

## OPENING REFLECTION

Martha. She's always had a bad rap. Probably because she stuck her foot in her mouth at times. She was judgmental, demanding, and maybe a little too opinionated.

But Martha had another side. She was a servant and a nurturer, and boy could she throw a dinner party. Everyone in her village of Bethany probably called her the "hostess with the mostest."

Luke's gospel tells us of one occasion when Martha discovered Jesus was in town. Immediately she opened the front door and welcomed him in for dinner...and possibly some stinky, sweaty disciples too.

Soon the aromas of the kitchen filled the entire house. The oven was full, pots were boiling, Martha was chopping, and time was ticking. "Harrumph!" she muttered with tight lips. "If my sister would come in here and help me with all this, maybe dinner would make it to the table before breakfast."

While Martha was stewing, Mary was listening. She had started out across the room from Jesus, but as Jesus spoke, she couldn't stop listening. She inched closer and closer, till she sat at his feet. All her thoughts were fixed on Jesus, while all of Martha's thoughts were "distracted by all the preparations" (Luke 10:40).

Martha finally reached a point where she was boiling hotter than the soup on the stove. She marched into the living room where Jesus was teaching. "Lord," she said, "don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" (verse 40).

Mary was embarrassed. The disciples were wide-eyed. And the whole room waited to hear what Jesus would say.

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed – or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her" (verses 41-42).

When it comes to our thoughts, we have a choice. We can focus on the worries of this world. Or we can fix our thoughts on the "only one" that will not be taken from us.

"Mary has *chosen* what is better," Jesus said.

Let's do the same. Just as Jesus entered into Martha and Mary's living room, he has entered into our hearts. That means no matter where we are or what trials come our way, we can sit in his presence and fix our thoughts on this truth.

Lucado, Max. *Anxious for Nothing Study Guide* (pp. 98-99). Thomas Nelson.