

## A Tale of Two Sisters

**Martha:** We're a fortunate family—I can tell you that. When Jesus comes to our little village, do you know where he stays? At our house! I live here in Bethany with my brother, Lazarus, and my sister, Mary. When Jesus comes to town, there's so much to be done. You realize, of course, that he brings his best friends with him. There are Peter, James, John, Matthew, and—well, you know—the rest of the Twelve. Do you have any idea how much those men eat? Of course, I am known as the best hostess in Bethany. I brush my grilled fish with just a bit of olive oil and sprinkle on just the right herbs. Mmm—mmm. None of that fishy taste, you know. And my roasted lamb? It just melts in your mouth. And my fig cakes? Well, just let it be said that there isn't a single neighbor who hasn't asked for the recipe.

**Mary:** We're so honored that Jesus comes to stay with us. Think of it—the Messiah we've waited for all these years chooses our house to rest in. When he's here, he fills the house with love. Every word that he speaks seems to go straight to my soul. I understand things that I never thought I could—and yet there are so many things I don't understand. I want to stay close and catch everything Jesus says. Missing a single word would be like dropping a jewel and letting it roll into the mud. I wish I could explain what a privilege it is to sit and listen to the Son of God. I wish I could share the experience with you.

**Martha:** You know, the longer we know Jesus, the more people he seems to bring with him. It's only natural—everyone wants to see him, touch him, be healed. But can you imagine what it's like to try to run a household in the midst of all that?

Fortunately, our friends and neighbors help. They bring in food, invite some of the disciples to stay at their homes—that kind of thing. I don't know what I'd do without them, because I certainly don't get much help from my sister, Mary. Why, when Jesus gets here, she just kind of goes into a daze. She sits dreamily at his feet, not noticing how much there is to do.

**Mary:** Jesus is here again! I'm so glad! I've had the strangest feeling lately that he's not going to be with us much longer. There's a sadness about him today, as if he's struggling with what's ahead. I don't understand why he would struggle—after all, he's the Son of God. He can do anything. But he knows that something is about to happen, something that will be difficult for him—I'm sure of it. I can just see the sadness in his eyes. I'm glad he's come to us. He can find some peace and quiet here among his closest friends. I'll stay right here close beside him. Who knows when we'll get to see him again?

**Martha:** Well! This is just the outside of enough! I have all these people to feed, including the Lord himself, and what does Mary do? She sits there. Sits! Can you believe it? I've worn myself to a frazzle. I've had to organize the food that's coming in from the neighbors. There are extra sleeping mats to be gathered and our best dishes to be put out for the meal. I started cleaning this morning as soon as it was light and barely had the house ready when Jesus arrived. Someone has to get fruit at the market, and I still have bread to bake. Do you think little Miss Mary might at least start the fire? No! She sits by Jesus as if she's the queen of the scene. I've had it. I'm going to say something.

Permission to photocopy this story granted for local church use. Copyright © Lois Keffer.  
Published in *All-in-One Sunday School Volume 3* by Group Publishing, Inc., 1515 Cascade Ave., Loveland, CO 80538.