**Daily Prayer & Encouragement – 4th December**

Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said.But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things,but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”

Today we return to a familiar passage of scripture but one which I feel is appropriate for this time of the year. The scene is set, the guest has arrived, one of the hosts is frantically dashing round trying to get everything ready while the other host is just sitting there. Or at least that's how it looked from Martha's point of view. But Jesus gently shows Martha that actually what Mary was doing - sitting with Jesus, spending time with him, was all that mattered at that moment.

As the autumn term begins to reach its climax, the Christmas adverts bombard us left right and centre and we begin to make careful plans of how we can see family and friends over the Christmas period, we can easily miss that moment to stop and be still and just sit with Jesus.

But that is His invitation to us today. In the busyness of the day there's an invitation to switch off the TV, turn off the phone, clear our thoughts and just focus on Him.

But not just today, but in the preparations for Christmas too. As well as the careful scheduling of long awaited visits to family and friends, the planning of the Christmas dinner and studying of the Christmas Radio Times(!) let's not miss the opportunity to make Jesus the centre of it all. The carol, 'Joy to the World', has the line, 'Let every heart prepare Him room'. Let's actively make room for Jesus in all we do today and in all our plans for the rest of this Christmas period.

***Let's pray.***

*Thank you Jesus, that sometimes all we are required to do is to just sit and be with you. Today I choose to resist distraction. And I choose to spend time talking to you, listening to you and just sitting, being with you. Help me to rest in your presence, to seek your face and all that you have for me today. Thank you for your promise in James 4:8: 'draw near to God and He will draw near to you.' I draw near to you now.*

*Amen.*

You may find this song helpful as you look to focus your thoughts and mind on Jesus: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Od0-Z6jfsEg> But please don't let it distract you!!

