

Mary – Lazarus' Sister

Mary was also the sister of Martha.

Hospitality is an art. Making sure that the guest is welcomed, warmed and well-fed, requires creativity, organisation and teamwork.

Mary and her sister accomplished all of these goals making them one of the best hospitality teams recorded in God's Word.

Their frequent guest was Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:38-42 [New King James] *“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, ‘Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.’ And Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.’”*

For Mary, hospitality meant giving more attention to the guest Himself than to the physical needs He may have; she would rather listen and talk than cook.

Mary was more interested in her guest's words than the cleanliness of her home or the timeliness of her meals, she knew that her sister could very effectively take care of the food.

Mary's approach to events shows she was mainly a “responder,” and good listener.

Mary had to learn that action is often appropriate and necessary in serving other people.

The last glimpse we have of Mary shows her to have become a woman of thoughtful action.

John 12:1-8 [NIV] *“Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ‘Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.’ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. ‘Leave her alone,’ Jesus replied. ‘[It was intended] that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.’”*

Again Mary was at the feet of Jesus Christ, as He reclined at the table eating the meal provided by Martha and she anointed His body in the way a body was anointed after death.

Mary seemed to understand, more than the rest of the followers and disciples, why Jesus Christ was going to die.

Remember, Mary had experienced the death and resurrection of her brother Lazarus, [John 11:1-44].

What can we learn from the record of Mary's life? –

What kind of hospitality does Jesus Christ receive in our lives, are we so busy planning and running our life that we neglect spending time listening to Him by meditating on His Word, the Christian Bible?

Are we seeking ways in which we can worship Jesus Christ in our lives?

We need to learn when we should listen and when we should act on what we have heard and understood.