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| Psalm 139:1-18  Luke 10:38-42 (RSV) | Soul Keeping  “Practicing Grace” | Pinelands – 9am - 25/08/2024  Thornton – 10:30am – 25/08/2024 |

We have heard this story often…

And one of the most common ways of interpreting this story is to look at the **personality types** of Mary and Martha…

**Mary…** the reflective, deep, quiet and silent type.

She has a natural pull towards stillness…

and cherishes Clarity and Serenity

**Martha** on the other hand…

She is busy, active, achievement orientated…

She is very good at multi-tasking…

Preparing a meal, cleaning and listening to

Jesus in the other room all at the same time.

**BUT… FOR TODAY…**

**Let us look at this story from a different angle…**

**From the angle of… *Practicing the presence of God.***

So let us look a little deeper at this story…

At the beginning Luke says…

That Martha… ***“received him into her home.”***

Implying that Jesus would be spending the night

Highlights the custom of radical hospitality practiced in the Ancient Near East… Travelers were often dependent of the hospitality of private homes.

It is amazing that Jesus would be entertained in a home…

Headed by and unmarried woman…

Including an unmarried sister.

**NOT…** the normal practice of a Rabbi

***SO…*** it introduces a certain tension into the story.

**THIS…** is then compounded by what Luke says Mary was doing…

…That she… ***“sat at the Lord’s feet”***

This was a technical term used in ancient times to indicate

The relationship between a ***Disciple and a Rabbi***

To make someone your Rabbi…

you made a decision / a fundamental Choice to be…

*with that person… as much as possible.*

To learn everything you could…

How they dealt with… conflict, money,

Make food, pray,

LIVE

**Rob Bell** *(Nooma videos)* speaks of a blessing…

***“May you be covered in the dust of your Rabbi”***

**Literally** may you be so close to your rabbi that the dust from their feet

may fall on you…. May you be covered in his dust.

What mattered was being with your Rabbi in whatever was going on… Every activity,

listening to every… prayer, teaching, utterance,

Witnessing every… action and interaction

Watching every move.

This was the choice **Mary** made***… to sit at His feet…***

**Jesus said…** ***“Just one thing is needed”***

And Mary had chosen this one thing…

***To be at the feet of Jesus…***

No matter what else was going on around her.

The fundamental decision that **makes us disciples** is to…

***Choose to always*** be with Jesus…

So we can learn continually from him…

***…how to be fully like Him***

**Have you ever made that choice… *chosen…***

To sit at the feet of Jesus

Here is the **GOOD NEWS…**

***By GOD’s AMAZING GRACE…***

**Jesus** ***is present*** on every page of your Life…

*Whether you* ***recognize it or not***

**Jesus** is **Always Present !!**

What if you woke up every morning and said…

***“Today I would like to be covered in the dust of my Rabbi”?***

What if you repeated that same prayer all through the day…

***“I want to be covered in the dust of my Rabbi”?***

What if you became aware that…

***Jesus is Present on every page of your Life***

**While** **Mary** is at the feet of Jesus…

**Martha is in the kitchen…** Note what Luke says…

Martha was ***‘distracted’*** by all her preparations.

