

Text— Luke 10:38-42

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Our Scripture selection is an interesting portion of God's Word which can teach us Christians about choices, decisions, and priorities.

Now, concerning choices, there are some professed Christians who say they "chose" Jesus Christ, or they "made a decision" to follow Jesus. Nevertheless, such a choice or decision is impossible for anyone to make since all naturally conceived human beings are sinful, unclean, and spiritually dead, for Holy Scripture plainly states, "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. [For] we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand." (Romans 3:23; Isaiah 64:6-8) Furthermore, John 15:16 reports that Jesus once told His followers, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

Indeed, we and all other Christians are Christians because God chose us and gifted us with faith in Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord, for Ephesians 2:1-10 reports, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in

mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Accordingly, let us never forget that we who are Christians are Christians because God graciously called us and gifted us with faith in Jesus Christ.

However, once we've become Christians there are choices and decisions that we must make as followers of our Savior. Therefore, we can all benefit from considering what our Scripture selection relates regarding:

"JESUS AT MARTHA'S HOUSE"

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) Why Jesus was at Martha's house
- 2) What happened while Jesus was at Martha's house

-1-

Verse 38, ----- (Luke 10:38)

It was while Jesus was traveling with His disciples, *it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.*

We learn in John 11:1 that "Bethany" was "the town of Mary and her sister Martha." Bethany means "house of dates" and was "a village on the south-eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, about two miles east of Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho." [Easton's Bible Dictionary]

Martha owned a house there in the village of Bethany, and she received Jesus into her house, having obviously invited Him and His disciples to be her guests. Martha knew Jesus as her Lord, for so she addressed Him in verse 40 of our text. Hence, Jesus was at Martha's house because she desired Him to visit her home.

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As we continue to ponder our Scripture selection, let us see what happened while Jesus was at Martha's house.

Verse 39, ----- (Luke 10:39)

Upon being invited to Martha's house, Jesus arrived and was received into her house, and Martha *had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.*

Apparently, once Jesus was inside Martha's house, He began to teach as He was accustomed to do whenever there was opportunity to do so. Mary was attentive to hear Jesus' Word as she humbly sat at His feet. Thus, Mary – like her sister Martha – knew Jesus as her Lord, for she later addressed Him as such when she saw Him after her brother Lazarus had passed away. (John 11:32) Accordingly, both Mary and Martha believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

My friends, Mary and Martha were Christians, and like all other Christians they were Christians because God graciously gifted them with faith in Jesus. And how is it that God gifts folks with faith in Jesus? The answer to that question is given to us by the apostle Paul, who wrote by the inspiration of God, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power

of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:21-25; Ephesians 5:25-27) Hence, we are to highly value the Word of God.

Looking again at our text, we see that Mary highly valued the Word of God, for she *sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.* Yes, Mary, who was already a Christian, continued to highly value the Word of God. Mary knew that she was greatly privileged to hear God Himself preach His Word right there in her sister Martha's house. Can you imagine the scene? The Lord Jesus Christ Himself expounding His Word! What a blessing to those who would attentively hear it.

Let us never forget that Jesus once said to some Jews who believed on Him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)

Fellow Christians, we are never done with God's Word while we live in this world, for God works through His Holy Word to sustain us in the faith and grow us in the faith, which is why Holy Writ in 1 Thessalonians 2:13 informs us, "the word of God... effectually worketh also in you that believe."

Fellow Christians, we sin daily, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." (Ecclesiastes 7:20) Therefore, we need to regularly hear God's Word – God's Law – because Romans 3:19-20 relates, "we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Furthermore, we

also need to regularly hear God's Word – the Gospel of Christ – for we read in Romans 1:16-17 that, "the gospel of Christ... is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." Thus, Mary was wise to choose to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His Word. Let us likewise highly value Jesus' Word as we have it in the pure preserved Holy Scriptures, completely and accurately translated into English in the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

Verse 40, ----- (Luke 10:40)

Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to Him preaching and teaching His Word— the words of eternal life. *But Martha was cumbered about much serving.*

Martha was agitated and distracted about doing a lot of serving. Martha loved Jesus and knew Him as her Lord, but she was overly focused on providing Jesus and His disciples with a fine meal. Consequently, Martha was perturbed by the fact that her sister Mary was not helping her do the serving, which is why she said to Jesus: *Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.* It's as if Martha was thinking: Lord, don't you care? Lord, tell my sister to get with it and help me with the chores!

