

GOD'S CALLING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Lesson Nine

IN THE GOSPELS: Martha

Burden to Impart:

All those who receive the Lord and His salvation need to firstly learn to listen to His Word and know His heart. Then they will be able to serve Him in a way that is proper and pleasing to Him.

Memory Verse: "...Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; But one thing is necessary; for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42).

Facts to Teach:

1. A dear family of Jesus' close friends, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, lived in a poor village outside of Jerusalem named Bethany. Once, Martha received the Lord as a guest into her home (Luke 10:38-42). She was very busy preparing things for the Lord and His disciples. Martha had a disposition to do things for the Lord; to serve and work hard. However, she needed to learn how to serve the Lord in a way that pleases Him; not in her own, natural way.
2. While Martha was so busy, her sister, Mary, was apparently doing nothing at all! Actually, she was paying attention to their guest. She was seated at the Lord's feet and was listening to His word.
3. To serve is good. But Martha was so busy that she was actually "distracted" from the Lord Himself. She began to reason and think negative thoughts like, "Why doesn't Mary stop being so lazy and help me? Can't she see how much there is to do? Why do I have to do everything? Why doesn't Jesus send her to help me? Doesn't He care about me?" She was getting angry and irritated. She felt she was doing everything good and right, and her sister, Mary, was all wrong. Even Jesus seemed to be wrong in Martha's eyes, for He seemed to not care about her need of help!
4. Finally, Martha could not hold in her disgust any longer. She did not complain to Mary, but to Jesus. She came over to Jesus, and "standing over Him," began to rebuke Him. After rebuking the Lord and expressing all of her opinions to Him (that He didn't care about her, etc.), she next proceeded to tell the Lord what He should do. He should "tell her (Mary) that she should do her part with me." How strong a person was Martha! How opinionated! How demanding! How right she thought she was! She invited the Lord in as a "guest," but now she was rebuking Him, insulting Him, and telling Him what to do! Though Martha loved the Lord, she did not know how to serve Him properly yet. She did not know how natural and fleshly she was.
5. The Lord gently corrected Martha in His answer. He pointed out to her that she was too anxious and busy. She had missed the most important thing in her service, to listen to the Lord's word so that she would know the Lord's heart and desire.