

How should we
spend our time?
assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

How Should We Spend Our Time? Introduction It is only fitting that November is chosen to be the Stewardship month and a very timely occasion to remind us of the abundant gifts, many talents and vast resources that God has blessed us and entrusted us to be used in the building of His kingdom, in service to the church and in helping others. November is a sensible month to celebrate Stewardship because CPU recognizes the Importance of proper management and effective utilization of our time. Wealth, and talents In preparation for the approaching Advent season and the coming of our Savior Jesus.

Now, the usage I presume is not a very popular text that is commonly being used to illustrate the emphasis of the Stewardship of Time. However, the passage is a simple, easy to understand, common experience which we can easily relate to, thus, makes it a helpful story to help us understand where and how we should use our time. Now, the title of the message today comes in a question form: How Should We Spend our Time? The story of Mary and Martha with Jesus gives us three points that would help us understand what it means to become a good steward of time. . First, By Being With Christ we receive discernment and wisdom to know how we can panned our time correctly. When Jesus and his disciples arrived in Marsh's house from their long travel the two sisters welcomed them. Verse 38 says, Martha opened her home to him. If you try to visualize what was going on, probably the two sisters prepared their Salsa, gave them stools to sit on, opened the windows for ventilation and perhaps offered them refreshments the same way we do when visitors come In our house.

I am sure Mary and Martha were both tense but at the same time excited to have Jesus and his disciples in their house. Who would not be? It must have been a real honor and privilege for them, an opportunity for them to come close and get to know Jesus. Here, the story tells us of two women who, I would say, tried to offer their time to be with Jesus in the best possible way and manner. Each of them invested their time to activities and efforts that each view as important to them.

In verse 39, we know that Mary chose to sit at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. And, in verse 40, it shows that Martha preferred to spend her time in preparations that had to be made. Looking at how each devoted their time, we would probably not see anything wrong or inappropriate. On one hand, perhaps we would even commend Martha for her hard work and initiative in ensuring that her guests are well accommodated and entertained. On the other hand, we might even scold Mary for not helping her sister.

As we read Martha complaining to Jesus in verse 40, we might even agree with her complain why Mary was just sitting while she is doing all the hard work – “ Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me. However, we can see that in verse 41 Jesus didn't agree with Martha instead gave Martha an advice “ Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “ you are ordered and upset about many things. ” Now, who do you think was a better steward better than Mary. Specially for Filipinos like us, hospitality is one of the best expression of a time spent correctly and productively.

In our church, we usually speak well of individuals as hardworking people when one put their time on service and preparation. We even look at it as a faithful expression of being a good steward than those who sit at the pews concentrating, listening on lectures or sermons. At times, we would even brand those people who prefer to sit and listen as lazy, insensitive and inconsiderate. However, when we try to look closely why Jesus has commended how Mary chose to spend her time than Martha we will understand Jesus point.

Jesus put more value on what we can get and what we will receive when we give our time to learn from Him. Jesus put more value to people who decides to sit at His feet because this signifies readiness to receive his word, and submission to the guidance of his teaching. Moreover, Jesus favored how Mary utilized her time over Martha because Jesus knew that the value of service and hard work is only temporal and limited while the value of spending time sitting at his side is more permanent, eternal and lasting.

Thus, how Mary spent her time not only signifies submission to learn from him but also an expression of a life ready to follow Jesus. Second, By Studying the Word of God we will receive enlightenment and guidance to discover where we should invest our time. Jesus said in verse 42 “... Only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her. ” – this only reveals that putting our time to know God’s Word through the teachings of Jesus is far more valuable and important than a time spent on hard work, service and preparation.

The story illustrates that though both showed good intentions in the way each used their time, Mary was favored more, but we have to note also that how Martha preferred to use her time was not completely despised or entirely rejected by Jesus only valued lesser. Martha's efforts in verse 40 to provide the physical needs of her visitors was regarded by the Luke as a distraction since it breaks Martha's connection with Jesus, hindering her from an extraordinary opportunity of receiving something that she could keep for the rest of her life and that is God's wisdom in Jesus.

Looking at Mary sitting at the Lord's feet listening to him in verse 39, we could visualize a person building a relationship with Jesus. Mary must have a great time listening to God's Word through Jesus. It must have been an opportunity of a lifetime to ask for clarifications, explanations or just simply listen and learn. Mary may also be sitting comfortably, relax and happily that somehow irritated Martha leading her to come to Jesus and suggested in verse 40 to tell her sister to help her! So looking at Mary, we could say that she has indeed put quality time learning from Jesus.

For us today, we should be like Mary who would put quality time studying the Bible. And, as we read the Bible, like Mary, this should give us comfort, relaxation and happiness instead of getting laziness, sleepy and tired. Today, Jesus continues to call our attention through the Bible to show us where we should spend our time and the story brings to light that the more we study the Bible the more our relationship with Jesus is built. Hence, Jesus can caution us better by directing us away from activities that will only waste our time, activities that seem important yet produce less value.

