

Making the Most of 525,600 Minutes

Listen Before You Leap

January 22, 2023

Overarching Theme: 2023 – Living the Dream

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.

Core Point: 2023 can be a year of living the dream of faithful discipleship as we take a step forward in following Jesus Christ.

Reflect on this Scripture: Luke 10:38-42

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him.^[a] ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at Jesus's^[b] feet and listened to what he was saying. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by her many tasks, so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her, then, to help me." ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—indeed only one.^[c] Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

Commentary:

Martha's gracious offer of hospitality to Jesus and his disciples soon leads to conflict. Based on cultural and personal expectations, Martha proceeds with extensive preparations, assuming that her sister Mary will do her part. But Mary chooses otherwise, much to Martha's chagrin. While Martha is distracted by "parts" of the meal, Mary chooses "the good part" (listening to Jesus). Jesus' remarks infer that disciples often need more discernment, not more vigorous effort. Martha presumes to tell Jesus what he should do; Mary lets Jesus tell her what she should do. By choosing to attend to Jesus' teachings while laying aside everything else, Mary exemplifies what it means to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind" (v. 27). As if to affirm Mary's radical violation of Palestinian social roles, Jesus adds that what she has chosen "will not be taken away from her" (v. 42).

- Adapted from the New Interpreters Bible Commentary, Vol IX, p. 232

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. How are you at listening and discerning? Are you more of an action person, a contemplative person or somewhere in between?
2. Are you ever distracted or worried by the expectations of others (either at home or in the workplace)? Explain.
3. Have you ever been in a situation in which urgencies and expectations had you busy and active but the end result was not necessarily productive?
4. In the midst of the busyness, distractions and worries of life, have you ever missed out on something really important?
5. In this passage, Jesus seems to advocate listening before leaping into some endeavor. What are some ways that you can pause and reflect before you are tempted to leap?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: Luke 10:41-42⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "*Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, ⁴² but few things are needed—indeed only one.^[c] Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.*"