

**TFTD 2025.13      Wednesday March 19<sup>th</sup>**  
**Choosing the better part: Luke 10.38-42**



Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at Jesus's feet and listened to what he was saying. 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." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things, <sup>42</sup> but few things are needed—indeed only one. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her."

"There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part." Choices!

So, Mary has made the better choice, says Jesus, and we quickly conclude

that we should be like Mary and not like Martha. We are to sit and listen rather than be active and busy. That is one way of reading this text but is it the definitive reading? Is Mary necessarily better, more holy, more loved, more acceptable to Jesus?

If Jesus is saying that Mary, to the exclusion of Martha, is that the way we are to be then the next time there's work to be done? I'll just choose the better part and sit here with Jesus. I don't however think that is what Jesus is saying - Jesus is making an observation, not a judgment.

I don't think this text is really even about Mary and Martha but about you and me and the choices we make. Jesus is saying that our choices matter. I wonder how many choices we make each day? Sometimes we choose unconsciously, sometimes quickly and easily, while at other times with great deliberation and struggle. Some choices are insignificant. They are forgotten the next day.

Other choices have great meaning and the consequences are long lasting. Our choices can shape who we are. They can establish in us patterns and habits of how we see and act, the words we speak, and the ways we relate to each other. Our choices can set a trajectory for our life. Our choices make a difference.

In this particular context Mary made the better choice but it was a choice for that time, that place, and those circumstances. Change the setting and Martha's choice might have been the better part. We can see that in Jesus' own life.

Sometimes Jesus went off by himself to be alone, silent, still, to pray, to sit and listen, to be present to his Father. At those times he was like Mary. Other times Jesus was active, on the move, in the midst of people, and busy teaching, healing, feeding 5000. On those days he was more like Martha.

There is not simply one choice that is to be made for ever and always. We are always to be discerning the one thing needed at this time, in this place, in these circumstances. What is the better part given our particular

**situation? Some days Mary will be our guide and other days it will be Martha. Either way we must choose.**

**What is the one thing needed right now, in this moment? Not forever and ever but just for now. What is the one thing needed that will keep you aware, open, receptive, and present to Christ? Choose that. That is the better part but hold your choice lightly because there will be another choice to be made after that, and another after that one. We choose our way into life, love, relationships, faith, and even salvation, and those are the choices that really do matter.**

**Lenten blessings, Linda**