



Jesus with Mary and Martha

Luke 10:38-42

Theophilus hummed softly as he trimmed the azalea hedge along the south wall of the King's garden. He was just about to spread some mulch around the rose bushes near the Bible's window, when something caught his eye. Gus was lying on the bench under the great live oak tree and the Bible was on the bench next to Gus' head.

"Gus. Gus, wake up...GUS!!" the gardener yelled as he shook the sleeping squire.

Gus jumped up and pulled out his sword. "Halt! Who goes there?!"

The gardener jumped back from the swinging sword. "Gus? It's me, Theophilus."

Gus squinted through his sleep-filled eyes. "Oh, are you sure?"

"Last time I checked, I was me," Theophilus laughed. "Gus, are you all right?"

Gus propped his sword against the tree and sank back down onto the bench. "I'm fine, I was just studying God's Word and I guess I dozed off."

"You are becoming quite a devoted student of God's Word," Theophilus said, sounding pleased.

Gus sighed, "I have to be. I have so many questions about God that I can hardly keep up!"

Theophilus smiled. "Ah yes, being a new disciple is a lot of work, but there is also great reward," Theophilus reminded.

Gus looked up at his teacher. "Disciple? I'm not a disciple!"

"You're not?" Theophilus questioned. "Then what is a disciple?"

"A disciple is someone who has decided to follow Jesus. New disciples need someone to teach them about the Bible and help them grow closer to Jesus! Holy Guacamole! I *am* a disciple!"

Theophilus tried to hide his grin. Instead, he just nodded. "It looks that way."

"But, I can't...I mean, I don't...I can't... I don't have time to be a disciple! I can barely find enough to keep up with my training. I've got archery lessons and sword play and jousting lessons and guard duty and..."

"Oh, Gus, Gus, Gus, you are worried about so many things," Theophilus interrupted. "You remind me of Martha."

"Martha! Who's Martha?" Gus asked.

"You don't know the story of Martha and Mary? It's in the Bible. Here, give the Bible to me and I'll show you." The gardener flipped through the pages until he found Luke, chapter 10. "Ah, here we are. This report is about when Jesus and His disciples visited the home of Mary and Martha. They were two sisters that loved God."

"Were they serving the King?" Gus asked.

"Actually, they were both serving the King but in different ways." Theophilus explained. "Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to everything He said and Martha was busy preparing the dinner."

Gus held up a hand. "Now, hold on there. Are you telling me that Mary was just sitting on the floor while her sister Martha was running all over the house doing all the work?"

"That's right." Theophilus replied with a small grin.

"Well, that's not fair! If I were Martha I would be very upset!" Gus exclaimed.

"She was." Theophilus agreed. "She even went to Jesus and said, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'"

"Good girl, Martha!" Gus said excitedly. He was glad Martha was finally going to get some help with her chores. "So, what did Jesus say?"

Theophilus read, "Jesus said, 'Martha, Martha, 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.'"

"Wait just a minute," Gus interrupted. "I thought Jesus was going to tell Mary to get to work!"

"So did Martha," Theophilus replied.

Gus shook his head. "But I don't get it. Was Jesus telling Martha it was wrong to work hard?"

"No, there's nothing wrong with hard work," Theophilus said. "It's just that she was so worried about so many things. I think Jesus was simply telling Martha that spending time with Him was more important than worrying about the dinner preparations."

"I'm not sure I understand," Gus said as he rested his chin on his hands.

"Let me put it this way," Theophilus tried. "Why do you think Martha was so upset?"

"Well...," Gus began thoughtfully. "Maybe she was nervous because she wanted everything to be just right for Jesus." He suddenly stopped and sat up straight. "Oh, I see! Jesus wasn't telling Martha not to be busy; He was simply telling her not to be so worried because, if we focus on Jesus, our worries will take care of themselves. "

Theophilus smiled approvingly. "Very good, Gus. Now, why do you think Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus?"

"Because she loved Him and she wanted to hear what He had to say," Gus said.

"That's exactly right," Theophilus agreed. "And that's why Jesus said, 'only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.'" He looked up at Gus. "Jesus is all we need. Focusing on Him is a much better choice than worrying!"

Gus leaned back against the bench to think for a moment; then his face brightened. "I think I get it! I've been worrying so much about studying God's Word and all of my other lessons because I want to be a perfect knight, but, what I really need to do is keep my mind on Jesus."

"When you keep your focus on Jesus no matter what you are doing, you'll find you get closer to Him and His Word, the Bible gets deep down in your heart," Theophilus explained. "And then I won't have to worry so much about saying the wrong thing because I'll be so close to Jesus, I'll know what He would say!" Gus added.

Theophilus reached over and patted the young man on the shoulder. "Oh Gus, you grow wiser all the time."

"I pray that it's true. I want to one day be as wise as you and use that wisdom to serve our King," Gus replied.

"Well, as a wise man once said...," Theophilus began.

"Serving the King is the noblest thing!" They finished the famous phrase together.

"Let's go spend time with Jesus!" Gus suggested as he stood up.

Theophilus smiled and followed Gus out of the garden. "Now, that is a wise choice! Very wise indeed!"