

John 11:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

Analysis

Martha's immediate response to Jesus' arrival demonstrates her active temperament, contrasting with Mary who 'sat still in the house.' Martha's action fulfills her character seen earlier (Luke 10:40). She goes to meet Jesus outside the village, perhaps for privacy or to intercept Him before the crowd. Her initiative demonstrates faith seeking Jesus, while Mary's stillness may indicate deeper grief or different temperament. Both responses are valid; Christ accepts diverse personalities.

Historical Context

Women in first-century Judaism had limited public roles, making Martha's bold approach to Jesus remarkable. Her action demonstrates the freedom and dignity Jesus afforded women.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do Martha and Mary's different responses teach about diverse expressions of faith?
2. What does Martha's initiative teach about actively seeking Christ in crisis?
3. In what ways does Jesus accept and value different temperaments in His followers?

Interlinear Text

ἡ	οὕν	Μάρθα	ὥς	ἤκουσεν	ὅτι	ὁ	Ἰησοῦς
G3588	Then	Martha	as soon as	she heard	that	G3588	Jesus
	G3767	G3136	G5613	G191	G3754		G2424
ἔρχεται	ὑπήντησεν	αὐτῷ·	Μαρία	δὲ	ἐν	τῷ	οἴκῳ
was coming	went and met	him	Mary	but	still in	G3588	the house
G2064	G5221	G846	G3137	G1161	G1722		G3624
ἐκαθέζετο							
sat							
G2516							

Additional Cross-References

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (Parallel theme): Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.