



Mary and Martha

Unusual Women in the Bible Zoom Bible Study

July 26, 2022

John 11:28 - 37

²⁸ After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." ²⁹ When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

³² When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. ³⁴ "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

³⁵ Jesus wept.

³⁶ Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

³⁷ But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Do you see a change in the relationship between Martha and Mary?

What is your first reaction when you're facing one of life's many struggles? Who do you run to first?

When Mary gets to Jesus, she immediately falls at his feet in an act of worship and in grief, weeping, but she says the same words Martha had said: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (vs 32)

Remember that death is the enemy.

1 Corinthians 15:55 – 57:

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mary and Martha did not lose faith in Jesus. They believed he could heal Lazarus, but that's where their faith stopped. That was the limit of their faith.



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Jesus does not rebuke Mary for her accusation or her tears or what some might call her lack of faith. What did Jesus do? Jesus wept.

Hebrews 4:15 – 16:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Notice that Martha said, "The Teacher is here. . ." Jesus is the Master Teacher and he uses everything in our lives as teaching moments. But especially his most effective lessons come when we're hurting the most.

John 15:5: *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."*

Hard times teach us that we are not self-sufficient. Someone has written:

Until I learned to trust, I never learned to pray;
And I did not learn to fully trust 'til sorrows came my way.

Until I felt my weakness, His strength I never knew;
Nor dreamed 'til I was stricken that He could see me through.

Who deepest drinks of sorrow, drinks deepest, too, of grace;
He sends the storm so He Himself can be our hiding place.

His heart that seeks our highest good, knows well when things annoy;
We would not long for heaven if earth held only joy.

Why did Jesus weep at the tomb of Lazarus?

Even though Jesus knows that one day he will wipe away all our tears, he still weeps with us when our hearts are broken.

Isaiah 53:3a: *He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.*

The Jews who were there saw Jesus' tears as tears of love:

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!" (John 11:36)

Others were not so understanding.

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?" (John 11:37)

The enemy will lie to you in times of severe trials. He will try to tell you that God must not love you or God is not able to prevent trials like you're going through.

How do you resist Satan? What are specific things you can do when Satan is lying to you?

Jesus was completely human, and he wept. As we become more and more transformed into the likeness of Jesus, we should become more compassionate people who express godly emotions easily.

Christ is the Teacher and he calls you to come to him and learn from him in your tough times.

Untitled Hymn (Come to Jesus) - Damaris Carbaugh: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-PH8L8WSmJo>

John 11:38 - 47

³⁸ Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. ³⁹ “Take away the stone,” he said.

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

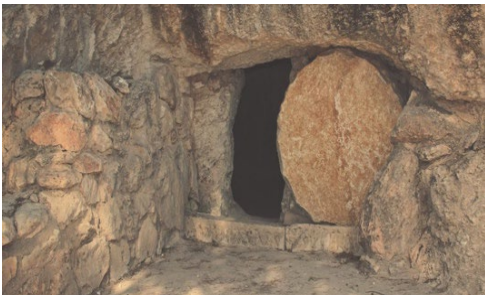
⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

⁴⁵ Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees called a meeting of the Sanhedrin.

These caves were used as tombs, and the stones are huge. It takes many men to take them away. So, when Jesus gives this instruction, it would mean that several people there would have to work together to move the stone.



What do you think Jesus meant when he told Martha: “You will see the glory of God if you believe”?

Then Jesus prays publicly: “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.” (John 11:41b-42)

John made it clear in his Gospel what was the purpose of miracles recorded in his Gospel:

John 20:30 – 31:

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

This is the final “sign” recorded in John’s Gospel, and it is by far the most spectacular.

All through his Gospel John was teaching the Jews that there was complete unity between Jesus and his Father.

John 10:30: “*I and the Father are one.*”

John 17:21: *...that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

So in this public prayer, he declares again that he is not just a prophet, but he is the Messiah sent by the Father, who was one with the Father. No prophet has ever made such a statement before.

Can you confidently declare that you know Jesus is the Son of God and that you have accepted him as your personal savior?

2 Timothy 1:12b: *...I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.*

Keep in mind the reason Jesus raised Lazarus—so that many would believe in him. And this chapter closes with the good news that many believed.

But notice that some of them did not believe and they were tattle-tales. Jesus' enemies are so hardened against him that this miracle only inspires them to have Jesus killed more quickly. How could they not believe that Jesus was Messiah? There was abundant proof of Jesus' deity, but they could not care less.

How often are you surprised that people you know continue to resist a commitment to Jesus? Satan blinds their eyes; they cannot and will not see the truth.

John 12:37 – 40:

Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. ³⁸This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

“Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: ⁴⁰“He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn—and I would heal them.”

2 Corinthians 4:4:

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

If you are a Christ-follower, it is because Jesus has chosen you and he has taken the blinders off your eyes and your heart and given you faith to believe. It is all of God and none of you. And all we can do is be eternally and continually thankful.