**A little Bit of Martha and a little bit of Mary**

**In the story of Martha and Mary, Martha is the worrier, worker bee and Mary is the one who sits at the feet of Jesus listening to him. Yes, Mary did the right thing by listening to Jesus. I know it’s the right thing to hear the words of the Lord; you know it’s the right thing and if we could, we’d all want to sit at his feet and listen to him talk. Yet, I perfectly understand Martha. If Jesus came to our home and it was near dinner, I’d rush into the kitchen to fix him a meal. If my sisters were sitting at his feet and listening to him, I would be resentful just as Martha was resentful toward Mary. Really it’s a dilemma, because as much as we’d want to listen to Jesus we wouldn’t want him to go away hungry. In reality there’s this duality in all of our natures. We’re all a little bit Martha, and we’re all a little bit Mary.**

**Just so you men don’t feel left out, all men are a little bit like Peter and a little bit like Paul. You too all hold as many dualities inside of your selves. As we all do, Peter and Paul had their struggles and I’m sure resentments. Paul was a wealthy tax collector, a Roman citizen, yet he was not one of the original twelve disciples. Peter was a poor, uneducated fisherman whose nickname was block head. These were two very different men. Peter at first believing only Jews could be Christian and Paul believing all people can become followers of Jesus. Resentments and arguments must have broiled over in their times together. There was a duality between these two men, just like the duality in Martha and Mary. They both were good men and yet they both could get angry and feel resentments.**

**I can take my dualities down to a very everyday level. I’m more the Martha type and I always have big plans when our family comes to visit us. I want to fix them a lot of good food. But I always forget my family, each and every one of them, is more the Mary types. Not that they’re sitting around praying and listening to Jesus, but they’re certainly not helping me in the kitchen. I grew up in a family where all the women were in the kitchen together creating dinner and having a wonderful time. I miss that kind of comradery and I now realize not all families were like mine. Today I love each and every one of our family, but I wish they’d feel a nudge to come into the kitchen and enjoy the pleasure of creating a dinner together. When no one is helping me, I become resentful, hurt, and somewhat of a martyr, thinking I’m not appreciated one little bit.**

**Men you must have different issues, different old memories triggering resentment and hurt within you too. Maybe its politics, or maybe its work-related, or family-related. Yet every human being has dualities inside of themselves and every human being can become resentful toward their family, the opposite political party, somebody at work that irritates them all the time. Any number of unknown factors can set any one of us off making us angry, resentful and sometimes leading to hate and rage.**

**You’ve all seen the cartoons of the devil on one shoulder and an angel on the other cajoling a person to act in a negative or a positive way. In psychology this tendency for all humans to have the capacity to act in negative ways is called the shadow side of us. The problem for humanity begins when some people think they are always right and they haven’t got any tendencies to do harm. So they begin to target some groups of people as the problem, and the reason for all the troubles in their community or country. Problems begin for all of us when some of us feel we’re in the right and believe others are totally in the wrong. When whole groups of people begin to be identified as bad people, they can become reasons for all sorts of conflict and trouble.**

**We all know our country is terribly divided right now, and such division begins with a simple act of separation of one person from another person. Even the resentment of Martha toward Mary can illustrate how easy it is to get upset and blame the other person. There is no such thing as an all good person or and all bad person. There are only human beings, and at our best we struggle to become part of the Light of the world. At our best we all want to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his wisdom. At our best we don’t want anyone to go to bed hungry, or to not have a bed at all. At our best we want to feel no resentment toward anyone.**

**I’m going to write another little scenario for Martha and Mary. Suppose half way to making dinner for Jesus, Martha said to Mary, “It‘s my turn to sit at the feet of Jesus, while you finish dinner.” Martha would have to say this with no anger, just as a matter of fact. What if all over this country we could sit down and talk to one another and listen to one another. I’ve heard this story about how the senators all used to live in Washington D.C. and not commute to the suburbs. Because they all lived in close proximity, they had dinners together, their families knew each other and socialized together. The divide between party lines become much more blurred as each group began to see the humanness in the other group.**

**We live in a time to be honest with one another. To dare to give the best each of us possibly can offer to one another. Every day we are given opportunities to share our hearts with each other. Sharing our stories, our pains, our hopes, and our fears can be one way to heal one another. If I could talk to Martha and Mary, I would say to them please just trade places with one another and let your sister finish dinner. There’s plenty of time for each of you to cook, to listen to Jesus and to live out his precious words with those in our lives. There’s also plenty of time for us to share our stories and the love we have for Jesus Christ. If we share and listen to one another, we can accomplish miracles. Amen**