

LIFE WITH SOMETHING MISSING

MARY AND MARTHA, FRIENDS OF JESUS

Luke 10:38-42

Introduction: Both Martha and Mary belong to the gallery of famous Bible women.

I. Some things that were NOT missing

in Martha's life:

A. A comfortable house.

It was apparently HER house, not Mary's.

B. Adequate finances for economic security.

1. They were both women of means

2. John 12:3 tells us that the pound of ointment to anoint Jesus was very costly.

C. Talent as a hostess and homemaker.

Striving for perfection.

D. A practical and unemotional nature or temperament.

She concentrated on the work to be done.

II. But Something was Missing in Martha's Life:

A. The ability to remain carefree and untroubled (v. 41).

1. Mary had this ability.

2. Martha did not have it.

3. She was so upset that she blamed Jesus as well as Mary.

She also asked Jesus to make Mary come into the kitchen and help her.

Her request was denied.

It is more important to attend to Jesus' teachings than to be overly concerned about matters of food and drink.

SOME concern for necessary food and drink is in order in its proper place,

but in this instance Martha was too LAVISH in her efforts for entertainment.

She was preparing too many things on the menu, when only a few, or one or two would have been sufficient and would have allowed her time to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his teaching.

It is interesting to notice that this story comes in the Gospel of Luke immediately after the story of the Good Samaritan.

The major point of that story is that we must be unselfish in ministering to the needs of others.

And the major point of THIS story about Martha and Mary is that the service of others is NOT ENOUGH.

Indeed, it is possible to be distracted with much serving like this.

It is possible to lose one's soul in a program of highly useful activity.

Our service to others must be in a relation of constant alternation or rhythm with our sitting at the Lord's feet and listening to His word.

B. Martha was missing THE EXPERIENCE OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP AND DISCIPLESHIP.

1. Mary had this experience

2. Martha did not

C. Martha was missing the one essential and needful thing -- concern for the spiritual life.

Many good people are missing the same thing in their lives.

D. Moreover, Martha was missing the spiritual sensitivity to the secret power and central mission of Jesus.

She saw him only as a human guest, not as God in the flesh.

1. Mary had this sensitivity.

She was one of the most spiritually sensitive women in the New Testament -- more sensitive, in fact, than his disciples.

This was illustrated in Mary's anointing Jesus before he went to the cross (Jn 12:3).

In boundless gratitude for the restoration of her brother Lazarus from the dead Mary offered the lavish gift of expensive ointment

without consideration of the cost.

"Give all you can; high Heaven rejects the idea of nicely-calculated less or more."

(3)

If you are keenly sensitive to Jesus as the Christ, and as your personal Savior and Lord, and if you understand that he has the final and absolute power over life and death, then you can withhold nothing, absolutely nothing, from Him.

E. But Martha was not only missing this kind of spiritual sensitivity, but she was also missing the ability to put everything into proper perspective.

In overestimating her role as a hostess, she lost the perspective in which all her activities must be viewed.

Having at least for the moment lost the WORD of Christ, she lost the true reason for her social service and hospitality. Then the work itself ceased to be satisfying, significant, and creative.

She lost the one thing which was needful, to give attention and devotion ^{to} the the Words of Jesus, and her service as a hostess was valuable only because that one thing was so important.

We are much more in need of finding MEANING in life than we are of LIFE ITSELF.

Indeed, our frantic, nervous search for "many things", and our attempts to enjoy various novelties and luxuries of life, are efforts to make up for or to hide the lack of the "one thing" which we really need and want more than anything else.

Jesus taught us that the proper perspective is to seek first the Kingdom of God, and then all other things would be added to us. But most people today are seeking material things, hoping through them to find happiness, and then put the Kingdom of God down at the bottom of their list of priorities.

II. Is There Something Missing in Your Life?

1. The knowledge of Jesus as your Personal Savior.

2. Dedication to Him as Lord and Master of your life.

3. Sensitivity to His will for your life.

4. St Augustine said:

"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in You."

5. Are you missing the ability to benefit by the warnings of others concerning your eternal salvation?

In this connection, Elie Wiesel wrote in French a gripping story of a Jew who had escaped from a Nazi Concentration Camp and returned to his native village to warn his fellow Jewish people, but they not only refused to believe his stories, but even to listen to them. Moshé wept as he said, "Jews, listen to me. It's all I ask of you. You don't understand. I have been saved miraculously. I managed to get back here to tell you the story of my death, so that you could prepare yourselves while there was still time. I only wanted to come back to warn you. And no one will listen to me."

They had plenty of time to escape if they had only believed and heeded Moshé. But they refused and perished.

Even so Jesus came back from the dead to warn you to prepare for your eternal destiny. Do you dare take the chance of refusing to believe and heed Him? If you do, you will miss the most important thing in life; that is, eternal life.

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