

*Martha, Martha, Martha*  
*All Work but No Worship*  
*(Turnpike Wesleyan – November 8, 2020)*

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

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a village where a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was worrying over the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are so upset over all these details! There is really only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it and I won't take it away from her."

***Introduction***

Sometimes we may feel like the driver of that passing vehicle ... wow, will we ever be able to pass God's spiritual test? Sometimes we may feel more like the juggler ... trying to balance all of life's responsibilities & demands.

Balance is one thing that our society is quite short of. In fact, we are so out of balance that we struggle to keep our priorities in their right order.

Our Scripture text is also about two women. Jesus shows us in this story that what we need in the Christian life is balance. A balance between work and worship. A balance between doing and listening. A balance between a faith that is active in love and a faith renewed by the Word of God.

When Christians lose this sense of balance, their priorities get out of focus, they become distracted by other things, and start manifesting attitudes and behaviors that are not very Christ-like. This is one of the lessons of today's story.

**Mary - The Worshiper.**

Mary represents the disciple who is a worshiper. She is receptive, meditative and devotional. When we first encounter Mary in the story she is "sitting at the feet of Jesus" (Verse 39).

That is not only good advice for ice-skating. It is also an important lesson for the Christian disciple to learn. Before you stand up and serve others, "you have to get on your knees first." Why? Because it is at the feet of Jesus that you learn "to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" Luke 10:27.

## Martha - The Worker.

If Mary was the worshiper, Martha was the worker. Martha was the “doer” in the family, the one who saw things through and got things done. Martha had the gift of hospitality - she was the sister who welcomed Jesus into the home. Martha was also the practical one - she wanted the Master to have a good meal.

Thank God for the Marthas in the church. If we did not have any Marthas, nothing would get done. It is the Marthas who teach the Sunday school classes, run the Vacation Bible Schools, chair the social committee and the outreach committee. The Marthas are “the movers and the shakers” in the church. They are the workers the pastor depends upon to get the job done!

When you think of Mary you think of worship. When you think of Martha you think of work. It reminds us that there needs to be a balance in our lives between our worship and our work. Do you have a place for worship in your life? Do you have a place for work in your life?

## The Sister Crisis.

Luke 10:40 says, “Martha became angry because she had so much work to do. She went in and said, ‘Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me alone to do all the work? Tell her to help me!’” Wow! Martha has come unglued! She is distracted by all that needs to be done, she becomes resentful toward her sister Mary, and she starts dictating to Jesus her frustration. Have you been there, done that?

## The Savior’s Solution.

First, Jesus calms Martha's anxiety. He says, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things.” The word “worry” means “to be torn in two directions, to be pulled apart.” That is what worry does to a person - it takes your heart and mind and pulls them apart.

Secondly, Jesus corrects Martha’s priorities. He says, “Martha, Martha only one thing is needed” (Verse 42). “Martha, you are so busy doing things for me that you do not take time (like Mary) to be with me. Martha, what does that say about your priorities?”

Yet, so often we forget the most important lesson of life: the key to the Christian life is Jesus Christ first, then everything else. The only way to really learn that lesson is to spend some time every day, “sitting at the feet of Jesus.”