

The Gospel of Luke

Prioritizing That Which is Necessary

Luke 10:38-42

1. **Mary and Martha** (vs.38-39)
Along with their brother Lazarus, these women lived in the town of Bethany (John 11:1) and numbered among Jesus' close and beloved friends (John 11:5, 11).
2. **Mary: Seated, Listening, and Quiet** (v.39)
Whenever the Bible shows Mary in close proximity to Jesus, her primary focus and attention is on Him (cf. John 12:3). Upon Jesus' arrival, Mary chose to sit, as a disciple, at the feet of Jesus and listen to His words (cf. John 6:68).
3. **Martha: Busy, Distracted, and Complaining** (v.40)
In an effort to show both honor and hospitality (cf. Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9), Martha busied herself in preparing her home to host Jesus. Her busyness along with her sister's inactivity resulted in her irritated attitude as well as her attempt to have Jesus chastise her sister.
4. **Jesus Chastises Martha** (v.41)
Rather than joining in with Martha's frustrated criticism of Mary (cf. Luke 12:13), Jesus gently rebukes Martha's undue anxiety over so many things. Considerate hospitality is good and right (Heb 13:2). However, doing a good thing with a bad attitude or doing a good thing instead of the best thing is not commendable.
5. **Jesus Commends Mary** (v.42)
Whether or not Mary should have been helping Martha is not Jesus' primary concern (cf. John 12:2-3). He has repeatedly emphasized the primacy of His teaching (Luke 4:43; 8:21; John 6:26-27), and so He commends Mary's decision to focus on what is truly important over what seems to be urgent.
6. **The One Necessary Thing**
Knowing God is what characterizes eternal life (John 17:3), and Christians ought to prioritize knowing God during our time on earth.
 - A. Storing Up Treasures in Heaven (Matt 6:19-21)
 - B. Beholding the Beauty of the Lord (Ps 27:4)
 - C. Reaching Forward to the Prize Ahead (Phil 3:13)
 - D. Conforming to God's Word (Ps 119:27, 33-40)
 - E. Possessing the Pearl of Great Value (Matt 13:45-46)