

# Martha

**Martha is a name derived from an Aramaic form not found in Hebrew meaning lady or mistress. Only one person bears this name in the New Testament.**

**Martha was the sister of Mary who anointed Jesus Christ shortly before His death, and Lazarus, whom Jesus Christ raised from the dead, was their brother.**

The family lived in Bethany, a village some 2 miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho, [**John 11:1**].

Matthew, Mark and John all agree that Jesus Christ's anointing was in Bethany and Matthew and Mark specify [presuming the same occasion is referred to] that it took place in the house of Simon the leper. Since Jesus Christ was received into Martha's house in Luke's record and Martha served at supper in Simon's house at Bethany during which Mary anointed Jesus Christ, **it has been supposed that Martha was the wife [or even widow] of Simon.**

**Also the lead Martha takes on both occasions suggests that she was the elder sister.**

In Luke's narrative [**Luke 10:38-42**] Martha is gently rebuked by Jesus Christ for her impatience with her sister Mary and her excessive concern for the practical details of the meal, [**verse 40**].

**Martha was no less devoted to Jesus Christ than Mary but she failed to see the way of receiving Him which would please Him most.**

The fact that Martha, Mary and Lazarus are remembered for their hospitality takes on added significance when we note that hospitality was a social requirement in their culture, it being considered shameful to turn anyone away from your door.

Martha's family met this requirement very well.

**Martha worried about details, she wished to please, to serve, to do the right thing, being the oldest she feared shame if her home did not measure up to expectations.**

As a result she found it hard to relax and enjoy her guests.

**Jesus Christ showed Martha that personal attention she gave her guests was more important than the comforts she tried to provide for them.**

**Later, following her brother Lazarus' death, Martha could hardly help being herself when she rushed to meet Jesus Christ and expressed her inner conflict of disappointment and hope.**

**John 11:20-27** [New King James] *"Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.'"*

**Jesus Christ pointed out to Martha that her hope was too limited.**

Later in her natural awareness of details Martha pointed out that her brother's body after four days would stench, [**John 11:39**]. This awareness of details sometimes kept her from seeing the whole picture.

**In our last picture of Martha, she is once again serving a meal to Jesus Christ and His disciples. She had not stopped serving but she was silent this time. She had begun to learn what her younger sister already knew: worship begins with silence and listening.**

**Lessons we can learn from the recorded life of Martha –**

Getting caught up with details can make us lose sight of the main reason for our actions.

**There is a proper time to listen to Jesus Christ, through study and meditation on His Words recorded in the Christian Bible, and a proper time to work for Him.**