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# In the Presence of Jesus

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Free media and discipleship resources for pastors, leaders, and growing disciples.

## In the Presence of Jesus

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“Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him as a guest. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he said. But Martha was distracted with all the preparations she had to make, so she came up to him and said, ‘Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do all the work alone? Tell her to help me.’” —Luke 10:38-40

Sweet Martha opens her home and takes under her care our Savior, receiving Him both kindly and hospitably. This is no small matter. There were no grocery stores or take-out restaurants. I am sure that she had to grind wheat to make bread, milk the cow or sheep or goat for milk, and slaughter the fatted calf or whatever for some meat. You get the idea here! Preparations for entertaining in that day were both difficult and time consuming!

Mary meanwhile, was soaking in the presence of Jesus! Having Him in her home was too good to be true. She certainly was not going to be distracted by the details of a meal. Those details could wait, but she could not. Her focus was on finding fulfillment where need used to dwell.

Each one of us was created to fellowship with God. He is a “with” us God! It has been this way from the beginning. We find Him walking in the garden in Genesis calling out for Adam and Eve even after they had eaten the forbidden fruit:

“Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the breezy time of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, ‘Where are you?’” —Genesis 3:8-9

He still calls to His children, wayward or not. He delights in our being *with* Him. We often are caught up in doing things for him, but He simply wants to be with us. I think that is why we are called human “beings” instead of human “doings!”

Martha was busy! Her attention and concentration and focus were on the details of the preparations and the meal. She was preoccupied with her service to Jesus. How very easy it is for us to get distracted in the same way! Our motives may be as pure

as refined gold, yet our focus is pulled away from the most important. The tyranny of the urgent creeps in and overtakes us!

In *Come Away My Beloved*, Frances J. Roberts says: “I want your life, character, and personality to be as beautiful and lovely as I visualized you to be when I created you. Live close to Me, and let Me remold and re-create until I see in you the image of all I want you to be ... I do not want you to work for Me under pressure and tension like a machine—striving to produce. I only want you to live with Me. I have waited for you to wear yourself out. I knew you would find it eventually—the secret of silence and rest, of solitude and of song.”

Silence, rest, solitude, and song sound great to me! They can be ours if we, like Mary, choose to be in God’s presence. What Martha was doing was important; it just wasn’t the most important.

Jesus actually modeled this for us in Matthew, prior to the Sermon on the Mount. He and His disciples were confronted with a vast sea of hurting humanity. The Bible tells us:

“So a report about him spread throughout Syria. People brought to him all who suffered with various illnesses and afflictions, those who had seizures, paralytics, and those possessed by demons, and he healed them. And large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan River.” — Matthew 4:24-25

Can you even imagine the mayhem? This was the disciples’ introduction into following Jesus. I am confident that they felt as helpless to help the hurting as they actually were! This is where we all begin! We are all helpless to help apart from the Holy Spirit’s power within us. What follows is incredibly interesting! Jesus does the unexpected:

“When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain. After he sat down his disciples came to him. Then he began to teach them.” Matthew 5:1-2

He sat down and taught! He did not begin by doing the obvious, which would have been the physical healing; He began by doing the spiritual work! He gave everyone a chance to be in His presence. He was showing the disciples what they would need to accomplish the task ahead of them. A task that was monumental and far beyond their ability! Oh if we could only appropriate this into our own lives! I am convinced

we would not be so frenzied and defeated. Jesus desires to work through us with His power, for His glory, for our good, and for the furtherance of His Kingdom. Our own strength will fail us; it is only through His power that we will be sustained.

This is why we must come to Him daily to renew our strength and to regain our focus. Jesus could have just started by healing the masses, yet He chose to give the people himself.

### **Become More**

“Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.” — Proverbs 3:6

### **Further Reflections**

“Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and mysterious things which you still do not know about.” —Jeremiah 33:3

“Because he loves me,” says the LORD, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.” —Psalm 91:14-16