

LEARNING THE LOVE OF CHRIST AT THE FEET OF CHRIST

LUKE 10:38-42 • TV0-45B

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By

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Luke 10:38-42

“Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

I’m going to bring you a message that I believe is from the Lord. And I believe it is especially needful in this day of great religious and church activities. Now this is a message that was a special blessing to me personally and I’m praying that the Spirit of God will make it a special blessing to you.

If you want to follow in your Bible; you open them first of all to the book of **Luke 10:38-41**. Just hold the book of **Luke** there in your hand and let me make a few comments as I introduce the message.

Now the title of the message is this: **“LEARNING THE LOVE OF CHRIST AT THE FEET OF CHRIST.”**

Now, there was a little family down in Bethany, a brother, two sisters, and their names were Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. And the Scripture tells us in **John 11:5** that *“Jesus loved Martha and her sister Mary and Lazarus.”*

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The Lord Jesus loved this little family. He was often in their home. In **Luke 10:38**, the Scripture that you have opened there, this is what we read, this is our text:

“Now it came to pass as they went, Christ and His disciples, that He entered into a certain village, (a village called Bethany) and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house and she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His Word.”

Now, according to the Scriptures this is where you usually found Mary, sitting at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is where she usually was, sitting at His feet down on the floor, feeding on His presence, worshipping Him, adoring Him, and hearing His Word.

That’s where you found Mary most of the time. Let me show you that: First in **John 11:1** it says: *“Now a certain man was sick whose name was Lazarus of the town of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.”*

Look at **verse 2 in John 11**: *“It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with the hair of her head.”*

Now, the only way she could have wiped His feet with the hair of her head is to be on the floor sitting at His feet; the Scripture says, she just covered them with precious, expensive and costly ointment and wiped His feet with the hair of her head.

John 11:32; listen to this: *“When Mary was come where Jesus was; (this was after Lazarus had died), she fell down at His feet and she said, Lord; if you’d been here my brother would not have died.”*

Where was she? She was at His feet. **John 12:3**, it repeats it again: *“Then Mary took a pound of costly ointment and anointed His feet and dried them with her hair of her head.”* Mary was usually found at the feet of our Lord.

Now, for what it’s worth to you, Judas the betrayer kissed the cheek of the Lord. Mary kissed His feet.

Now go back to the text again in **Luke 10**; our Lord had come into this little home He and His disciples as they went; came to a certain village by the name of Bethany and this woman Martha whom Christ loved, her sister Mary, and Lazarus, invited Him into her home.

And Christ our Lord went into the home. And He was sitting down and here was Mary at His feet. In **verse 40**, Martha was in the back, busy, working and serving the Lord. Now listen to it, and let’s see if God will teach us something here:

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“Now Martha was cumbered about, (over occupied, is the word). She was cumbered about with much serving.” She was so busy serving the Lord. Mary sat at His feet and Martha came to the Lord Jesus, and the Scripture says she was upset and troubled.

And she said; “Lord; don’t you care that my sister has left me to do all the work and to serve alone? You tell her to get up and come and help me.”

And our Lord answered; now this will be good for you and me, our Lord answered and said: *“Martha, Martha,”* He repeated her name twice.

Like He repeated, *“Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again.”*

This is so important; *“Martha, Martha, you are over occupied and anxious and troubled.”* Read your amplified version on this: *“You’re troubled and you’re anxious about many things. There is one need and only one and Mary hath chosen that good part to sit at my feet and to learn of me. And this she’ll never lose.”*

Doesn’t this strike you as a true picture of religion today? It does me; it strikes me that way. It’s a picture of today’s religion, over occupied, just like Martha running around here and there and yonder, busy, always so busy.

We’re so organized. We’re serving the Lord in so many activities and so many ways. We’re really too busy and too occupied and too noisy and too troubled and too anxious to just sit at His feet and worship Him.

You know, you’ve got a lot of activities. How long has it been since you just worshipped the Lord? You’ve got a lot of things you’re doing to serve the Lord. How long has it been since you just worshipped Him and praised His name and sat at His feet?

