

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 οὖν Μάρθα ὡς 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.