As for our time studying God's Word instead of consuming our time on reckless fun and fooling around. We should be like Mary who knew how to handle her priorities. And, we should be like Mary who remained firm with her decision and conviction that spending her time knowing God's Word with Jesus is the best way to invest her time rather than be tempted to participate on activities and pursuits that Jesus considered of secondary importance. The story tells us that Jesus would attend to those who give their time wanting to listen to God's Word, because only then we are able to discern the purpose of our time and life.

Furthermore, with the advancement of technology and gadgets along with the fast paced life nowadays our time is easily diverted away from our Bible reading time to playing our computers and ' pads; or from having time for meditation, we favor watching movies and follow telemeters; or from having a long and meaningful time conversing and bonding with loved ones and friends, we become contented receiving and sending text messages and spending our time in short time chats via faceable and skips.

As stewards of time, Martha and Mary story is a strong reminder why we should devote enough time to sit at Jesus' feet cause by studying the Bible we learn Jesus' teachings, discover more our purpose and find out better how to become good stewards of time that would best prepared us as Christians to do the works of God. Jesus calls us to be more like Mary first and be like Martha probably later on, so let us not get worried and anxious by putting too much time preparing the best possible future of our lives.

Matthew 6: 33 should help us understand that as stewards of God's gift of time we should " seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and everything shall be added unto us. " III Third, By Serving the Church and Community we can inspire others to be good stewards themselves. In verse 40 we saw how Martha got distracted with preparation and service and how she complained to Jesus for feeling left alone to do all the labor, chores and hard work while Mary sits around feeling comfortable.

It must have been a terrible experience for Martha. She must have been exhausted, tired and agitated specially looking at Mary having a good time concentrating, enjoying and sitting closely to Jesus. I am sure Martha must be envious or perhaps thought of joining Mary at Jesus' feet to listen also. But, I'm sure Martha thought more of what her guests will eat or drink and how to make their visit worthwhile. The whole story conveys a specific message that at times we overlook.

When we look closely how Martha is described to be distracted in verse 40 and compare it to how Mary is depicted in verse 39 who sits at the Lord's feet, we could draw an assumption that Martha perhaps didn't give any attempt to sit, listen and establish first a connection with Jesus instead she is portrayed to have rushed to preparing and serving her guests. Jesus might have felt that Martha is taking his presence and the message that e could share and impart to Martha as secondary importance or less priority. Jesus may have wanted to establish rapport with Martha.

Jesus possibly wanted quality time from both sisters for proper introductions or greetings. However, in our present context, we cannot all at the same

time do the preparation or do the ushering, someone must be assigned to entertain while someone will be tasked to oversee that the preparation is properly done. But as Christians and stewards of time, we cannot serve the church and the community properly and effectively without first investing mission he is trying to accomplish. We cannot just rush and go forward serving the church and community without prior preparation and training.

We must first be equipped to become competent individuals and this requires time, enough time. To serve the church and community is like aspiring to become like a chef. He needs time to learn the techniques, the process, the ingredients and many different styles of cooking from an instructor before the instructor becomes confident and assured that the aspiring chef can handle his assignment in the kitchen. A cook cannot just rush serving menus and preparing dishes after his introduction with the instructor.

Imagine the mess he will make inside the kitchen. As stewards of God's gift of time, we are expected to become as hardworking, active and energetic to do God's works like Martha. We should be like Martha who is sensitive to see what is needed and act on it. We should be as industrious as Martha to ensure that the roles and duties that the church and community expects us to do and fulfill, is carried out effectively. I am sure you also wondered, was it totally wrong for Martha to use her time serving and preparing instead of listening to Jesus?

Not at all, because in reality we also need omitted people to put their time and dedicate their lives in service and preparation for the church to ensure

that programs and activities will run smoothly and properly. So, we also need Martha in our homes and churches not just Mary. The story is a good reminder for the church to be sensitive and conscious in ensuring that every member should be given equal time, opportunity and access to all programs and activities because these would strengthen their faith and relationship with Jesus and the community of faith.

People like Martha are also good stewards of time, in fact a valuable resource of the church and in our households. Individuals like Mary and Martha are both necessary in our time because each will complement the other, but the story conveys a message of wise usage of time and discernment to know where we should primarily put more our time. We can be Mary and Martha at the same time to inspire others by showing them how to become good stewards of their own time.

We can be a Mary who gives time to listen and accompany others while they share their struggles and impart their knowledge. And, we can be a Martha at the same time who is hardworking and sensitive to the needs of others. If we want to lead others towards Christ and help people become good stewards of their own time we need to become a Mary and Martha so they may understand what it means to become good stewards of time.

Conclusion Brothers and sisters in Christ, the story conveys a strong message for our Christian understanding – that time is a precious gift from God designed for various ways how, where and when we can use it, but also comes with many possibilities that we can waste it. As stewards of God's gift of time, we are expected to be like Mary who discerned that establishing a

relationship with Jesus and learning from his teachings is the best way to spend time, thus, encouraging us also to be like Martha who is sensitive and industrious to serve and prepare the way for others.

Both characters are relevant in becoming good stewards of God's gift of time. May we recognize the task that God has entrusted us as stewards of time not to use our time for personal and the community. Time is a valuable resource entrusted by God to us as His stewards – we are expected to use this gift to help build God's kingdom and establish a relationship with Christ, not to waste time for own selfish goals and serve our personal interests.

Amen.