

THE BETTER PART

“Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.” (Lk 10:41-42)

Have you ever complained and felt exhausted from doing ministry work? Are your lives overbooked? Are they making you feel spiritually dry and undernourished? Can you barely hear God’s voice above the busy noise?

We can labor so much for the Master that we forget the Master of our labors, and our acts of service run counter to the Lord’s purposes. We want to do it all for the Lord, like Martha, but we should rather discover what God has given us to do. If Jesus wanted Mary in the kitchen, He could have so let her know.

The Lord wants to work in us through His Word. Of course, there is a time for anointed action. We should not sit around and learn when He is calling us to stand up and act. We need to be sensitive to the moving of the Spirit. Don’t run off and try to do something for God, especially something you don’t particularly enjoy, if the Spirit prompts us to sit at the feet of Jesus. But on the other hand, we should not be passive when God calls us to action, thinking that hearing the Word is enough.

Following Mary to the feet of Jesus and having the energy to serve God is not easy. We need to maintain balance in our spiritual life. No man can be spiritually healthy who does not meditate and commune with Jesus; on the other hand, everyone is called to be active and diligent in His holy service. If we neglect the spiritual for the sake of the external, we would be throwing away gold to gather to ourselves iron.

While we ought to abound in service and do good abundantly to our fellow men, yet we must not fail in worship, in spiritual reverence, meek discipleship and quiet contemplation. We can be practical like Martha but also, like Mary, sit down in quietude and nourish our souls with divine truth. We look to the Savior to rejoice in the Spirit and say “Father, I thank you.”

For it is not our thoughtless service, performed while our souls are half asleep that Jesus accepts, but it is that which we do for Him with hearts that overflow with fervent love, showing reverence with our adoring souls. Such fervent, intense, and thoughtful service is the “better part.” It was available to both Martha and Mary, and likewise to each one of us, regardless of our gifting or personality. It is a choice we each can make.