

SIDE NOTE: This is how Jesus made FIRM Mary's "better CHOICE", a choice that could never be taken from her.

Eternally significant effort is never wasted effort. Those three 9 year olds yielded an eternal harvest of thousands upon thousands.

There's another Biblical example about Mary the sister of Martha that demonstrates that **Eternally significant effort is never wasted effort.** Mary was the only disciple who was listening so well to Jesus that later Jesus defended her AGAIN when she CHOSE THE BETTER THING by pouring expensive perfume on Jesus. I cannot prove it, but I think she didn't let her filters block out Jesus' words that he was going to be killed, as the other disciples did, because of their misunderstanding about his path as the Messiah.

Matthew 26:12–13 (NLT) — 12 She has poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial. 13 I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed."

As a footnote, compared with John 12:7, we know that this was Mary—there may have been reasons to protect her identity when Matthew and Mark wrote... which was not a concern when John wrote.

Deuteronomy 11:18–21 (NIV) Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. ¹⁹ Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. ²⁰ Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, ²¹ so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.

Luke 10:38–42 (International Children's Bible: The Version Children Can Read and Understand) While Jesus and his followers were traveling, Jesus went into a town. A woman named Martha let Jesus stay at her house. ³⁹ Martha had a sister named Mary. Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet and listening to him teach. ⁴⁰ Martha became angry

*because she had so much work to do. She went in and said, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me alone to do all the work? Tell her to help me!”⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are getting worried and upset about too many things.⁴² **Only one thing is important.** Mary has chosen **the right thing**, and it will never be taken away from her.”*

ASK CHILDREN: Age 12 or younger?

- So what the RIGHT thing that Mary chose to do? That thing that Jesus said nobody could take away?
 - To listen to Jesus.
 - To listen to Jesus. That's right.
- And what was the thing that Martha chose to do?
 - Cook and serving.
 - Cooking and serving. Is cooking and serving bad?
 - No.
- So what is even better than cooking and serving that Mary chose to do?
 - She listened to Jesus.
 - Yeah.
- So, Kids that’s point number one today!

II. Choose WHAT is BETTER

- So, Kids that’s point number one today! What’s the one thing that is the important thing?
- Hey, give it up for our kids. Thank you so much for helping me.

II. Choose what CAN’T be TAKEN AWAY

If a change lasts 5 years that’s better than 1 year.

III. Lasting significance is measured by TIME

Do you realize the importance of teaching children little by little?

Only time will really tell of it’s importance. What does that look like in five years, in 25 years, in 50 years, if we took the time now with our little ones to teach them the Bible every day. What kind of impact will we have in our country in 50 years?

And what I want to encourage you with, those of you who have little ones in your home, little ones in your lives, that little by little, little heart by little heart, day by day, even just simple things like that of reading the Bible to our kids, just imagine the compound interest over time of what a little bit of God's Word everyday in our kids' lives will look like over time. I just want to encourage you to keep on doing that, and to keep on doing that.

And I realize and I understand that there may be some of us who our kids are all grown, and they're out of the house. And maybe you didn't know Jesus back then when your kids were little, and you look back, and you wish that you could have. Or maybe you didn't take the time that you would have wanted. I just want to encourage you that God is so much bigger than our regrets. He is able to make a way where there is no way. And he restores what was lost and what was taken from us or what we didn't do.

And so maybe you're in a place where you have grandkids, and you just take time whenever you get your grandkids to talk about Jesus. You don't have to open the Bible. But maybe you don't have grandkids. Maybe you don't have kids around you. I would encourage you to get plugged into serving kids and Youth at VVCC.

What was Jesus Thinking?

He told us. **Mary chose the one necessary thing for SIGNIFICANCE.**

Your relationship with Jesus is the main thing! Mary's choice was the main thing. She put Jesus front and center. Mary chose to sit at his feet and that could not be taken away from her. Her choice made an eternal difference, even if Mary didn't know it, and even if Martha could not see it.

Martha made things that don't last, the main thing. Mary is listening. Mary is getting it. Martha is missing it.

What was Mary Thinking?

It is quite possible Mary was really listening and catching what nobody else was catching. Jesus had been telling the disciples he was going to be killed. Because of the disciples preconceptions about what they believed it meant to be the Messiah, they didn't believe Jesus was being literal. Mary took Jesus' words literally. Mary was prepared in a way Martha was not. Mary was prepared in a way the other disciples were not. Mary did something beautiful later. She imitated another lady who took her valuable perfume and poured it on Jesus. Mary did also, and some of the disciples were indignant at how she was wasting valuable resources that could have been sold and invested in the ministry. They missed the main thing too. Mary didn't miss the main thing. Jesus was front and center. She was listening to Jesus. What she did could not be taken away from her!!! Mary chose the ONE THING!

While sitting at Jesus feet we position ourselves to hear what Jesus whispers to us, and not to others who are too busy to listen.

What if our five-year plans don't go as we planned? What if our plans fail, or life happens differently than what we thought? What if. The Lusko's never dreamed of losing their precious daughter suddenly as they did. But the precious time they spent together as a family with Jesus could not be taken away from them!

There's so much to do in a day-- make sure that whatever you do, you do the ONE thing that cannot be taken away from you. It's the one thing that brings everything else you do into eternal perspective!!

Spend time at Jesus feet!!!

Our prayer for you is that, if life doesn't go as planned, that you would be so in love with Jesus that you would be prioritizing your time to sit at his feet, to listen to what he says, that your relationship with him is so

rich and so deep that no matter what happens-- your relationship with Jesus cannot be taken away from you!

SMALL TALK

1. Share about a time when you had to choose between two important priorities or activities. How did you make the decision, and what were the outcomes?

VIEWPOINT

2. **Read Luke 10:38-42.** What is happening in this passage, and what do you think is the main message Jesus conveys to Martha (and us)?
3. What contrasts do you notice between Martha's and Mary's attitudes and actions, and how do these relate to our own lives?
4. Discuss the idea of choosing what is better as presented in this passage? Discuss what Jesus corrects and what Jesus affirms.

GETTING PERSONAL

5. What are some areas where you prioritize busyness and productivity with less impact than choosing "what is better"?
6. Share practical ways to take the attentive listening position of a disciple of Jesus?
7. How can you strike a balance between serving and taking time to listen and learn from Jesus?

MAKING PROGRESS (THIS WEEK)

8. **Action Step Challenge:** Commit to setting aside and spending a specific amount of time each day in quiet reflection, prayer, and studying scripture.