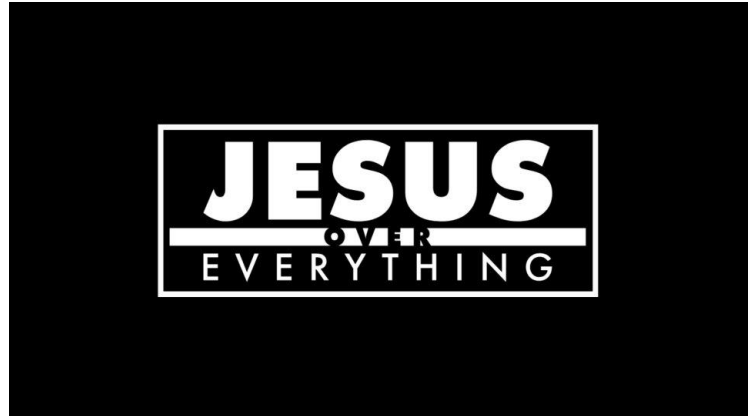


# “Jesus Over My Priorities”

(Mary and Martha)



**Icebreaker:** Do you have siblings? If so, what kind of relationship do you have with them?

**Objective:** To recognize that Jesus should be the object of our focus.

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

**Observe:** What do you think about this passage? What do we know about Mary and Martha from this passage?

**Discuss:**

Martha is the one who “opened her home” to Jesus and Martha is the one working hard to be a good host (which was very important in Jewish culture). But Jesus says Mary is the one with the right focus.

- Is Martha wrong for caring about the preparations and details of hosting?
- In your own life, when has a good thing (behavior, mindset, belief, etc) become unhealthy? Or when have you settled for something good instead of something great?

We often group ourselves with either Martha or Mary. Many who identify with Martha do so because they identify with the desire to care for the preparations, but this isn't just about whether you'd choose Jesus over cleaning the house or cooking for guests.

- What thing or focus in your life is most likely to turn you into a “Martha”? In other words, what in your life is most likely to distract you from sitting at the feet of Jesus?

**Note:** *Look at everything, but don't skip over the “good” things. Even “being a good parent” can turn unhealthy if it draws you away from the feet of Jesus.*

It could be said that, at some point, the house needs to get cleaned and mouths need to get fed.

- If we're only ever sitting at the feet of Jesus, when are we doing chores, going to work, and so on?
- What does that balance look like for you personally? How could it be better?

**Read:** John 11:21, 32 and John 12:3

**Observe:** What pattern do we see in Mary's interactions with Jesus?

**Discuss:**

At BPF, we sometimes use “three-word stories”. These stories explore either our salvation, or another encounter with Jesus, when Jesus showed up plainly, whether through a trial, recovery from a sin, or something of that nature. One word to describe how the story starts, one to describe a crisis or pivot point, and one for how the story is going.

- Work together to create a 3-word story for Mary (based on the passages explored so far)
- Is there a story in your own life where focusing on Jesus was either a challenge (like Martha) or your natural reaction (like Mary)?

**Read:** John 11:17-28 and John 12:2

**Observe:** How has Martha changed throughout her story?

**Discuss:**

We can assume that Martha found a balance in her struggle. In John 12:2, she's still serving (just like she was in Luke 10), but now she's not worrying about Mary. The Bible doesn't comment on this, so we don't want to make any leaps or assumptions, but based on John 11, it seems like Martha has developed a more mature faith. One that can balance "doing the things" with focusing on Jesus.

- What do you think about Martha taking on the role of "the servant"?

**Read:** John 12:3-8

**Observe:** What's the worldly response to someone focusing on Jesus?

**Discuss:**

In Luke 10, Martha went to Jesus because she was upset with Mary. In John 12, Judas went to Jesus because he was upset with Mary. In both passages, Jesus defends Mary because she's focusing on what's good (Jesus) and they're focusing on something else (personal anxiety and greed).

- As we shift our focus away from the world and onto Jesus, how might we prepare for the world's reaction?

**Application Suggestions:**

**Leader notes:** Some leaders pick one application to suggest, and some leaders read through each selection and encourage everyone to pick one on their own. You can make the call on that based on how much time you have left and the general vibe of the room.

**Switch Your Focus.** Identify the thing most likely to take your focus away from Jesus this week. Spend some time considering the problem of focus in prayer and reflection. Answer the questions:

Is this something that needs to be removed from your life? (ie, anxiety/greed)

Is this something where you just need better balance of focus? (ie, service)

**Spend Time at the Feet of Jesus.** Very intentionally set aside time to sit at the feet of Jesus like Mary did. Spend time in study and meditation (Luke 10), in grief and

petition (John 11), and in praise and worship (John 12). Let this be a powerful, sweet time of focus on Jesus.