Theme: A life immersed in the Word of God is indispensable to the effective, faithful service of the disciple. The two are inseparable.

Background: Jesus’ eyes are fixed on the road to Jerusalem. There will be little rest for Him. The hospitality would be welcome, indeed.

Introduction: The generous gift of unlooked-for hospitality.

I. From Hospitality

A. Martha Style –

1. Meet their needs
   - a “gift” or spirit of hospitality? (Romans 12:13; 1 Peter 4:10)
   - Desire to serve
   - Caring for Jesus

2. A special guest
   - Caring for a friend
   - Lots to be done!
   - Focused on “serving”

B. Mary Style –

1. Listening (Having needs met)
   - Not preparing food – but partaking (John 6:27; Luke 12:22)
   - Quiet, undisturbed, absorbed

2. At His Feet – completely accepted!

ASIDE: Women and the Ministry of Jesus

1. Women in 1st Century Judea
   - Thanking God that he had not been made “a Gentile, a slave or a woman”

2. Women in 1st Century Rome
   - Severe inequality before the law

3. Women and Jesus
   - Luke 8:1-3 Scandalous acceptance!
   - Galatians 3:28
   - Disciples sat “at the feet” of the teacher (Acts 22:3)

4. Women and the Gospel
   - Freedom and dignity everywhere the gospel goes
II. To Hostility

A. Martha’s distractions (“pulled away”)

1. Her important work
   - Too much work for one person
   - Resentment builds

2. What is Mary doing??
   - I’m serving!
   - Her job is out here – helping me!

B. Martha’s rebuke

1. She doesn’t ask for help

2. She chastises Jesus

III. To Humility

A. Jesus’ gentle rebuke

1. Missing the “good portion”
   - Not “Get behind me Satan”, but, “Martha, Martha”
   - She missed the “good portion”

2. A difference not of personality but of priorities

NOTE: Jesus is not encouraging choice between contemplative life and that of active service. We must learn to sit at Jesus’ feet – our service will be to ourselves.

B. Martha’s enduring testimony
   - John 11:27

IV. Conclusion – Keeping Priorities Straight

1. Are my way, my priorities, my projects the important ones?
   - Do I judge those who don’t “serve” where I deem most necessary.

2. Do I share the same open, accepting life of Jesus in regard to the dignity of all image bearers?

3. Do I take the time to “sit at Jesus’ feet”?
   - One thing is necessary. I must know God. (John 17:3; Ephesians 1:17-21)

4. We must sit at His feet where we will learn how to serve.