

# Mary and Martha

## DISTRACTIONS

LUKE 10:38-42

### What's happening in this story?

Martha welcomes Jesus as a guest to her house while he is in her village. While Jesus teaches at the house, Martha's sister, Mary, sits at Jesus' feet, listening to his message. Martha is preparing dinner for the party and is annoyed that her sister is not helping. After all, Mary is also a host! Martha sternly asks Jesus to tell Mary to help her. Jesus tells Martha not to take away that moment from Mary, for she has chosen to be with him.

### What does this story mean for kids?

The dynamics of this story are pretty tough for the youngest kids to understand. In the time and place that Jesus visited Mary and Martha, hospitality was a really big deal. And the burden of hospitality ultimately fell on a woman; she was duty-bound to provide for a guest. Many kids sit down for a big holiday meal and likely don't yet consider who made it, how long it took, or how it will get cleaned up. The best connection will be when a sibling complains, "No fair." They might be surprised to hear that Jesus didn't encourage Mary to do her fair share, but instead, told Martha to stop worrying about everything that needed to be done.

### Why this theme?

Kids are wonderfully distracted by novelty, a gift that is ultimately discouraged as they get older. This story reminds us not to be distracted by busyness and expectations, but to focus on what's truly important.

### TEACHING TIP

Kids this age may or may not realize how distracted they can be, even just during personal interactions. This session is a great opportunity to introduce and begin to develop their understanding of the impact their behavior and attentiveness can have on others.



#### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Clear tape

#### LESSON SUPPLIES

- ~~Dustpan~~
- ~~Broom~~
- ~~Nontoxic disinfectant wipes~~
- ~~Duster~~

# WELCOME 15

## DO SOME KIDS ARRIVE EARLY? TRY THIS.

Provide some light-cleaning items—a dustpan and broom, cleaning wipes, a duster—and invite early arrivers to help tidy the room as if a visitor is coming.

## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

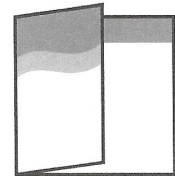
Distraction happens when we can't give our full attention to something. What do you get distracted by and when does it usually happen? Allow responses. This may be surprising, but it's even possible for good things to distract us. What do you do when you find yourself wanting to do two good things at the same time? Wait for answers or provide an example of your own. We can trust God to guide us when we need to figure out what's most important.

Pray together: ~~Dear God, thank you for a life that gives us so many opportunities to do good things while we follow you. Help us keep you at the center of our attention. Amen.~~

Be still and know that I am God...

## Pass out leaflets and markers.

Help younger kids find an older buddy. One buddy will try to write the alphabet backwards, and the other one will try to write the alphabet forwards. Don't start yet. Give buddy pairs time to decide who will do what. The person who is writing backwards goes first. Start writing the alphabet backwards inside the alphabet soup frame on your leaflet. While that buddy is writing, the other buddy starts saying random letters, trying to distract the writer. If the writer messes up, stop and switch. Once the first writer finishes or makes a mistake, have buddies switch and do the same thing with the other person writing the alphabet forward. How did you do? Did the distraction make it hard to focus and write the letters correctly? Why or why not? Collect their leaflets until Respond.



## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

Mimi is making presents for our Whirl friends! Who wants to see what she's making?

View Episode 10, "Friendship Corp.," on the Year Blue Winter DVD. (4 min, 34 sec)

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- \* What was Mimi's original intent behind making the bracelets?
  - How did Ruby first show appreciation for the gift?
- \* What distracted Ruby from simply being grateful for the bracelet?
  - How did Mimi feel about all of Ruby's plans?
  - When have you forgotten to appreciate something someone did for you?



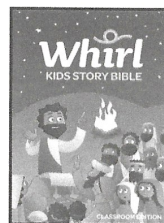


# HEAR 15

Use Whirl Kids Story Bible, "Mary and Martha" Pg 262

## Open your Whirl Kids Story Bibles and Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Have younger kids find an older buddy. Invite them to find Luke 10:38-42 on page 1245 of the Whirl Kids Study Bible. Sisters Mary and Martha were getting ready for Jesus and his disciples to visit. Martha was working hard to make sure everything was ready for Jesus. Mary got ready for Jesus, too, but in a different way. Listen for the distractions the sisters faced in the story.



While you read the story aloud, get up and walk around. Turn the lights off and on. Knock on a door, window, cupboard, and/or table. Sneeze, stomp, and otherwise make a racket. After you finish, choose volunteers to read the story aloud again while everyone sits quietly and listens. Which way was easier to pay attention to the story?

Read what Ruby says about Luke 10:38-42 on page 1245. Then read Ada and Otto's questions and comments on page 262-263 of the Whirl Kids Story Bible.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- How did Mary and Martha respond differently to Jesus' visit?
- What distracted Martha from Jesus?
- What distracted Mary from all the chores?
- What would you do to get your house ready for a visit from Jesus?
- What distracts you from learning about and talking to God?

## Play together!

We're going to play a quick game. When I call on you, your job is to tell me what word I'm mouthing at you. To make it trickier, the people on either side of you will try to block your view. Let's see how well you can stay focused! Choose easy words, like Mary, Martha, Jesus, apple, trumpet, etc. Remind kids that they don't get to touch the person they are distracting. Continue until all kids get a chance to guess. How did your neighbors' distractions affect your ability to read my lips?

## BIBLE BIT

This story immediately follows the parable of the good Samaritan. One story tells us we should practice hospitality, and the other tells us how!

## WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, imagine that Mimi asked Ruby to help her build a business. How might that change what happens?

## OUR CHURCH

This is a great opportunity to talk about being aware of how we can be unintentional distractions during worship. What are some little things we can avoid doing?

## RESPOND 10

### Pass out leaflets and pencils.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **Look at the image on your square. What's happening?** Some of the circles seem like they are moving.
2. **Look directly at the center of one of the moving circles. What happens when you do that?** That circle stops moving.
3. **Try getting all the circles to stop moving at once. What happens?** It doesn't work. Only one circle will stop moving at a time. **When you focus on one of the circles, the other circles are distracting because they're still moving. And you can't make all the circles stop moving because you can only focus on one at a time.**
4. **When Martha was getting ready for Jesus, she was distracted by all the things she needed to get done. She couldn't keep her focus on Jesus.**
- \* 5. Help older kids find a younger buddy. **Together, read the phrases on the square. Draw a star by things that you sometimes get distracted by. Draw an X by things that you sometimes get distracted from. For example, I might get distracted by watching television. I might get distracted from learning.** Kids can put both a star and an X by things that fit both categories.
6. **What things distract you most often? What do they distract you from?**
7. **How can you deal with distraction at home? At church? At school?**

## LAUNCH 10

### Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Martha wanted to do her best for Jesus, but she ended up being distracted from spending time with and learning from him. Why would Jesus want us to spend time with him, even if there are other things we could be doing?

### Pass out leaflet panels, markers, scissors, and tape. (If there's time)

On your leaflet are pictures of things you can do when you feel distracted: pray, relax and take some deep breaths, read the Bible, or meditate. Think of one more option and draw it in the blank rectangle. Cut out the strip of images and attach it around your wrist as a reminder of things to try when you become distracted.

### Send kids out with a blessing. → Help and Thanks prayers

Circle up with kids. ~~God blesses all of us. And that means me (place a hand on your chest). And that means you (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, Go and bless the world.~~

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.