

Sabbath Rest
Jesus Protects Times of Stillness
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Today's Treasure

*As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by 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 worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."
Luke 10:38-42 .NLI, John 12:1-7 .NLI*

Jesus loved to spend time with his friends. Among some of his closest friends were Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus was welcomed in their home. Martha was the busy host who was distracted by the details of the meal she was preparing. Her distraction with details led to worry, emotional turmoil, and resentment toward her sister who sat at Jesus's feet. Yet, Mary remains seated quietly at his feet, totally absorbed in his teaching. Her heart is focused on her Savior as she listens intently to him instead of the demands of her sister to enter her world of worry, emotional turmoil, and resentment.

How does Jesus respond to Martha's accusation that it is unfair for Mary to just sit there while she does all the work? One would think he would validate Martha's feelings and put Mary to work. After all, Martha was busy preparing a big meal for Jesus and his disciples. Yet, Jesus speaks tenderly, but directly to the condition of Martha's heart. "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details!" He then directs her to the one thing she needed to be concerned about, which was what Mary, the object of her frustration, had discovered.

Mary had discovered the treasures of sitting still at the feet of Jesus listening to what he taught. Mary was not distracted but focused. She was not worried or upset but at peace as she sat still before her Lord. Mary could have reacted to Martha's frustration by leaving Jesus's feet to appease Martha's accusations, but she chose to remain. Jesus protected Mary's desire to sit at his feet and learn from him. He drew a boundary

around Mary's time of stillness before him and stated very clearly, "it will not be taken from her."

LIFE GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

What is our attitude in service? Are we like Martha who was so busy and distracted with preparing the meal for Jesus and his disciples that we become resentful of our sisters who have discovered the treasures of sitting still at his feet? There is nothing wrong with serving by preparing a meal. In fact, we are called to serve by feeding the hungry and providing hospitality. But when serving becomes a distraction from times of stillness before Jesus, our focus becomes our works which results in a whirlwind of emotional turmoil and resentment toward others.

The stillness Mary discovered at the feet of Jesus protected her. Mary does not speak one word during the exchange between Jesus and Martha. She does not justify her priorities to Martha, and she does not leave Jesus's feet to appease Martha. She remains at Jesus's feet under his protection as he speaks on her behalf.

Sabbath rest was instituted for us. A time to sit still before our Lord and learn from him. As we practice Sabbath rest, Jesus will protect our time at his feet. He will protect us from distraction, worrying about all the details, and resentment from others who have chosen work over times of rest.

PRAYER

Father, Thank you for the gift of Sabbath rest when we can sit in the stillness we find at your feet. Protect us from the distraction, worry, and resentment we experience when we prioritize work at the expense of Sabbath rest. Help us to remain silent as you speak for us when confronted with resentment from those who demand that we leave your feet to enter their world of distraction and worry. You are Lord of the Sabbath and in you, we find rest.

In Jesus' name. Amen