



Sermon Notes from 9 September

The Call That Lifts You Upward (Luke 10:38-42)

by Pastor Thomas Lim

The story of Mary and Martha is immediately captivating as we are able to identify with them. Mary had a single-minded devotion to Jesus while Martha was very task focused.

3 main characters in this narrative:

1. Martha the distracted disciple

1) Martha was a very resourceful, generous and industrious woman. She loved Jesus and wanted to serve him by preparing a meal for him, and possibly for the many who were with him.

2) She is very consistent.

Jn 12 She is again found using her gifts. But she had an adulterated motive and self-seeking attitude in her service. She was 'distracted' (meaning not only the inability to concentrate but also to be dragged in different directions). In their culture, hospitality was a matter of honour – serving less than the best would bring shame to her family. Oftentimes, we too are unaware that we are distracted until someone awakens us to it.

Lu 10:40 *Why the question? Why humiliate her sister, Mary?* Martha was not only distracted physically but also pulled internally in different directions. She was comparing herself to her sister.

V41 Jesus saw through the ugliness in Martha's heart. She wanted to please and make an impression on Jesus and her guests – the selfish root. Her seemingly selfless service masked her inner need for approval and applause. Like Martha, we too are prone to make our ministry and service,

about us and not about Christ. Jesus gently but firmly called out the hidden idols of Martha's heart.

2. Mary the devoted disciple

Mary, the younger sister, remained unaffected by Martha's accusations.

Jn 11 Mary was one who felt deeply and was a person of the 'heart' while Martha was more concerned with the practicality of things. Listening to Jesus was more important to Mary. She took on the role that was traditionally reserved for men. **Her posture is important; it shows that she was hungry, eager and submitted to Jesus the Master Teacher.** *The three times that Mary is mentioned in the Gospel record, she is found in the same place - at the feet of Jesus (Lu 10; Jn 11:32, 12:3). What is distracting you?*

Lu 10:39,42 **Clearly, being in the presence of Jesus through prayer and study of His Word is the one thing necessary in life.**

3. Jesus the divine Son of God

Jesus called her name twice, signifying the impact his words would have in her life (Jn 11:27) as it did in the lives of the other six in the Bible (Gen 22, 46; Ex 3; 1 Sam 3; Lu 22; Acts 9).

Lu 10:42 **The good portion refers to the posture of submission, hunger for God's words and intimacy with Jesus at his feet.** God is our portion! Christ is our inheritance! (Num 18:20; Ps 73:25) – only because of His irresistible grace! Choose *the good portion at Jesus' feet!*