

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost  
17-07-2022  
St Cuthbert's Anglican Church – Tweed Heads

Amos 8: 1-12      A Basket of ripe fruit, Ripe for punishment because they have turned from God's ways.

Psalms 52          Surely God will judge the evildoer,  
But I will stick to praising God.

Colossians 1: 15-29      The Supremacy of Christ, and Paul's labour for Christ's body, the Church.

Luke 10: 38-42      Jesus with Mary and Martha  
Jesus says Mary had chosen the better part.

### Introduction

Today I would like to focus on the story of Jesus with Mary and Martha. To see how both women were wonderful friends to Jesus. And to look at how Mary's response to Jesus might help us in our lives as followers of Jesus.

I'd like to look at each of the verses first and then look at how the reading might apply to our lives.

### Verse 38

<sup>38</sup>Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home.

Firstly, we note that it was Martha who welcomed Jesus. What might welcoming mean? When we look at welcoming in the historical context of Jesus time, people didn't travel like we do today, so welcoming was considered a very important task. How do we welcome others today?

### Verse 39

<sup>39</sup>She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying.

We might today hear sitting at someone's feet and think that's weird, but in Jesus time it was the term used for a disciple listening to a teacher. Schools weren't as structured as we have today, so if someone was a good teacher, other would gather around them. How do we listen and learn today?

## Verse 40

<sup>40</sup>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.”

I want to point out that Martha was doing exactly what was expected of her as a good host. Martha wanted to do the right thing. However, Jesus was using this interaction to teach his hosts about who he was, and the significance of his presence for all humanity.

## Verses 41,42

<sup>41</sup>But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; <sup>42</sup>there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Much to Martha’s surprise Jesus corrects her. She hasn’t done anything wrong per se, but she has missed the significance of who Jesus is. Jesus is different. Jesus is the one who is bringing about God’s New Creation. By focusing on Jesus, Mary is the one who has chosen the better part.

## Application

Martha knew who Jesus was, but she had missed the point. Mary had got it. In Jesus we have Good News. We have access to God!!

We need to work out in our lives how to focus on Jesus, and place Jesus first.

But, do we really treasure sitting at the feet of Jesus? I can just imagine Mary spellbound – so focused on Jesus that she was unaware of what else was going on around her.

To be aware of God’s presence in our lives is such a wonderful thing. It gives us hope and meaning and purpose, and an inner peace that can’t be taken away from us, even in all the busyness and challenges of life.

How do we come into God’s presence, as followers of Jesus today?

We gather to Worship with others for encouragement. We are immersed in the scriptures to be taught the word of God. We spend time in prayer to grow in our relationship with God. If we do these things, then the other things we need to do will more easily fall into place.

I was once challenged by my spiritual director, “Are you working hard for God, or are you doing God’s work”. In the story from Luke’s Gospel today, we hear how Martha was working hard, and doing something that was important and good, but she had missed the point about what is most important in our lives.

### Conclusion

I’d like to conclude with words from today’s reading in the letter to the Colossians. In it we heard about the supremacy of Christ.

<sup>15</sup>He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; <sup>16</sup>for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him.

To be a Christian is to say that Jesus is number one in our lives, and we need to work out how our lives can really show that.

Today we have a lesson from Mary. We need to prioritize Jesus.

We need to take time from the good things we do, things that may be good, things that might be right and expected, and we need to sit at Jesus’ feet first. It is only by spending time with Jesus first, that we might be really able to accomplish the work God has ready for us, to build up his Kingdom. Amen.