



## **LIFEGROUP GUIDE**

### One Thing is Necessary

Jesus walks into a house. Two sisters welcome him. One serves. One sits. Both seem to want him there. But only one is commended. In a few quick verses, Luke shows us the difference between a heart that is busy for Jesus and a heart that is captivated by Jesus. Martha is not rebuked for her serving. She is rebuked for her distraction, her anxious pull in many directions, her loss of the one thing that actually matters. The one thing, Jesus says, will not be taken away. This is the story of two sisters. It is a mirror for every disciple.

#### **THE SCRIPTURE: LUKE 10:38-42**

<sup>38</sup> Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. <sup>39</sup> And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." <sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, <sup>42</sup> but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

## LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS

### OPENING QUESTIONS

1. When you have a guest in your home, are you more of a “make-every-thing-perfect” host, or a “drop-everything-and-sit-down” host? What do you think that says about you?
2. Think of a time when someone gave you their full, undivided attention. What was that like? What made it memorable?

### DIVING DEEPER

3. Read the passage slowly. In the chart below, fill in everything we learn about Mary and Martha: what they do, what they say, and where they are. Looking at your chart, what is the central contrast Luke wants us to see?

	Mary	Martha
<i>What she does</i>		
<i>What she says</i>		
<i>Where she is</i>		

4. This story comes immediately after the parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37, where Jesus praises radical action toward a neighbor in need. Here, the woman of action is rebuked. What might Luke be teaching us by placing these two stories side by side? How do they together fulfill Jesus’ summary of the law in Luke 10:27?
5. Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching.” In Jesus’ day, sitting at a teacher’s feet was the formal posture of a disciple learning from a rabbi (Paul describes being trained “at the feet of Gamaliel” in Acts 22:3). What is unusual, even shocking, about Mary taking this posture, and what does it suggest about how Jesus viewed women as disciples?

6. Verse 40 says Martha was “distracted with much serving.” The Greek word translated “distracted” literally means to be pulled around in different directions. Where in your life do you feel pulled in many directions right now, especially in ways that pull you away from the Lord?
  
7. Jesus calls her name twice: “Martha, Martha.” Look up Luke 22:31 (“Simon, Simon”) and Acts 9:4 (“Saul, Saul”) for other examples of a doubled name. What does the doubled name communicate? What does it tell us about Jesus’ tone toward Martha here? Do you think Jesus is yelling her name?
  
8. Martha accuses Jesus, “Lord, do you not care?” How does Jesus’ response in verses 41 and 42 demonstrate that he does, in fact, care, perhaps more deeply than Martha realized? What does this teach us about how Jesus handles us when we are frustrated with him?
  
9. Our year-long theme MAGNIFIED comes from John 3:30: “He must increase, but I must decrease.” How does Mary’s posture in this passage embody the “decrease” side of that verse? Where might Martha’s distraction reveal the opposite impulse in our own hearts?
  
10. Be honest about your own season. What is the “many things” of Martha that pulls at you most right now? What is one specific step you could take this week toward Mary’s posture of sitting at the Lord’s feet?