

July 9, 2017

“Jesus and a Few Friends”

“Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me.” John 15:15b

“Friends with Same Genes but Different: Getting Along in Spite of Our Differences – Mary and Martha!”

“Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord’s feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing.” Luke 10:39-40a

First Impression

Age: Martha, older; Mary, younger
Occupation: Domestic Engineers
Summary: One might think that Martha is the worker and Mary is the shirker.
Culture: They were expected to practice the customary responses to guests in their home. Women were to be in the kitchen working and men were talking in the living room.

Family: Lazarus, Martha, & Mary
Friends: Close with Jesus
Romance: Martha, possibly widowed
Things: Possibly her home as she opened her home for hospitality. It was 2 miles outside of Jerusalem.

Journey

Goal: Service to the Lord
Motivation: A great honor to host guests.
Conflict: Two sisters seeing life differently
Awakening: Jesus’ response to the sisters

Personality

Flaws: Martha was a bit obsessive; Mary appears to be in the moment
Graces: Martha desired to serve and host. Mary’s tender heart put her in relationships.
Skills: Martha was practical, efficient, & hospitable. Mary was genuine, gracious, sincere, & sensitive.

Martha = ESFJ Mary = INFP

Myers-Briggs:

To increase energy, those who...

Turn to others are an **E** (extroversion) Turn inward are **I** (introversion)

Those who take in information in a...

Creative way are an **N** (intuition) Pragmatic way are **S** (sensing)

When making decisions, those who...

Seek harmony are an **F** (feeling) Seek objective truth are **T** (thinking)

Those who prefer to...

Get closer and act are a **J** (judging) Stay open and adapt are **P** (perceiving)

<http://www.humanmetrics.com>

A. Martha and Mary were friends of Jesus...

Referred to in Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-46; John 12:1-11

1. Martha appears to be the elder and most outspoken of the sisters.
2. Martha appears to be the first to speak and address the concerns, and does so with a more direct approach.
3. Mary appears to be at the feet of Jesus whenever the opportunity arises. In all three accounts, Mary was at His feet.
4. The encounter at the first meal with Jesus is not repeated in the second meal, although the circumstances seem to be the same.

B. The three passages...

1. Martha was in the kitchen; Mary was in the living room!

“Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord’s feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing.” Luke 10:39-40a

2. Martha was outside; Mary was inside.

“When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed in the house.” John 11:20

3. Martha was servicing; Mary was at Jesus’ feet again.
“A dinner was prepared in Jesus’ honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.” John 12:2-3

C. If you were friends with Mary and Martha, what takeaway would you gain from your friendship?

1. From Mary – It is always right to spend time with Jesus.
2. From Martha – Serving with the wrong attitude is just wrong.
3. From Mary – Life is full of choices and we will always be challenged to choose better over good.

4. From Martha – It is never too late to change. We all have different gifts but we need to use them with joy.
5. From Mary – Whatever you give to Jesus is never wasted, too costly, or too much.
6. From Jesus – Keep your priorities in the right order. Worship always comes before work. “Don’t just do something, sit there!”
7. From Jesus – The better choice is always the eternal over the temporal.

Martha or Mary Leadership Style Inventory*

*Charles Stone

As you take the assessment, grade yourself in this way:

- If the statement is never true of you, give yourself a ‘0.’
- If it’s sometimes true of you, give yourself a ‘1.’
- If it’s often true of you, give yourself a ‘2.’

1. The urgent often crowds out the important.

Martha’s busyness in the kitchen caused her to miss what was most important.

2. Projects often take precedence over people.

Martha’s project and busyness to make a meal trumped being present with Jesus. Author and pastor Chuck Swindoll writes, “Busyness rapes relationships. It substitutes shallow frenzy for deep friendship. It promises satisfying dreams, but delivers hollow nightmares. It feeds the ego, but starves the inner man. It fills the calendar, but fractures the family. It cultivates a program, but plows under priorities.” (Killing Giants, Pulling Thorns, p. 79)

3. Everything has to be done perfectly.

A simple meal would have sufficed for Jesus, but not for Martha.

4. You feel a nagging feeling of oughtness.

Martha had to attend to the details that *had to be made*.

5. You often show insensitivity and impatience toward other people.

Martha yelled at Jesus for not sending Mary into the kitchen to help.

