



# FROM THE PASTOR

*As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.*

*But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.*

*She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself?"*

*Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered,*

*"you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one.*

*Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:39-42 NIV*

Dear Friends,

There is always a temptation in this story to see Martha as the “bad one”, and Mary as the “good one”. Yet I think it wasn't that Martha didn't want to listen, rather she felt obligated to make sure dinner came off without a hitch. Were there some important details that only she could decide? Probably. Did she need to respond to them all? Probably not, but Martha's conscience left nothing to chance. She was probably so imprisoned by a “micromanagement” mindset she couldn't take the time to sit still and be with Jesus. To that it would have been extremely hard for Martha. But if she had made that choice perhaps she too had gotten the better part of her encounter with Jesus.

Here in the 21<sup>st</sup> century maybe we can relate to Martha. With so many demands on our time, work, activities, or finding some “downtime” just to relax or “sleep in”, taking the time for our spiritual nurture seems to get pushed to the bottom of the list. Unfortunately for all of us our “Martha” tendencies can too easily get the upper hand.

So as the new year unfolds perhaps a worthwhile goal as people of faith is to reflect on how much of our lives reflect Martha or Mary. To be Mary means to be still, and put many perceived priorities on hold. It might mean being quiet after the words of the psalmist when he says in Psalms 46:10, “Be still and know that I am God”. It might mean taking some time from watching TV, and spending a few minutes reading the Bible or quiet prayer.

So, to be a “Mary” is not an easy choice. But obviously Jesus intimates that it is the better choice. In 2018 take the time to be a “Mary”, you will be spiritually enriched if you do.

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