**Not** too busy**, not** over committed…

**Distracted**… pulled / dragged away from

**Martha** has a desire to be in **the presence of Jesus…**

**BUT…** allows herself to be ***DISTRACTED…***

By culture, expected role, fear, pride, etc

**Martha is trying to *get rid of the dust…***

**… While Mary is *wallowing in it!!***

**You can imagine…**

**Martha** working hard, doing the chores…

*Wondering when Mary will come and help…*

**But** **Mary** does not come.

**Martha** is now getting a little frustrated…

Banging dishes, rattling the crockery, slamming doors…

***BUT…*** **Mary** does not come.

You know what Martha is thinking…

***Jesus talks about serving… Why does Mary not get it***

***Hello… Mary… time to serve, time to do.***

**But that is not all…** **that troubles Martha…**

**No Rabbi… has a woman disciple…**

***Why is she sitting at his feet.***

***What will people say? (rumours)***

***What about our reputation?***

**Finally… Martha** can take it no longer…

She is certain she is in the right…

**Martha wants Jesus to sort it out… *Her way!!***

***“Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me***

***to do all the work myself? Tell her to help me.”***

**Jesus replies… *“Martha, Martha…”***

**Watch out…** When Jesus calls you name twice…

Then he means business…

he is especially trying to get your attention

**1 Samuel 3:10** *Samuel, Samuel… God calls Samuel*

**Luke 22:31** *Simon, Simon… I have prayed for you (predict denial)*

**Acts 9:4** *Saul, Saul… Why do you persecute me*

*You might have done the same with your children…*

**JESUS** says… ***Martha, Martha… only one thing is needed…***

**The decision** to live continually in the presence of Jesus…

***To be covered by his dust.***

**All we need to do is be aware… Jesus is PRESENT…**

**He** is always **PRESENT**

***…in what we are doing at every moment.***

**Martha** was not doing ***bad things…***

Jesus often speaks about hard work…

Tell stories about hard workers…

Doing constructive work…

Rewards the hard workers…

***The problem is simply…***

She was **not** being with **JESUS…**

She invited **JESUS** into her home…

**BUT…** not into the kitchen.

**How often** do we not get so distracted with…

- daily chores, group activities, daily demands

That we ***forget Jesus*** is Present in each moment.

**How often** do we get so distracted with…

- Work demands, Achieving the goal, getting to meetings

That we ***forget Jesus*** is Present in each moment.

God is closer than you think…

***God is on every page of your life…***

**Be AWARE of Him…** Every moment,

Every activity

Every circumstance / situation

It is not about trying harder and doing more…

***It is about BEING with Jesus…***

***And being AWARE that Jesus is with you.***

***BY God’s Grace… Jesus is always present…***

***on every page of your life***

In our Shared Life Groups we have been looking at this verse…

In our Soul Keeping Series… **Matt 11:28-30** *(GNT)*

“Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest. For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light.”

Eugene Petersen in The Message… writes it like this…

**Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)**

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Note these two Phrases…

**“Keep company with me.”** Says Jesus.

Be in His Presence, sit at His feet, Know He is there!

**“Learn the unforced rhythms of Grace”** Says Jesus.

Just BE present, BE aware.

**I challenge you to be a *Dusty Disciple…***

***“Today and everyday may you be covered***

***in the dust of your Rabbi, Jesus”***

**Psalm 139:1-18 God's Complete Knowledge and Care**

Lord, you have examined me and you know me.

You know everything I do;

from far away you understand all my thoughts.

You see me, whether I am working or resting;

you know all my actions.

Even before I speak,

you already know what I will say.

You are all around me on every side;

you protect me with your power.

Your knowledge of me is too deep;

it is beyond my understanding.

Where could I go to escape from you?

Where could I get away from your presence?

If I went up to heaven, you would be there;

if I lay down in the world of the dead, you would be there.

If I flew away beyond the east

or lived in the farthest place in the west,

you would be there to lead me,

you would be there to help me.

I could ask the darkness to hide me

or the light around me to turn into night,

but even darkness is not dark for you,

and the night is as bright as the day.

Darkness and light are the same to you.

You created every part of me;

you put me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because you are to be feared;

all you do is strange and wonderful.

I know it with all my heart.

When my bones were being formed,

carefully put together in my mother's womb,

when I was growing there in secret,

you knew that I was there—

you saw me before I was born.

The days allotted to me

had all been recorded in your book,

before any of them ever began.

O God, how difficult I find your thoughts;

how many of them there are!

If I counted them, they would be more than the grains of sand.

When I awake, I am still with you.

**Luke 10:38-42** (RSV) **Jesus Visits Martha and Mary**

Now as they went on their way, he entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her.”