



“Get to Know Jesus”

Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Saturday & Sunday, July 20–21, 2019

All Services

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Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

Grace to you and peace, from God who is, who was, and who is to come. Amen.

In our gospel reading, Jesus is traveling from one place to another. It doesn't matter where, or why, really. Jesus and his troop take a rest stop in a village, which is home to two sisters, Mary and Martha. We, the reader, know from John's gospel that Jesus is already good friends with this family, because Mary & Martha are also sisters to Lazarus. Lazarus, you might remember, is the one that when Jesus learned of his death, Jesus cried, and then raised Lazarus from his tomb. We don't learn that in this passage from Luke, but knowing that's how close of a relationship they have, helps to explain a lot of the backstory to this text.

Martha invites them in, and because she's the host, busies herself preparing refreshments. Sister Mary, meanwhile, decides to sit and listen as Jesus talks and teaches, rather than help her sister get the food ready.

What we today don't necessarily pick up on is that, in that culture, in first century Palestine, if you invite someone into your home, it's the responsibility of **everyone** in the household to work together to entertain them and help them relax. But that's not happening here. Martha's doing the busy work. Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet, soaking in his teaching. Which is a bit strange.

Most of the messages I've heard that have been based on this passage tend to focus on *Martha*, and her *faux pas*: Martha, the *host*, complains to Jesus, the *guest*, about Mary's lack of participation in the preparations of food. This makes a bit of sense, if we assume they are good friends, and he's like a big brother to her.

But what's going on with Mary?

(she) sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. (V39)

Mary wanted to learn more about what Jesus was teaching. She wanted to better understand his message. Which is great. What we often tend to miss is the entire *other* aspect of what's happening here, which is that a *Woman* is presenting herself as wanting to be a disciple of Jesus, and, more importantly, that **Jesus doesn't have a problem with it.**

That's not to say that Martha did **not** want to get to know Jesus, to get deeper into her

faith. She was serving Jesus, literally and figuratively. Not only in making the meal for him and crew, but in the act of *doing*, she was getting to know him through service. And that's basically how Jesus responds to Martha.

Do you see the set up here? We have this cutting-edge theological position that: women want to be disciples, ones who learn, who deepen their faith. **And**, Jesus is perfectly okay with that.

It also strikes me that we have something else going on here, as well. Simply that, we are able to *get to know* Jesus in different ways at different points in our lives. And that we *serve* God in different ways at different points throughout our lives.

There is nothing *wrong* with either **Mary** or **Martha's** approach. Some of us are like Martha. We're better at **doing**. We sent a mission crew up to Maine, where they helped build a wheelchair access ramp for an individual's home. A bunch of our youth helped cleanup storm ravaged areas in North Carolina. How many of you worked at the VBS, or the Madi Gras, or how many other events we've had just in the past twelve months? And we've got fourteen folks down in Guatemala right now, finishing up a week's worth of ministry there. I haven't even mentioned the sewing group, or the prayer shawl group, or Property committee, or Fellowship, Social Ministry, Intercessory Prayer, and the, I don't know, let's say twenty-five other groups that are a part of Trinity that I can't even remember that do wonderful and amazing things All of those, valid ways of serving Christ, of deepening your own faith.

Some of us, though, are better at serving God when we are like Mary. We're better at those quiet times. We grow in faith, we *serve*, by *learning*: Sunday morning classes; or Wednesday Connect program. During the school year, we've got Tuesday Morning Men's Bible Study; Thursday Lead Pastor Bible Study; Wednesday morning Women's Bible Study; and a whole bunch of other education experiences that you'll find listed on the website, *Trinity Today*, and the newsletter. You just have to do a little bit of work and actually *read* those to find out about them.

And we're not just **One** of those ways, we're not just *doing* or *listening*, for our entire life. That's point that I'm trying to make we get to know Jesus in all kinds of different ways throughout our lives. There is not necessarily one "right" way. We get to know Jesus by doing, by serving. We also get to know Jesus by listening, by learning. We might be better at one more so than the other. but depending on the circumstances of our life at any given time, we might be called to one more so than the other.

Sisters and brothers, I encourage you to examine your life. determine how you can know Christ more - by doing, or by listening. And then, whichever it is, do it.

Amen.

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