raised from the dead. They lived in the village of Bethany, which is just two miles outside of Jerusalem.

As you explore Jesus' time in Martha's house, see if you can discover more symptoms of "Martha-itis." Be sure to spend some time at the feet of Jesus allowing Him to check your own heart for any lingering symptoms.

1. Note and comment on the following from Luke 10:38–39:
 - a. *Certain village*
 - b. *Certain woman*
 - c. *Welcomed Him*

- d. *Her house*
- e. *Sister*
- f. *Also sat*
- g. *Jesus' feet*
- h. *Heard His word*
2. According to Luke 10:40:
- What happened to Martha?
 - What did she accuse Jesus of?
 - What did she accuse Mary of?
 - What did she want Jesus to do?
3. Remark on the following phrases from Luke 10:41–42:
- Jesus answered*
 - Martha, Martha*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

At the Lord's feet is the position of the disciple (see also Luke 8:35; Acts 22:3).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The word “distracted” is *perispao*: to be driven about mentally, to be over-occupied, too busy about a thing.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Martha thinks she's serving Jesus by giving him a meal. But Jesus clarifies that He's the one serving the real food—and Mary is right to sit at his table.*²⁰

- c. *Worried*
- d. *Troubled*
- e. *Many things*
- f. *One thing*
- g. *Needed*
- h. *Chosen*
- i. *Good part*
- j. *Will not be taken away from her*

4. Which of these sisters do you have the most in common with? Why?

5. What is your greatest takeaway from Jesus in Martha's house?