One old man was heard to pray in Spurgeon’s church during a prayer meeting and this is what he said; *“Oh Lord; give me Mary’s place, give me Mary’s place that I might have the one thing needful.”*

That’s what Christ said; *“Martha; you’re so busy, but Mary has chosen the one good part and it won’t ever be taken away from her. This she’ll never lose.”*

It seems that the efforts of preachers today and churches today is to get people busy, get them busy in religion, get them busy in the kingdom of God, get them busy serving the Lord.

It looks like it’s taking all of the strain, effort, power, organizational ability, promotion, and entertainment to get people busy, busy, serving the Lord while God is saying *“Be still and know that I am God.”*

Isn’t that right? And we’re so busy, we’re so troubled, we’re so anxious; we’re so cumbered about with care. We’re rushing here and there serving the Lord. And the Scripture is saying all

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this time; *“Wait upon the Lord. Be of good courage. He’ll strengthen your heart. Wait I say on the Lord.”*

We’re so busy. And our Lord is saying to us; *“Come unto me and I’ll give you rest.”* People work six days a week in the factories and then go to church on Sunday and they wear themselves out serving the Lord.

They don’t worship and praise and pray and seek His face and sit at His feet and learn of Him. We’re just like Martha, *“Martha, Martha, you’re so troubled, you’re so anxious and you’re so busy. Mary hath chosen the good part.”* Huh?

I’m not saying that Martha didn’t love Christ. I’m not saying that Martha didn’t have good intentions. I’m not saying that Martha wasn’t sincere. I’m just saying what the Lord said, *“You’re too troubled and you’re too anxious and you are too cumbered about with care. Mary’s chosen the good part.”* Now you’re going to lose that. She’ll never lose this.

The hymn writer said this:

**“Sitting at the feet of Jesus
Oh what words I hear Him say
Happy place, so near, so precious,
May it find me there each day**

**Sitting at the feet of Jesus
Where can mortal be more blessed?
There I lay my sins and sorrows
There my weary soul finds rest**

**Sitting at the feet of Jesus
There I love to weep and pray
While I from His fullness gather
Grace and comfort and strength every day.”**

Yes, Martha loved the Lord. Yes, Martha knew the love of Christ but not like Mary. Every time you read in the Word of God about Mary you read about love, compassion, a personal and a living relationship with Christ, that brought her to His feet.

You just keep reading that four or five times in the Scripture. *“This is Mary who sat at His feet. This is Mary who anointed His feet. This is Mary who kissed His feet.”* Mary learned the love of Christ at His feet and that’s where you get the best view of His love.

Now, there are some things the higher you are, the better view of it you get. If you want to get a good look at the New River Gorge up here in West Virginia; you just get up over top of Hawk’s Nest or Gauley Mountain and the higher you get the more you can see.

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But I'll tell you, if you want to learn the love of Christ, if you want to learn the mercy of God, if you want to learn the grace of God; you learn that, not the higher you get but the lower you get. You don't learn it from the uppermost seats in the synagogue; you learn it from the dust of humility.

Now my friend; I want to point out about five things and I want us to learn together; we're seeking the Lord together. We're not trying to prove anything. We're not rattling the chains of denominationalism and we're not stressing and plucking on the strings of prophetic prophecies; we're just trying to preach a little Christology.

We want you to know Christ: *"O that I may win Christ and be found in Him, that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection,"* that I might learn His love. Oh God; give me Mary's place. That's what I want and I hope that's what you want.

First of all: We have learned the love of Christ doctrinally!

Now my friend, don't underestimate learning the love of Christ doctrinally. Don't make fun of doctrine. Paul said to Timothy: *"Till I come you give attention to reading and to doctrine and to exhortation."*

If a man would know the purpose of God in Christ Jesus he's going to have to learn it from the Word of God. Don't neglect the Book. Open God's Word: *"Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."*

If you want to learn God's covenant mercies and God's redeeming grace and God's atoning sacrifice in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit and how you ought to behave yourself in the church of God, if you want to learn these things, go to the Book. Go to God's Word. Learn the love of Christ doctrinally.

