

Week 5

MARTHA: Performance, pressure, and choosing what matters most

Overview: Martha felt the pressure to perform, impress, and manage everything. Jesus gently redirects her: presence > performance. Being with Jesus is more important than doing for Jesus.

Key Scripture: Luke 10: 38-42

CONTENT

Key Takeaway: Jesus cares more about who you're becoming than what you can accomplish.

Overview of Martha: Martha loved Jesus deeply, but she felt the weight of serving, impressing, and doing everything right. While Jesus was in her home, she became overwhelmed, anxious, and frustrated – especially when her sister Mary sat with Jesus instead of helping. Martha thought Jesus cared more about her performance than her presence. But Jesus gently reminded her that being with Him is more important than doing for Him.

Key Points

- Key Pressure – perfectionism, productivity, performance
- Martha was doing good things, but missing the best thing (vv38-40)
 - She wasn't doing anything wrong – she was serving Jesus, trying to honor Him, and trying to make everything perfect. But her heart was overwhelmed, anxious, and pulled in every direction
 - We often have overcommitted schedules and face the pressure to be “enough” – grades, sports, clubs, etc. These good things slowly become heavy things
 - Good things become heavy things when they take the place of Jesus
- Jesus isn't impressed by performance (v41)
 - “Martha, Martha...you are worried and upset...”
 - Pressure to perform can lead to irritability, comparison, and a belief that God expects more from us
 - Jesus sees the heart, not just the output.
 - We're often carrying a pressure Jesus didn't ask us to carry
- Jesus redirects her – he doesn't rebuke her
 - “Martha, Martha..” – tender, compassionate way to address her. He invites her to see her value doesn't come from what she does, but from being with Him. Jesus meets your exhaustion with compassion, not criticism.
- Mary chose “the better thing” (v42)
 - Sitting with Jesus > doing for Jesus
 - Presence > pressure

Gospel Application: Jesus doesn't measure us by our hustle, productivity, GPA, or spiritual performance. Through his life and death, He secured our identity, so we don't have to earn God's approval. The gospel invites us to rest in a love that doesn't depend on perfection or accomplishment. Because Jesus already finished the work that matters most, we are freed to slow down, be present with Him, and receive His grace. In Christ, our worth is settled – so our pressure to perform can finally fade.

Key Question: What pressure do you need to release so you can choose what matters most?

APPLICATION

Activity Suggestions

- During the message, invite 2 students up to demonstrate the story. Have one person sit by the speaker and give the other one tasks and things to clean. The goal is to have students feel the tension of the story. Which person felt more challenged by their position?
- Take time for students to sit and individually read this passage. Prompt reflections on the screen: "What is distracting me?" "What is Jesus inviting me to release?"

Community Group Questions

- What stands out to you about this passage? Why?
- What do Martha's actions reveal about her heart? What about Mary's actions?
- How does Jesus measure us? By our outward actions or our identity through salvation in Him?
- Knowing that our worth in Christ is settled by the cross changes EVERYTHING! For you personally, how does this passage change the way you live?