

Driven to Distraction

Scripture Reading — Luke 10:38-42

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one.”

—Luke 10:41-42 —

You have to love Martha, don't you? She was much like us—distracted by many things!

Martha had many mouths to feed, and she wanted to be the best possible host to her guests. No wonder she was “dragged all around.” That's what the word for “distracted” literally means. Because of her insistence that everything needed to be just right, she was pulled in every direction till she was nearly coming apart at the seams! Finally, in desperation, she asked Jesus to tell Mary to pitch in: “Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

What made Martha so driven? Did she somehow need to feel important? Was she driven by a desire to live up to the expectations of others? Or was she simply unwilling to come to terms with her own limitations?

In Jesus' response we hear his tenderness and care for her: “Martha, Martha ... you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one.” Yet we also hear a gentle rebuke. Martha had chosen what was second best. Mary, on the other hand, had chosen well. She had put Jesus in first place, and as a result, she was able to set aside busyness for a while to soak up the joy of being with her Lord.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, there is so much to do! We find it hard to simply “stop” to listen and learn from you. Teach us how to gather at your feet, ready to honor you and take your words into our hearts. Amen.

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