6. You feel resentment about others who aren’t as driven.

The story reveals Martha’s resentment toward Mary’s lack of helping her prepare the meal.

7. You convey a demanding spirit with others.

Martha demanded that Jesus tell Mary to help.

8. You have difficulty concentrating on one thing at a time.

The scripture uses the word *worried* to describe an agitated state of mind which certainly inhibited her ability to concentrate and focus.

9. Delays easily frustrate you.

Ditto what I’ve written above about Martha’s response.

10. You often experience sunset fatigue.

This term sunset fatigue comes from John Ortberg. He describes it as coming to the end of your day with no energy for important things like being present for your family. Martha must have been exhausted after Jesus’ visit, not because of Jesus’ presence, but because of her misplaced priorities.

How did you do? Here’s the scoring key.

- If you scored 0-3, you’re in good shape.
- If you scored 4-6, take 2 baby aspirin.
- If you scored 7-12, take 2 extra strength Tylenol.
- If you scored 12-20, you might need Valium.

If you found yourself more like Martha than Mary, consider three ways to counter a Martha driven leadership style.

1. **Slow down your pace of leadership.** Once when the pace got too frenetic, Jesus told his disciples to get away to a quiet place and rest (Mark 6.31). Slowing down involves not just slowing our physical pace, but our mental pace as well.
2. **Reflect more often to discover what is most essential.** Martha was in such a rush that she failed to reflect upon what was most important at that very moment, being with Jesus. Jesus preferred her company over her service at that moment. Life will not automatically arrange itself into the correct priorities. We must regularly stop to reflect so we don’t miss what’s most important.
3. **Put first things first.** Jesus told Martha that “*One thing is needed.*” Sometimes we simply must narrow our choices to put first things first. The word priority kept its singular focus until the 1900s when we pluralized the term. We often need to step back from the pace of life and leadership to make sure we have prioritized what is truly most important, keeping ourselves moored to Jesus as we lead.

As Jesus said, “*Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.*”

Summer sermon series:

July 16, 2017

Losing a Friend: Dealing with Loss – Lazarus!

John 11

July 23, 2017

Trusting A Close Friend: The Many Sides of Peter!

July 30, 2017

Friend in the Military: Defending and Believing –The Centurion!

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| ISTJ –Responsible, sincere, analytical, reserved, realistic, systematic. Hardworking and trustworthy with sound practical judgment. | ISFJ – Warm considerate, gentle, responsible, pragmatic, and thorough. Devoted caretakers who enjoy being helpful to others. |
| INFJ – Idealistic, organized, insightful, dependable, compassionate and gentle. Seek harmony and cooperation, enjoy intellectual stimulation. | INTJ – Innovative, independent, strategic, logical, reserved, insightful. Driven by their own original ideas to achieve improvements. |
| ISTP – Action-oriented, logical, analytical, spontaneous, reserved, independent. Enjoy adventure skilled at understanding how mechanical things work. | ISFP – Gentle, sensitive, nurturing, helpful, flexible, realistic. Seek to create a personal environment that is both beautiful and practical. |
| INFP – Sensitive, creative, idealistic, perceptive, caring, loyal. Value inner harmony and personal growth, focus on dreams and possibilities. | INTP – Intellectual, logical, precise, reserved, flexible, imaginative. Original thinkers who enjoy speculation and creative problem solving. |
| ESTP – Outgoing, realistic, action-oriented, curious, versatile, spontaneous. Pragmatic problem solvers and skillful negotiators. | ESFP – Playful, enthusiastic, friendly, spontaneous, tactful, flexible. Have strong common sense; enjoy helping people in tangible ways. |
| ENFP – Enthusiastic, creative spontaneous, optimistic, supportive, playful. Value inspiration; enjoy starting new projects, see potential in others. | ENTP – Inventive, enthusiastic, strategic, enterprising, inquisitive, versatile. Enjoy new ideas and challenges, value inspiration. |
| ESTJ – Efficient, outgoing, analytical, systematic, dependable, realistic. Like to run the show and get things done in an orderly fashion. | ESFJ – Friendly, outgoing, reliable, conscientious, organized, practical. Seek to be helpful and please others, enjoy being active and productive. |
| ENFJ – Caring, enthusiastic, idealistic, organized, diplomatic, responsible. Skilled communicators who value connection with people. | ENTJ – Strategic, logical, efficient, outgoing, ambitious, independent. Effective organizers of people and long-range planners. |