Oh, Martha loved the Lord Jesus, but she got ticked-off at her sister for not helping with the meal preparations, the setting of the table, and so forth.

Many Christians today are like Martha, for they busy themselves with their own ideas regarding serving while they ignore hearing God's Word. Just look around at the numerous churches which call themselves Christian while they ignore the Holy Scriptures and instead busy themselves with all sorts of money-making schemes, such as entertainment events, dinners, dancing, gambling,

and the like, with the idea of getting people to come to their church in order to raise funds and gain membership numbers. Such professed Christians have their priorities out-of-proper-order, to say the least.

Let us never forget that our Lord Jesus Christ declares in Luke 12:29-31, "seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you." Yes, the things of God are to be first and foremost to us in our thinking and doing.

We must never think that our Lord Jesus does not care about us. Jesus has in fact shown the utmost care for us in that He has kept God's Law perfectly for us and has paid for our lack of keeping God's Law. Jesus shed His own holy and precious blood while nailed to the cross of Calvary to pay for our sins in full, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Romans 5:6-11) Thanks and praise be to God for His undeserved love shown to us in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Verses 41 & 42, ----- (Luke 10:41-42)

Despite Martha's sinful snapping at the Lord Jesus, she certainly loved the Lord Jesus and had good intentions, but her priorities were messed-up. Consequently, Jesus corrected her thinking.

Picture the scene: Jesus shaking His head as He beheld Martha standing there ticked-off with sweat streaming down her face as a result of her laboring to prep the meal; Jesus then saying to her: *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

Jesus' words to Martha give us some insight into the woman's personality, for Jesus said she was full of care and troubled about many things— the lady was a worrier, especially about the things of life in this world. Oh, we all have different personalities, and the Lord knows us better than we know ourselves. The Lord desires that we have proper God-pleasing priorities: that we place and keep Him and His Word first in our hearts and minds.

Note well that Jesus says: *one thing is needful.* Indeed, we are all full of need of one thing, and that is: THE WORD OF GOD AND THE SAVIOR WHICH THAT WORD PROCLAIMS. It's as we considered earlier in this sermon, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17) And, "the word of God... effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13) Indeed, GOD'S WORD IS AND REMAINS NEEDFUL to us in order that we may have faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord, and that we might continue in that faith of Jesus Christ, for Mark 16:16 plainly states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mary made the better choice than did Martha, and Jesus was not about to take that good part from Mary. Mary chose to feed on God's good and gracious Word as preached and taught by Jesus, rather than worrying about physical food which could be partaken of later. Martha could have – and should have – simply turned the heat down on the meal she was cooking, and joined her sister Mary at Jesus' feet to hear His Word. I'm sure that Mary would have subsequently gladly helped Martha prepare and serve the meal when Jesus had concluded His preaching and teaching.

My friends, WE NEED to make proper choices to this very day. WE NEED to CHOOSE THAT GOOD PART – regular time in God's Word – rather than choosing to put worldly things ahead of time in God's Word. For example, time is better spent first in church on Sunday hearing God's Word rather than running off to a ball game and a tailgate party, or running to a lake to swim, fish, and picnic. ONE THING IS NEEDFUL! WE ALL NEED GOD'S WORD which shows us our sin and shows us our only Savior from sin, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, it's true, for in John 14:6 Jesus who cannot lie says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 3:36 adds, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Therefore, let us never forget the one thing that is needful: spending time in the Holy Word of God, taking it to heart, for Jesus Himself says: "blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." (Luke 11:28)

Let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord, by regularly spending time in God's Word, the Holy Bible, for, "the holy scriptures... are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:15-17) Yes, let us remember what our sermon text has taught us regarding Jesus at Martha's house. Amen.

m.e.l.