It's necessary to know that His love is eternal. He said; *"I've drawn you with an everlasting love, an eternal love. For God so loved the world."* Christ didn't come in order to get God in the notion to love sinners; He came because God did love sinners.

God's love is an everlasting love. God loved us in Christ before the world began. That's what the Scripture says. *"We were chosen in Christ before the world began."* That's right! That's what God's Word declares.

His love is an eternal love. It pleased God to make you His people. It pleased God that in Christ should all fullness dwell. It pleased God to bruise Him. It pleased God to reveal His Son in you. It pleased God to bring you to salvation.

**"Before the day star knew its place
Or planets with their round
The saints and bonds of sovereign grace
Were one in Jesus Christ found."**

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It's necessary to learn God's love doctrinally. It's an everlasting love. It's something else; it's a love that'll never end. That's right! "Where did you find that out preacher," from the Word of God?

"Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?" No sir; "I'm persuaded that nothing can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ my Lord. Having loved His own He loved them to the end."

It's an everlasting love both ways. *"The gifts and calling of God are without change. Herein is love, not that we loved God but He loved us and gave His Son to be a sacrifice for our sins."*

This is where we start. This is where every man has got to begin. God doesn't save you without your mind; salvation is a heart-faith. I know that but not without the mind. Paul said; *"I know whom I have believed."* You can't believe in someone you don't know, someone of whom you haven't heard.

So, the first place we come is to come to this place; we learn the love of Christ doctrinally. We learn who loves, and how He loves, and why He loves, and when He loves. It's an everlasting love. It's in Christ. That's where God's love is; it is in Christ!

Secondly: We not only learn His love doctrinally, but we learn it personally!

Now I want you to listen to me for a moment. Learning the love of Christ is not something that comes quickly. It's not something that comes easily. To know that the Lord Jesus Christ loves me, to know in your heart that He loves you, to know that He redeemed you by His death on the cross; now that doesn't come quickly and that doesn't come easily.

Charles Wesley put it like this:

**"And can it be
That I should gain an interest
In the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, Who Him to death pursued?"**

Is it possible that He loves me? Is it possible that He died for me? Is it possible that God has redeemed me? Do you know that? Well, you know it doctrinally; you read it in the Scripture: *"God so loved the world. God's plenteous in mercy."*

We know some things from the Scripture. We know we're sinners. *"All have sinned and come short of God's glory."* You know that. *"All we like sheep have gone astray. If a man says he has no sin he's a liar and the truth is not in him."* If he says he has no sin he is making God a liar because God said all have sinned.

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We know we are sinners and we know that God is plenteous in mercy. We know that. And we know that Christ came into this world. You can take out your calendar. Have you got a calendar in your pocket?

That calendar will tell you a man called Jesus Christ came into this world. What year is this, 1977? What, A.D (in the year of our Lord)? Time is measured on your calendar by His coming into the world: B.C, “before Christ,” and A.D, Anno Domini, “in the year of our Lord.”

You know He came into this world. You know He died on the cross. You know He was buried and rose again. It might take you to the so-called Holy Land and show you a hole in the ground; but they can't show you the Lord; He's not here, He's risen.

And we know that we want to be among these people, we want to. And there's some things we've done. Like the Publican we stood with bowed heads and smote upon our breasts and cried, “*God be merciful to me the sinner.*”

Have you ever done that? “God be merciful to me the sinner. Lord save me or I perish.” Or like the thief; “Lord, I'm getting what I deserve. But when you come into your kingdom will you remember me?”

We know those things. We've learned those things from the Scripture. But wait a minute! The day will come when God's Spirit will bear witness with your spirit and as I say, it won't come quickly, and it won't come easily.

And I hear preachers tell rank sinners, agnostics, skeptics; “Come down this aisle and accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour.” Now I can understand a man saying, “come down this aisle and bow to the claims of Christ.”

