

Time Audit Chronicles: Martha and Mary

(Luke 10:38-42)

Prologue: The Choice of Priorities

The Presswood family was gathered around the table, the soft glow of the lamp flickering in the evening quiet. Ariel had just finished reading **Luke 10:38-42**, the story of **Martha and Mary**, two sisters who responded very differently when Jesus visited their home. Ariel was deep in thought, reflecting on the contrast between the two sisters' choices—one busy with tasks and the other sitting at Jesus' feet. Alice, still holding Mr. Fluffernutter, was pretending to set up a grand feast for her toys while Mr. Fluffernutter sat at the head of the table, waiting for the conversation to begin.

"Daddy," Ariel asked, "Why did Jesus say that Mary made the better choice? Wasn't Martha doing important work too?"

Ryan smiled, knowing this was an insightful question. "That's a great question, Ariel. Jesus didn't mean that **serving** and **being busy** are bad, but He was teaching us about **priorities**. Martha was focused on getting everything ready for Jesus' visit—she was busy, but she was missing out on the opportunity to sit with Him and listen to Him. Mary, on the other hand, chose to stop everything and be present with Jesus, hearing His words and enjoying His company. Jesus was teaching that sometimes, we need to prioritize time with Him over all the busyness of life."

Ariel nodded, beginning to understand the lesson. "So, Jesus wasn't saying that work is bad—it's just that sometimes we get so busy that we forget to spend time with Him and listen to what He has to say."

"Exactly," Ryan said. "Jesus wants us to remember that He is the most important part of our lives, and that it's essential to spend time with Him, even in the midst of everything else. Let's use the **Time Audit Machine** to go back and see the moment when Martha and Mary made their different choices."

The Journey Begins: Martha and Mary's House (Luke 10:38)

The Time Audit Machine hummed, and with a flash of light, the family found themselves standing in the courtyard of a **home in Bethany**, a village near Jerusalem. The warm evening light bathed the house, and inside, the air was filled with the sounds of people talking, moving around, and preparing for a special guest. **Martha and Mary** were inside, and Jesus had come to visit.

"This is the house where Martha and Mary lived," Ryan said. "Martha, the older sister, was busy getting everything ready for Jesus, and Mary was sitting at His feet, listening to Him. Jesus had just entered their home, and this was an important moment, because He had come to share His teachings and spend time with them."

Ariel looked around, imagining what it must have been like. "Jesus was there in person! I bet everyone was excited to hear what He had to say."

“Yes,” Ryan said. “And Martha was trying to make sure everything was perfect. But in her effort to serve, she became frustrated and distracted, while Mary chose to focus on being with Jesus.”

Martha’s Busy Work: Frustration in Service (Luke 10:39-40)

As Martha hurried around the house, preparing the meal and taking care of the details, she grew frustrated. She looked over at her sister, Mary, who was sitting at Jesus’ feet, listening intently to His words. Martha felt overwhelmed and went to Jesus, asking, “**Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.**” (Luke 10:40)

Ariel frowned. “Martha was doing all the work, and she was frustrated that Mary wasn’t helping. But why did she go to Jesus and ask Him to tell Mary to help?”

Ryan nodded. “Martha was probably feeling **stressed** and **overwhelmed**. She was trying to serve Jesus in the best way she knew, but in doing so, she lost sight of the most important thing—being **present** with Him. She wanted Mary to help her with the tasks, but in that moment, Jesus was offering something even more valuable: the chance to **be with Him** and hear His teaching. Martha was so focused on the work that she missed the opportunity to simply enjoy being in Jesus’ presence.”

Ariel thought about this. “So, Martha thought she was doing the right thing by working, but she wasn’t spending time with Jesus, which was the most important thing.”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Jesus wasn’t saying that service is wrong, but He was showing that **prioritizing time with Him** is even more important. There’s a balance—work and service are good, but they shouldn’t overshadow our need to be with Jesus and listen to Him.”

Jesus’ Response: Prioritizing Time with Him (Luke 10:41-42)

Jesus responded gently to Martha’s frustration, saying:

“**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.**” (Luke 10:41-42)

Ariel blinked in surprise. “Jesus didn’t tell Martha she was wrong for serving. He just said she was worried about too many things and that Mary had chosen the better part. What does He mean by ‘the good part’?”

Ryan smiled. “The ‘good part’ Jesus is talking about is the **time spent with Him**—listening to His words, learning from Him, and being in His presence. While Martha was busy working, Mary chose to spend time with Jesus, which was the most important thing in that moment. Jesus is reminding Martha that service and work are good, but they should never take the place of spending time with Him.”

Ariel nodded, understanding more. “So, Jesus isn’t saying that serving is bad—it’s about **balance**. We can’t get so caught up in the tasks that we forget to spend time with Him.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Jesus is teaching us that **time with Him** is the priority, because it’s through that time that we grow in relationship with Him. When we spend time listening to Him, it deepens our understanding and our ability to serve Him and others better.”

Reflection: The Need for Balance Between Work and Worship

Back in the garage, the Time Audit Machine powered down, and the family sat quietly, reflecting on the lesson they had just witnessed. Ariel turned to her father, her heart filled with the deeper meaning of the story. Alice, still with Mr. Fluffernutter, was pretending to balance tasks while also listening to Mr. Fluffernutter’s “wisdom.”

“Jesus really wanted Martha to understand that she didn’t need to be so worried about everything being perfect,” Ariel said. “It was more important to just spend time with Him and **listen**.”

“Yes,” Ryan said. “Martha’s heart was in the right place—she wanted to serve Jesus. But she got so caught up in the details that she missed the most important thing—being present with Jesus and letting Him speak into her life. Jesus was showing her that **priorities matter**.”

Ariel thought for a moment. “So, when we’re busy with school or other things, we have to remember to take time to just sit with Jesus, listen to Him, and not let all the busyness distract us.”

“That’s exactly right,” Ryan said. “There will always be things to do, but we need to make sure that **time with Jesus** is our priority. He is the source of peace, wisdom, and direction, and spending time with Him is the best way to live in balance with the busyness of life.”

Takeaway: Prioritize Time with Jesus Over Busyness

In Luke 10:38-42, the story of **Martha and Mary** teaches us an important lesson about **prioritizing time with Jesus**. Martha was busy serving, but Jesus reminded her that the most important thing was being present with Him, listening to His teaching, and growing in relationship with Him. While service and work are important, they should never take the place of spending time with Jesus. Like Mary, we are called to **choose** the “good part” — the time spent with Jesus that cannot be taken away. In our busy lives, we must remember to set aside time to listen, learn, and be in His presence, allowing Him to guide and strengthen us for the work He calls us to do.