

Is Your Stress Blocking Divine Miracles?

Does life ever stress you out? I think we could all give a resounding “yes!” answer to that question.

But I have found out that the closer I am to God, the less stressed I feel. Because He has the answers to every problem. And He loves me (and you) like crazy and wants to be closer to us so we can hear His voice, react in His wisdom, receive His power and walk in His peace.

There’s a story in the Bible about a woman named Mary who found out the same thing. She discovered that time spent with Jesus is much better than stressing out—it does us so much good!

Mary’s story is in Luke 10:38-42, where one day Jesus paid a visit to the house she shared with her brother Lazarus and her sister Martha.

Jesus probably brought quite a few people with Him to their house that day, as He rarely traveled alone, and He also probably didn’t call ahead for reservations. So that meant that Mary and Martha had quite a bit of work to do to serve a meal to all those people at a moment’s notice.

It was obviously pretty stressful, because we see Martha in the kitchen, plucking the chickens, preparing the salad, making the lemonade, ordering the servants around, banging the pots and pans—and then suddenly she looked around her and noticing that *Mary was not in there helping*.

We know this ticked Martha off, because she immediately ran into her living room and *yelled at the Lord* (you know you’re pretty stressed out when you yell at the Lord in your living room!).

With the vein standing out in her neck, Martha sputtered, "Lord, I'm working pretty hard in here! Make my sister help me!" I'm sure she totally expected Jesus to say, "Oh you poor girl, yes! Mary, go help your sister." But no.

Instead Jesus focused on Martha with a look of compassion and said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42, NKJV).

In her frenzy, Martha thought that 65 things were needed to get dinner on the table that day. She thought someone needed to roast the chicken, mash the potatoes, pour the drinks, set the table and more. But Jesus said *only one thing* was needed, and Mary was doing it.

What was Mary doing? She was sitting at the feet of Jesus. Spending time with Him. Listening to Him.

Jesus was obviously trying to tell Martha to stop working so hard and getting so agitated. He wanted her to know that spending time with Him is more beneficial than stressing over all the things *she* thought needed to get done.

Stop the Merry-Go-Round

We don't get to see what happened after Jesus said that to Martha. She probably either huffed away, even madder than before, or she let His words sink into her heart and just stopped the merry-go-round right then and there, sinking to His feet to listen. I hope that's what she did!

Because if she did, all sorts of miracles might have happened. Just one chapter before, Jesus had miraculously turned a few loaves and fish into a meal for 5,000 people. I don't think He would have had any trouble getting a meal on the table at Mary and Martha's house. Could Martha's attempt to do everything in her own strength have stopped a miracle from happening at her

house that day?

I think that Bible story is such a powerful illustration of time spent with Jesus. Putting Him first, sitting at His feet, reading His words and listening for His voice takes the pressure off us and sets the stage for miracles! {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at . It is an excerpt from Karen's book Closer Than You Ever Imagined: Experiencing the Deep Relationship With God You Always Wanted. You can read the first part FREE and/or order your own copy by clicking here.