

LESSONS FROM LIFE

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April 10, 2022

Luke 10:38-42

1. The Word of God makes it clear that Jesus had a special relationship with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.
2. Apparently Jesus stayed at their home when He was in or near Jerusalem.
3. They were confident that Jesus loved them because when Lazarus became ill the sisters sent a message to Jesus stating, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." John 11:3
NOTE: It is a great comfort to know that God is constant in His love towards His children regardless of what they may be facing in life.
4. We can learn some important lessons from how Martha and Mary related to Jesus.
5. I think both women loved the Lord, but not to the same degree.
6. The depth of Mary's love and devotion was a great blessing to our Lord as He faced the ever-present reality of the Cross.
7. In every instance that Mary is mentioned in Scripture we find her at Jesus' feet.
8. She showed her love for Jesus by:
 - a. Listening to Him.
 - b. Leaning on Him.
 - c. Lavishing on Him.

I. Listening to Jesus. Luke 10:38-42

A. Verse 38 states that Martha welcomed Jesus into her home, which indicates that she was the homeowner and that Mary and Lazarus lived with her.

B. It is evident that Martha loved Jesus as well, and demonstrated that love by welcoming Him into her home and working to prepare a meal for Him.

NOTE: Perhaps Martha thought that she had to earn His love.

C. Mary, on the other hand, showed her love by sitting at the Lord's feet listening to His word.

NOTE: Confident of Jesus' love, Mary focused on listening with a deep desire to learn.

D. In contrast, Martha was, "distracted (unable to listen, encumbered, over-occupied, too busy) with all her preparations."

1. As time went on she became frustrated with her sister.

2. With hands on her hips, she appealed to Jesus:

a. For a little understanding and appreciation by saying, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone?"

b. To show He cared by telling Mary to help with the preparations.

E. What is the lesson here?

1. Genuine Christianity is first of all a love relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. The first necessity is to lovingly nurture that relationship by spending time sitting at Jesus' feet. (Note verses 41-42)

3. Ministry must be carried out in the strength of that relationship or we are going to:

a. Wear out.

b. Start feeling sorry for ourselves.

c. Question God's love and care for us.

d. Get aggravated with our fellow Christians.

II. Leaning on Jesus. John 11:32

A. Lazarus had become ill, and Martha and Mary sent for their friend Jesus.

B. Even though Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus He delayed His departure for two days. 5-6

NOTE: We should not misjudge God due to divine delays.

C. Jesus' delay allowed events to unfold that would glorify God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. 4

QUESTION: What are we willing to deal with, or go through, in order to see the Lord Jesus Christ glorified?

D. By the time Jesus arrived Lazarus had died, and his body had been in the tomb for four days.

E. When Martha heard Jesus had arrived she went out to meet Him, marched up to Him, and with an accusing voice said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." 21

1. I believe her tone of voice was exactly like it had been in the previous incident.

2. She did not question Jesus' power, but she was questioning whether or not He really cared.

F. When Mary came to where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell at His feet and said, "Lord, if (only) You had been here, my brother would not have died."

1. There was no tone of accusation.

2. There was no questioning of Jesus' love.

G. When we are confident of Jesus' love, we are, like Mary, able to lean on Him and trust Him even though we are not privy to what God is up to.

NOTE: A few days of grieving and questioning on Martha and Mary's part gave God the opportunity to glorify His Son by raising Lazarus from the dead.

III. Lavishing on Jesus. John 12:1-8

A. This incident is also recorded in Matthew 26:-6-13 and Mark 14:3-9 although Martha, Mary and Lazarus are not mentioned by name.

NOTE: A similar incident is recorded in Luke 7:36-50 that took place in the home of Simon, the Pharisee, and involved an immoral woman, while this incident took place in the home of Simon, the leper.

B. Putting all three accounts together we find that:

1. The meal was at the home of Simon the leper (a man who had been a leper).

2. Martha was acting as hostess.

NOTE: She seems to have grown because we find her serving as least sixteen people with no complaints.

3. All of the disciples became indignant at Mary's lavish demonstration of love and devotion for Jesus.

a. The disciples meant well, but they were misguided. Matthew 26:8-9

But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste? 9

"For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor."

b. Judas Iscariot, on the other hand, was motivated by greed. 4-6

C. Mary lavishly showed her love for the Lord by sacrificing her most valuable possession to show her love.

1. I chose the word lavish because it means, "Very generous or liberal related to giving or spending, often extravagantly."

2. A pound of pure nard was worth over three hundred denarii (a denarii being worth about a day's wages for a laborer).

3. Mary poured the ointment on Jesus' head and feet, and wiped His feet with her hair.

D. Note that Jesus:

1. Was not embarrassed by Mary's actions although they were totally improper from a cultural perspective.
2. Rebuke the complainers.
3. Commended Mary's actions. Matt 26:10-13

But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. 11 "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me. 12 "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. 13 "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

APPLICATION

1. Whenever we are exposed to God's Word we should ask ourselves appropriate questions.
2. Several questions are suggested here that we might try to answer.
 - a. Does my life contain extended periods of time for focusing on, and hearing from, God?
 - b. Does my life demonstrate that I am actually trusting God regardless of what He is, or is not, doing related to the circumstances of my life, and the lives of those I love?
 - c. Does my life manifest a lavish, unrestrained love for the Lord, or am I calculating and careful instead?
3. Let us not be like Martha who questioned Jesus' care for her, or like the disciples who were put off and upset by Mary's extravagance.
4. And certainly, let us not be like Judas, who was a betrayer and a thief and willing to sell out the Lord for a price.

NOTE: Sadly, there are many professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ who are willing to dishonor their Lord, and compromise their testimony, for the temporary attractions and approval of this world.