

# THE HEART OF MARY



*"At the Home of Martha and Mary"  
courtesy of Ain Vares [ainvaresart.com](http://ainvaresart.com)*

***Just as each of us has one body with many members,  
and these members do not all have the same function.  
-Romans 12:4***

Some of us have the gift of serving.

If that is your gift ...then serve ... give aid, assist those in need, make sure that what needs to be done, gets done.

Literally, serving means, "to wait on tables", like a waiter or waitress: first you bring the salad... when those eating are finished, you bring the main course.

- A servant cleans up the spills.
- A servant keeps the coffee cups full.

It sounds very simple and straightforward...  
not likely to get off track-like some of the other gifts....

- prophecy ..... can be false,
- teaching ..... can be in error,

- encouragement...may be amiss, saying, "Peace, peace"when there is no peace.  
Serving others usually doesn't get off track or become false.

But, our serving can become...

weighed down, burdened, and disheartened.

When that happens,

... even the "innocent" gift of serving can draw us away from where we need to be.

***As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha;!" the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."***

***Luke 10:38-42***



*Pain*

*Unknown Source*

Martha has the gift of service ... but Martha needs the heart of Mary.

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. But Martha is distracted by all the preparations.

Martha, with the gift of service, sees what has to be done; what an honor to welcome Jesus of Nazareth into her home! So Martha gets busy, she HONORS Jesus by serving him and his disciples. She HONORS him by doing what needs to be done.

"What about Mary?" Martha had a sister, Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. Mary also HONORS Jesus ... she also shows her respect for this important man who has come into her home ...but not by serving. Mary HONORS Jesus by listening ... by setting herself down in a position to hear. Being at his feet was more important than anything she could do.

Martha ... sees what has to be done *but is a slave to her work* ... busy, over-occupied, drawn here and there .... she is *enslaved by what needs to be done*.

Mary ... she has found something that won't be taken from her. She is *centered*, not enslaved by what needs to be done. She has found *freedom*.

**The heart of service ... the heart of Mary, is freedom.**

Geoffrey Bingham, an Australian, learned about freedom in a prison camp during WWII.

Every day at the end of their long, hard day, these ninety pound skeletons would come and sit down at their table to eat. A plate was laid in front of these men and on this plate would be 10 balls of rice ... always about the same size. But today, at his table, there was 10 balls of rice laid down, but one of them was markedly smaller than all the rest ... one quarter the size ... and everybody knew it as soon as the plate hit the table. The man closest to the plate just grabbed the ball of rice nearest him. Naturally, it was a big one. He hands the plate to the right. The neat man grabs the closest one to him and it's a big one too: "I'm not making a choice, I'm just grabbing the one that's closest to me." As the plate is passed over and over again, it finally ends up in front of Bingham, and there are only two rice balls left ... one big, and one small. And now it's obvious. Every one of those men made a choice...now it's Geoffrey Bingham's: choice and everybody's watching him. So he thinks, "I should serve my brother here to my right, that's what needs to be done...the Christian thing would be to give him the large ball of rice." As he looks at him he compares the 80 pound skeleton on his right to his own 106-pound frame. But then he notices that everyone at the table is staring at him... some are shaking their heads and thinking, "Here he is again, Bingham, he's going to show us up... show us that we're all selfish ... that he's better than all of us because he's going to take the smaller one." Bingham says to

himself, "Maybe I should take the large one to show them that I'm with them ... show them that I'm one of the guys. They all think that I'm a snob, maybe what needs to be done is to take the large ball and leave the small one."

Suddenly, he finds himself at the feet of Jesus. And Jesus says, "This man to the right of you needs the rice more than you---serve him!"

Do it, not because it's the Christian thing to do, but because I tell you to.

Forget what these other people think ... you're not responsible for them; you're not bound by what they think. You are bound to me and will find freedom by listening to me."

So, he picks up the "small" ball of rice and in obedience to his Lord serves and aids the hungry man to his right.

He does this with great freedom and great joy because he has found something;

He has found the heart of Mary.

- He now knows what's important, what's necessary.
- He's not serving two or three "lords," being pulled this way and that.
- He is a free man.

He has found



The HEART OF MARY isn't begrudging slavery...

**It's FREEDOM IN SERVICE ...**

**Freedom that's found at the feet of Jesus.**

But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

Martha is distracted ... occupied ... busy. Martha is drawn away by this and that, pressured by what needs to be done.

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Mary is worried—and concerned about good things, about necessary things.

Where Mary has found ONE master,

Martha has one hundred masters.

Martha has the gift of service.

She sees a hundred good and necessary things to do ... that is her gift.

But unless she finds one master to guide her among all the things that need to be done,

she will remain scattered,

drawn away by what's unimportant ...

Burdened, drained

and draining those around her.

Martha was drawn away from Jesus because she saw so much to do, but she didn't see what was best ... what was *necessary*.



Martha needs Mary's heart to know what's really important. She needs to know how to put herself at the feet of Jesus ... under one lord, with "no other god's before her."

She needs to be *captivated* by her Lord, not *enslaved* by her work!

If we are distracted, drawn away by this and that, we need

### FOCUS...

"stop, sit at his feet." There is a place for all of us at the feet of Jesus. Not a place of sloth or boredom, but a place of rest-focus ... a place to find out what's really necessary.

### DISCIPLINE...

"the force of will to push aside what drives us away from his feet." If we don't we will not only be drawn away, we will also draw others away from his feet.

