

COURAGEOUS

CHRISTIANS

HOLIDAY CLUB

Mary and Martha: Courage to stop and spend time with Jesus

Jesus and his disciples had been travelling around many villages and towns, telling all who would listen about the good news of the Kingdom of God, the good news that God's reign and rule are near! Many people welcomed the disciples as they took peace and kindness wherever they went. They were able to meet and befriend many people, teach and heal the sick. Sometimes the disciples went to places where they were not welcomed: people would not and could not listen to the good news. But Jesus taught them to cheerfully and kindly move on to the next village. So they did.

The disciples often told one another great stories of miracles and healings that they had witnessed as they prayed in Jesus' name. They were so excited! There were still some people who tried to trick Jesus by asking him difficult questions. The disciples were amazed that Jesus always seemed to be able to teach using stories that helped people understand the truth about the God who loved them deeply.

One day, Jesus and the disciples came to Bethany, a village outside of the big city of Jerusalem. A woman named Martha rushed out to greet them in the road.

'Come in! Please, come to our house, Master! Come in and rest and be fed. My sister Mary and I would love to have you and your followers to stay with us for a while!' Jesus smiled. He followed the woman into her home. Martha busied herself in the kitchen, clattering pots and pans and laying food out on platters and in bowls.

'Welcome, Master!' said Mary, Martha's sister, as Jesus entered. She fell at Jesus feet and kissed them. 'Please, sit down. This is your home too!' The house was warm and comfortable and there was plenty of food for all the disciples. Martha bustled in and out

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with aromatic dishes and spicy meats, clearing empty plates and refilling goblets with wine. Before long, they were all feeling full and rested from a delicious meal. Mary and the disciples sat around the table in the fading daylight, listening to Jesus and laughing and sharing stories about the goodness of God. Martha quickly lit the oil lamps and kept the fire warm in the grate. As she returned once again to the kitchen, her arms laden with dishes, everyone heard a mighty ‘CRASH!’ followed by a small cry and a loud sigh.

‘Martha! Are you alright? What has happened?’ asked Jesus. Martha returned to the room where Jesus, her sister Mary and all the disciples reclined around the table in the lamplight.

‘Master, don’t you care that I am having to do all this work by myself? My sister has not helped at all with this meal! I am left to serve and clear the table, to wash up, to make the fire...’

‘Martha!’ said Jesus.

‘Can’t you tell her? It’s not fair that I have to do it all! Can’t you tell her to come and help me?’ Martha looked at Mary, then back to Jesus. ‘Please?’

‘Martha,’ said Jesus, again. ‘Martha, come and sit down. Mary has done the right thing, to stop work and spend time with me. There’s no point being so worried about all this. Just come and spend time with me. I won’t be here for long, you know.’

‘But...’ began Martha.

‘Come,’ said Jesus, gently holding out his hand, ‘There’s a space next to me. Come and rest.’