I can understand a preacher saying; “Come down this aisle and bow to the Kingship of Jesus Christ.” I can understand the preacher saying: “Come down this aisle and bow to the sovereign rights of Jesus Christ and do with you as He will.”

But to come down here the first time I hear the Gospel, the first time I hear of my sin and accept Him as my personal Saviour? I might accept Him as the Saviour of sinners, I might accept Him as the only atonement and the only sacrifice, but I'll tell you this; it takes the Holy Spirit to reveal to a man's heart that Christ loves him, and Christ died for him.

And that doesn't come easily and that doesn't come quickly. But one day it will come if you're His own. You'll be able to say, “The Lord is mine and I am His and He is mine.” You'll be able to read the Song of Solomon and understand what it's all about, “*My beloved.*”

Paul understood, he said: “*I know whom I have believed. I'm persuaded that He is able to keep that which I've committed to Him against that day.*” You'll learn His love personally. You'll learn it first doctrinally from the Word of God.

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And as you bow to the sovereign claims of Christ, and as you seek the Lord with all your heart, one of these days He'll speak peace to your heart. And you won't find peace down in front of the church. And you won't find peace in the baptismal pool.

And you won't find peace in the Roll Book of the church. And you won't find peace teaching the Sunday school class. And you won't find it preaching; you'll find peace when the Holy Spirit speaks peace to your heart. *"My peace I give unto you."* That's right!

Christ said; *"You come to me, I'll give you rest."* In His own time you'll learn His love personally but you'll learn it at His feet.

You're not going to learn it in your busy activities and all your cumbered about with care and your anxiety and trouble. You're not going to learn it reading a book. You're going to learn it reading His Word as His Spirit speaks peace to your heart.

Thirdly: We then learn His love practically!

Now I want you to listen; you can't teach a man to swim in this television studio, no way, no way. You can tell him about how deep the water is and how to make the strokes and kick his feet but he can't learn to swim in this studio.

And I'll tell you, you can't teach a man to farm in a schoolroom; he's got to learn it behind a plow. That's the only place he'll learn how to farm. And the only place a man will learn how to swim is in a lake.

And you can't teach a man to mine on top of the ground. You've got to take him down where the seams about 25 or 36 inches and teach him on his belly how to dig coal. That's where he'll learn to mine.

And great soldiers aren't made at West Point; they're made in the smell and in the heat and the smoke of battle. That's where soldiers are made.

And I'll tell you this; the love of Christ is not learned from the creed or from the catechism and not from books. The love of Christ is learned at His feet as we personally draw on that love and partake of that love and experience that love in our own lives and heart.

You don't believe anything till you experience it. Now, you can talk about what you read and what you memorized and what you learned and what you found out in school, but you don't believe anything until you experience it.

How do you know His love, that He loves you, great sinner? Well, you answer from:

**"Sinking sand He lifted me
With tender hand He lifted me**

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**From shades of night
To plains of light
Oh praise His name
He lifted me.”**

That’s how I know His love. I know what I was, and I know what He did for me. And I know what I am now. I’m not what I ought to be and I’m not what I’m going to be but thank God I’m not what I use to be. And He did it all.

How do you know His love dear brother? Huh? “Well preacher, I’ll tell you how I know it. I’ve walked with Him through great sorrow. I’ve walked with Him through great suffering. I’ve been on my back distressed, sick, nigh unto death, and He never left me.”

**“He walked with me
And He talked with me
Along life’s narrow way
Oh the joy we share
As we tarried there
None other can ever know.”**

“Oh preacher, I learned it. I learned it practically. I learned it by experience. I learned it at His feet.”

Where did you learn His love, dear sister? “I lost my dear child and He was my comfort. I lost my dear husband right when I needed him most. And He’s been my help, He’s been my hope, and He’s been a husband to me. I’ve learned His love. I’ve learned it by experience.”

How do you know His love dear fellow laborer? “Well, through the deepest valley He’s never left me alone. Through the hardest trial He’s never left me. Through the greatest persecution He stood by my side. Through all things He’s been my refuge and my great reward and He’s met my every need.” Preacher; “I’ve proved His love many times over, over and over again.”

