

The Martha in Me

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. (John 12:1-3 NKJV)

Most of us are familiar with the account of Mary and Martha, when Martha, in her whirlwind of activity accused Jesus of not caring. It isn't hard for me to imagine her doing so because when I get caught up in my "to do list" I pretty much eliminate Jesus from the equation. Jesus gently rebuked her but He didn't overlook the need to bring Martha to a deeper understanding of her need to change. He did that by demonstrating His love and His ability to act in a way that totally transcended her human understanding. He raised Lazarus from the dead. In the process He wept with the mourners and defied the finality of mortal life. By the time the event described in the scripture above occurred, Martha was able to glorify God in her attitude of service. She was still Martha, industrious and task oriented, but her attitude was not one of anxiety and stress. Martha served, Lazarus sat at the table and Mary worshipped by anointing Jesus' feet.

There is a lesson in this for us as well. Oftentimes life becomes overwhelming and looks impossible by human standards. When it does, it is easy to look to the heavens and question God for allowing it to happen. But the correct response in those times is simply to humble ourselves and perform the tasks that He has given us to do. We need not worry about what others are doing or not doing, but simply glorify God by relying upon Him to accomplish what He is calling us to do in the moment. We can be grateful that He allows us to serve Him in any capacity at all!

Lately my life has been one of busyness. Over and over again in my quiet time one scripture comes to my attention; *And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 NKJV)*

I can receive this gentle rebuke from the Lord (through His Holy Spirit) in one of two ways. I can allow myself to feel overwhelmed and indirectly accuse God of not caring, or I can take it as Him gently putting His hand on my shoulder to remind me that He is very much present to empower to accomplish all that He has given me to do. The more intimately I am acquainted with Him the greater chance there is that I will glorify Him with my response.

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