

# The Family Jesus Loved Mary, Martha, & Lazarus

*John 11:1-5 & 12:1-11*

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

*February 13, 2022 p.m.*

Introduction: Consider some “famous” siblings in the history of our country: Wright brothers, JFK & RFK, George & Jeb Bush, etc. Then there are noted siblings in the O.T.: Moses, Aaron, & Miriam; Jacob & Esau; Rachel & Leah. Perhaps the most “notable” siblings in the N.T. (aside from Christ & His half-siblings) would be those found in our text for today. Let me read first of all in John 11:1-5. Then note the closing verse of John 11, “*Now both the chief priests & the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where He were, he should shew it, that they might take Him*” (:57). In spite of that danger, we find Jesus returning to Bethany, only 2 miles from Jerusalem. It was there in Jerusalem that His enemies were plotting against Him. But Jesus desires to spend some time with His close friends in their home, knowing full well what the future held for Him. We see an extraordinary family of two sisters & a brother. These three individuals represent different aspects of the Christian life that blend together in beautiful harmony. Consider with me this evening the lives of Mary, Martha, & Lazarus, and note how they represent worship, work, & witness. Let us examine our lives to see if these aspects of the Christian life are being displayed in balance by us, making us effective in our service for Christ.

## I. Mary represents **worship**

[Mary is found by name only 3 times in the Gospels, each time she is at Jesus’ feet.]

### A. Luke 10:38-42 > a previous luncheon with Jesus:

1. She is before His feet in worship & for wisdom (cf. Psalm 27:4).

[Mary evidences a spirit of humility & spiritual hunger. How about us?]

2. “She found at His feet her blessing” (Wiersbe).

### B. John 11:28-32 > after the death of Lazarus:

1. She is before His feet in grief & sorrow (cf. Psalm 55:22 & cf. I Peter 5:7).

2. “She brought to His feet her burden” (Wiersbe).

### C. John 12:1-11 > her anointing of Jesus:

1. She is before His feet in devotion & sacrifice (cf. Psalm 96:8-9).

2. “She gave at His feet her best” (Wiersbe).

Summary: Not only is she found each time at Jesus’ feet, but each time she is misunderstood for her actions. “When we give Jesus first place in our lives, we can expect to be misunderstood & criticized by those who claim to follow Him” (Wiersbe).

## II. Martha represents **work** (Luke 10:38-42)

### A. Note the service of Martha (:38, 40):

1. She is faithful in her service for the Lord. [We need more “Marthas” in our churches.]

2. She is faulty in her speaking to the Lord (note her complaint to the Lord & her command of the Lord).

B. Note again the silence of Mary (:39):

1. She placed herself at the feet of Jesus.
2. She presented herself to hear the words of Jesus.

C. Note the statements of the Master (:41-42):

1. Martha had a variety of concerns (:41, “...*careful & troubled about many things*”).
2. Martha needed a view of concentration (:42, “*But one thing is needful: & Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her*”).

Summary: One of the lessons here is that worship should come before service.

### III. Lazarus represents **witness** (John 12:9-11)

A. His life was watched (:9).

1. Though we have no recorded words spoken by him, his daily walk was enough – he was a “walking miracle” [compare & contrast John the Baptist > He did no miracles, but his words (messages) brought others to Christ – John 10:40-42].
2. Our lives are being watched by others. Do we give evidence that we have been spiritually “raised” from the dead? (see Ephesians 2:1-10 & cf. Romans 6:13).

B. His life was threatened (:10).

1. Lazarus’ very life was a testimony of the power of Jesus & he was considered a threat to the religious leaders.
2. Our lives may not be physically threatened by others, but our godly witness may well bring about persecution (see II Timothy 3:12).

C. His life was preserved (:11).

1. There is no mention that the Jewish leaders were successful in killing Lazarus.
2. Our lives are in the hands of our Redeemer & Sustainer (see Psalm 23).

Summary: Our life & our lips should give testimony to our relationship with Christ. Our new life in Christ (II Corinthians 5:17) & our words of witness (I Peter 3:15) should testify of His saving power.

Conclusion: What a family we see here in John 11, a family that Jesus loved. These three siblings represent different aspects of the Christian life that should be in evidence in us. But let me ask first whether or not you know Christ as your Savior? Do you have the assurance that if you were to die right now, you would go to heaven? If not, why not come to Christ this evening? If you are a believer, do you have that beautiful balance of worship, work, & witness in your life? Do you spend time at Jesus’ feet, for worship & to obtain wisdom? Are you active in the work of the Lord (see Romans 12:11, “*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord*”)? And do you share Christ by your life & lips, evidencing what God has done for you? Might we seriously evaluate our lives in light of these elements, represented by the lives of Mary, Martha, & Lazarus!