

³⁸Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. ⁴⁰But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me." ⁴¹But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; ⁴²there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:38-42 NRSV

One of the bad habits I had when I was younger, and still slip into now and again is not to appreciate what is going on around me now, and be distracted by something that doesn't seem to be going right, or focus on what will take place later on. One of my best infamous examples of this behavior was at our wedding. I was so concerned about who was there and who wasn't there that I almost lost track of the reason I was there. Pam patiently put up with me that day, and thankfully, by the grace of God, the special nature of that day did finally get through to me, and I have good memories of that occasion. I still fall into that trap when I am asked to do something that I really don't want to do, or I have judgments on what I'm being asked to do. Thankfully, even though I go into something "kicking and screaming", God does get through to me, and it becomes a blessing.

I think this is what was going on with Martha and Mary. If you read the lesson the both of them were originally sitting at Jesus feet. Martha doesn't just stop listening, but literally becomes distracted by meal preparations. Finally the distractions consume her ,she forgets she has a once in a lifetime opportunity to sit at the feet of Jesus. Not only does it consume her, but it causes her to humiliate her sister in front of Jesus. Hopefully Jesus gently brought her back to the importance of what was happening right then and now.

In an age when "multi-tasking", fast-paced living, and busy schedules overtake us let's ask God to help us live in the "now", that is what God has placed before us RIGHT NOW. This is especially true when we seek God in prayer, study, or worship. What God gives us now is the better part, and we shouldn't let ourselves be the reason the better part escapes us.

Pr. John Van Haneghan