



God's Many Gifts to His Children **John 12:1-11**

There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him (John 12:2—KJV).

So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him (John 12:2—NASB).

There they gave a dinner for Jesus. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him (John 12:2—NRSV).

God gives many different gifts to His children. God gave Martha a gift of hospitality. Martha served dinners for Jesus, His disciples, and all who came to hear Jesus teach. She helped people concentrate on Jesus' teaching and made it possible for Jesus to teach the truths that His Father sent Him to proclaim. God gave Mary a gift of teaching. Mary sat and listened when Jesus taught. She absorbed as much truth as she could whenever given the opportunity. Before and after Lazarus died, she must have shared with her family and those who came to grieve with her the faith she had in Jesus based on the truths He taught and the love He showed. We can believe this when we consider how everyone who came to grieve with Mary said that if Jesus had been there, He could have healed Lazarus. After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, Mary's previous teaching made it easier for people to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. God gave Lazarus a gift of witnessing. We do not have any recorded words of Lazarus, but after Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he used his gift to prove that Jesus has the power to give eternal life. Lazarus' testimony about Jesus was so effective that the chief priests planned to kill both Lazarus and Jesus, since on account of Lazarus many were believing in Jesus. No wonder Jesus loved this faithful family! God's children do not need to compare or complain about God's gifts to them and others; rather, they need to seek God's help to use His gifts as He intends.

Thinking Further

1. Why do you think Mary felt motivated to anoint Jesus' feet?
2. What reason did Jesus give to explain why Mary anointed His feet?
3. Who complained about Mary's actions? What reason did he give for complaining about her good deed?
4. What did John say about the one who complained?
5. Why did the chief priests plan to put Lazarus to death?