

**Discipleship in Today's World: 'One thing is needed!'**

How do we keep focused as disciples of Jesus Christ today? Dallas Willard has written: 'disciples want to learn everything Jesus has to teach them about life in the kingdom of God, and they are constantly with him to learn this.' (Renovation of the Heart). In understanding this, it is helpful to consider the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10: 38-42). Mary was commended by Jesus for sitting at his feet, while Martha prepared a meal in the kitchen. It's easy to miss what is being said about discipleship, as we usually assume that the incident is contrasting different personality types and commending the contemplative as opposed to the activist.

We need to understand that sitting at the master's feet is a technical term to describe a disciple's relationship with his teacher. The disciple would spend time with their rabbi to learn from him, in order to become like him. Therefore, Mary is commended because she chose the role of the disciple: 'One thing is needed'.

What can we learn from this?

\* Don't get distracted:

Martha was distracted; while engaged in right tasks, she became worried and upset. Inviting Jesus alongside when we are busy involves allowing him show us the right priorities and the best use of our time and energy.

\* Maintain a balanced life:

Today there's lots of talk about work/life balance. We all need to balance times of sitting/listening with going/doing. Mary demonstrates that to achieve a proper rhythm in our lives, work should flow from rest, rather than the other way round. Sunday is the first day of the working week, not the last! What does this insight say about our own work/life balance?

Take time to think through the implications for your family and church life as well!

**The Rev Paul Hardingham continues his series on discipleship**

**May we all live in the peace that comes from you.  
May we journey towards your city,  
sailing through the waters of sin untouched by the waves,  
borne serenely along by the Holy Spirit.  
Night and day may we give you praise and thanks,  
because you have shown us that all things belong to you,  
and all blessings are gifts from you.  
To you, the essence of wisdom, the foundation of truth,  
be glory for evermore.**

A prayer of Clement of Alexandria, c. 150 – 215AD.  
(A distinguished scholar both in Greek philosophy and in the Bible.)