

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK
Winter 2012 Grace Church News

“Mary and Martha” (Luke 10: 38-42)

In this famous story Martha is “distracted with much serving.” Martha was very likely serving more people than we modern Americans would normally imagine. Houses were open to the public in Jesus’ day. The public could walk in on a feast and recline to enjoy food, drink and conversation.

Mary, the sister, stayed close to Jesus and was attentive to his teaching. Martha resented having to serve alone and asked Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Hospitality was an important virtue. Jesus pointed out to Martha that she was anxious and troubled about many things. She needed to simplify her life. She needed to concentrate on the things that last ... things that could not be taken from her.

Professor William James of Harvard wrote that the problem of “the many and the one” is the most fundamental philosophical problem. Psychologists and psychiatrists try to get people to take a little time to indulge in some form of mental and physical relaxation. Books on pop-psychology offer exotic sounding meditation, etc., etc.

The first week in December I had occasion to counsel a lady whose attention was so divided that I could not help but think of the “story of Mary and Martha,” and of the word “distracted.” The word “encumbered” has also been used by translators to describe Martha’s condition. This lady whom I was trying to counsel was over burdening her nervous system. I talked with her three times in two days. Three hours after my last effort at calming her she had a stroke. I had read her the story of Mary and Martha. I had prayed for her that she might rest in Jesus. I had encouraged her to remember how Jesus loved to heal people ... to give them peace.

So, now, I want to remind each of you of the necessity of coming quietly to Jesus ... for peace and for his amazing grace. While we work hard at building up our church we must call on our Lord in times of quiet confidence ... confidence in **Him**. Grace and peace from the Lord Jesus Christ to each of you.

Your friend in Christ,
Rev. David E. Massey