**“The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
He will not, He will not, desert to its foes
That soul, though all hell endeavors to shake
He’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”**

That’s where you learn His love. I know you learn it from your doctrine. You’ve got to learn it there first. That’s where every babe in Christ learns it.

But then he’s got to learn it not only doctrinally, but he’s got to learn it personally. The Holy Spirit has got to come one day and reveal who Christ is to him and bring about a vital living union, whether that man’s willing to give his life for Christ’s sake.

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And then as we walk with Him through the years we learn His love practically and experimentally.

Fourthly: We learn His love by contemplation!

Now my friend, when you read the apostles; you don't find them arguing with people about the doctrine of the atonement do you? They believe something about the atonement, but they didn't argue; they just preached it.

But they preached the effectual death of Christ, the effectual work of Christ. They preached that Jesus Christ was the only Saviour: "*The only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.*" They didn't argue about a doctrine, they preached a person. There's a difference.

And you listen to preaching. Preaching if it's true preaching is the preaching of a person. Paul said; "*I'm determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ,*" not the doctrine of Christ, the person of Christ.

And then you don't find the disciples arguing about the resurrection; they preached it. But they walked with a living Lord. You didn't hear them arguing about the resurrection, arguing about the second coming. No sir; they looked for and walked with the living Lord. He's coming back, He's coming back.

These doctrines, I love them, but they are the throne upon which He sits. We don't worship the throne; we worship the person, the King. These doctrines are the garments He wears and I'm not going to spend my time continually talking about the throne and continually folding and refolding these garments.

No sir! I want Mary's place at His feet looking into the face of Him whom I love and seeing Him look at me and knowing He loves me.

**“My Jesus I love thee
I know thou art mine
For thee all the follies
Of sin I resign**

**I love thee in life
I love thee in death
I love thee as long
As you give me breath.”**

And last of all; now I want you to stay with me now. We've got to learn His love sympathetically!

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Now, there are very few people who have come to this sweet paradise here. I don't claim to be here. I sure would like to. I'd like to live here. Here's what I mean. Now go with me outside Jerusalem up there on a hill. And you and I are standing up there on that hill; we're looking down at that city, that city that crucified the Lord of glory.

And a voice says; "This city is going to be besieged by the Romans. Titus the emperor is going to burn this city to the ground. Plow up the ground and sow it with salt and blood will flow through the streets of that city."

And you and I are prone to say; "Well, they are certainly getting what they deserve. Didn't they hate Christ? Didn't they take Him outside their city walls to keep from dishallowing their Sabbath Day and nailing Him to an awful cross and laugh at Him while he died? Maybe they ought to die."

Wait a minute! A man's sitting behind us and we hear his voice as He weeps over that city and He cries: "*O Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you unto myself as a hen doth gather her brood you would not.*"

Who is that? That's the Lord of glory. I'd like to learn something about that kind of love, wouldn't you?

And then you stand outside the city walls of Jerusalem and you see a man on that cross, they nailed brutally, they lacerated His back and pressed the crown of thorns on His head and spit in His face.

They plucked out His beard and drove nails in His hands and hung Him up there between heaven and earth, thirsting and dying and laughing at Him and crying; "If you're the Son of God come down we'll believe you. Let's see if God will have you now. You say you are God's Son; let's see if He will own you?"

We say, one of these days God will send these people to hell. "*Vengeance is mine saith the Lord. I will repay you.*" It will be a good day when that bunch of soldiers has to bow to Him. Wait a minute! Let's let Him speak; "*Father forgive them; they know not what they do.*"

Paul prayed for the Pharisees who persecuted and hated him. He said; "*I could have wished myself accursed from Christ for these men, my brethren, according to the flesh.*" Moses said one day: "*Lord; if you're going to destroy Israel just blot me out of the book you've written.*"

That's the love of Christ learned sympathetically when we can pray for our enemies and bless them that persecute you and despitely use you and feed even your enemy when he hungers. You've learned the love of Christ sympathetically. It doesn't come easy!