"Lord, don't you care? .... Tell her to help me."

Martha wants to draw Mary into her whirlwind. But to draw Mary into her whirlwind of "what must be done", she will also draw her away from Jesus.

To draw people around our work, our serving, our cause, what we feel needs to be done...

--- is the unique temptation of those with the gift of service.

\* The unique temptation of the prophet is pride; seeing what others don't see. Pride may drive the prophet to belittle those who do not see.

\* The unique temptation of those who encourage, those who give aid by standing by the side of a brother or sister, is to feel that they are indispensable to their growth.

\*The unique temptation of a teacher is to mistake their picture of the truth for the truth itself.

\* Again, the unique temptation of a servant is to *compel people into our service*.

*Just as each of us has one body with many members,  
and these members do not all have the same function.*

*-Romans 12:4*

When we draw people around our job, our work, our ministry, we end up draining them. The work no longer revolves around Jesus, but around our plan, our expertise, our enthusiasm, our need to feel wanted.

But if we are a servant with the heart of Mary ... knowing what's necessary, walking in freedom under one lord instead of many lords ... our work, our service, won't draw people away from sitting at Jesus' feet

...it will help people find their place at the feet of Jesus.

We will give them freedom and focus, rather than draw them into our slavery.

The outsiders will be drawn inside...find the one thing necessary and fit in. Wherever we go people will sense that welcoming hand.

By our service the needy will find the one thing needful ...when they lay their small fish and half-eaten loaf at the feet of Jesus; it will multiply to more than enough.

The frail will find strength and resolve at the feet of Jesus because of our service. By our service the confused will find a point of focus.

Once we have found our place at the feet of Jesus, and also by our service, help those we serve find a seat there also, only then can we actually help and serve. Only then do we really see what has to be done.

If we are not centered at his feet our serving will...

- drain people rather than give life,
- be meddling rather than helpful,
- be contrived rather than necessary,
- be busy-work instead of useful.

*Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*

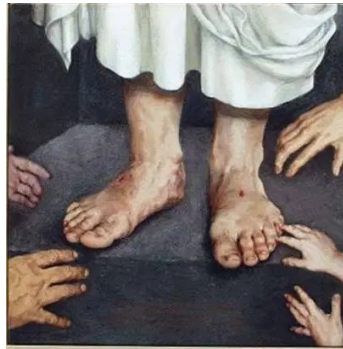
*John 13:3-5*

To imitate this action in our present day may be a nice ceremony; but is it real service to our brother or sister?

Today, we'd probably find Jesus unplugging a blocked toilet rather than washing feet.

Once we see the need to help, people find their way to Jesus...

Real serving ... is the action that actually clears a space at his feet, so our weary brother or sister can find a place to rest.



Real service brings aid where it's needed.

**We can clear a place at the feet of Jesus by serving the needs of the physical body...**

- the need of a "ride" so people can physically get to the feet of Jesus,
- the need of "food" so that those at his feet do not starve to death.

**We can clear a place at the feet of Jesus by serving the needs of the heart...**

- a smile, a warm welcome will clear a large space at his feet,
- a visit to the lonely will bring the footstool of our God into their very home.

**We can clear a place at the feet of Jesus by serving the needs of the spirit...**

- aggressive prayer for those in need,
- a word of encouragement to "wash the weary feet" of a tired pilgrim,
- reaching out to a burdened, stumbling saint, assuring them that they are his child.



Having the heart of Mary means that we find out what is necessary to clear a place at the feet of Jesus and then do it. As we bring people to his feet, we clear away the obstacles that prevent them from sitting down.

This is real service ... this brings freedom. And once we have found this freedom, Jesus will protect us; he won't let anyone take that freedom away from us.

*..Mary has chosen the best part, and it will not be taken from her...*

Jesus protects us - not from outsiders, heretics, and Romans ...those who kill the body ... he does protect us from brothers and sisters who have the "gift of service" but do not have the heart of Mary ... those who drain us because they have not found one master.

*"Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work myself? Tell her to help me."*

Their "guilt trip" doesn't work on those who walk in freedom. If that anxious, distracted, "servant" doesn't see our work as useful or our life as "committed", Jesus will protect us.

Jesus will also protect others from us if we lose the heart of Mary. If we begin draining God's servants with our demands for more effort, more time, more work, God himself will rebuke us. "Who do you think you are? You're not taking this (freedom) away from my servant."



*For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly, than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach...*

*Romans 12:3-7*

If your gift is serving, then serve ... do it.....

- In your service be focused ... find your place at the feet of Jesus.

- In your service don't draw people away from his feet, help them to also find a place there.
- In your service clear away any obstacle: physical, emotional, or spiritual that prevents people from taking a seat there.

Finally, serve in confidence,

knowing that the freedom you have been given will not be taken from you.



*"But as for Me and My Household, We will Serve the Lord"*  
Ain Vares ainvaresart.com

## Prayer

Precious Jesus, you deserve all of us to have hearts of Mary, sitting at your feet in loving adoration. For those of us who feel called to serve, may we be captivated by you, not enslaved by our service. May we draw encouragement, insight and refreshing rest at your feet. May our service never draw us away from your lovely presence, may our service not create obstacles for those who are seeking you. May our service be life giving, not life draining. Keep us from compelling others into service that has no life, no meaning. Show us what service is necessary so it truly clears space for others to sit at your feet. And as we serve with our hearts on you, may we and those we serve, find healing, freedom and joy in our service.



Maranatha Mirror Messages