

BACK TO SCHOOL WITH GOD
LUKE 10:38-42

Home

Whose home is this? – A Powerpoint quiz

Jesus had no home; He travelled around the country and as He went He healed people who were sick and He helped people in need everywhere He went; He always seemed to be travelling. But, certainly in some of places He visited, His friends made Him welcome in their homes; He stayed with them, He had meals with them; we're thinking about one of these stories today.

He stayed with two sisters, Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. They lived in a town called Bethany and it seems as if whenever Jesus was in that town He stayed with them; they were glad to make Him feel at home and they gave Him meals; they gave Him a bed and just made Him feel at home. Not all went well, as we shall see in a moment or two, but they welcomed Jesus into their home.

What happens when you have visitors? Let's say granny is coming to visit; what happens in your house? The floor is hoovered; the beds are made up; there is more food in the freezer; you put flowers in her room, just to make her feel welcome and at home. What happened with Mary and Martha's house? They probably cleaned and tidied the house before Jesus came and Martha is making dinner; Mary is sitting listening to Jesus as He teaches important things about God.

What might it look like to invite Jesus into our homes? Do you think we might behave differently? Might we care more for others if Jesus was there? Might we speak differently? Might we be quicker to say sorry for cross words? Might we read the Bible together?

We're thinking about school today: what might it look like to invite Jesus into our school? Would we behave differently? Would we care for others more if Jesus was there? Would we speak differently? Would we behave differently?

Here's the thing: Jesus is with us at home; Jesus is with us at school; He is with us wherever we are; He helps us be the right kind of people wherever we are. He wants to help us to be the right kind of people and He wants to help us live our lives in the right way, at home, at school, everywhere we go. He was with Martha and Mary in their home and they loved him and made Him feel welcome.

Hands

There is a puzzle on the screen: there is a slide full of kitchen things; and then a second slide in which one thing is missing; what is the one thing missing?

Martha and Mary made Jesus welcome in their home

Martha made herself busy making tea for Jesus, while Mary sat on floor beside Jesus and listened to Him teach, learning some important things about God.

Martha complained to Jesus that Mary had left her to do all work, sitting there listening while Martha rushed around making the dinner.

What would Jesus say: some people who didn't know how the story ended were asked what Jesus would have said to Martha:

Someone said that "Jesus would have joined Martha in cooking dinner"

Someone else said that it wasn't unfair at all because Martha would have her turn to listen to Jesus when Mary was washing the dishes!

There was one thing missing: Jesus saw that Martha was busy, but there was one thing missing in her day; she too needed to sit down and listen to Jesus; she was distracted from doing that by all

other things she had to do; she needed to take time and space to listen to Jesus and learn to love God and live by faith in Jesus.

Martha used her hands to serve others; she needed one more thing and we'll think about that in a minute. She used her hands to serve Jesus and that set me thinking about Jesus' hands. He used His hands to help and serve others: He healed people by touching them with His hands. In the end, Jesus' hands were nailed to a cross because He came to love and serve us and save us and because He did that, we have faith; we have a new life with God.

There are all kinds of things we can do to help people at school to look out for others and care for others; for people who are new to school, or people who are finding school hard, or people who have no friends; we can care for them. There are lots of school situations when people are bullied or frightened; can we do something to help them? By doing that, we can show them same kind of love that Jesus showed us.

Heart

A famous English painter called William Holman Hunt in 1853 painted a picture which he called *The Light of the World*. The only person in the painting is Jesus and He is doing two things: first of all, He is carrying a lamp, so the title of the picture; Jesus is the Light of the world, as He called Himself; He came to show us what God is like and how to live. Jesus the Light of the world. Secondly, He is knocking on a door. There are some things about this door if you look carefully: the door is overgrown with weeds, so it hasn't been opened for a while and it is cluttered with things that stop it being opened; the door has no handle on the outside; it can only be opened from the inside, so Jesus can't force it open from where He is; all He can do is knock on the door till someone on the inside opens it.

"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me." (Revelation 3:20) This is the Bible verse that goes with the painting. Jesus stands at the door and knocks; this is the door to our hearts and He knocks so that we will let Him in and He will become the Lord, the Saviour, the Friend in our lives. But there are things that get in the way: the door is covered with weeds to suggest that there are things in our lives that might get in the way of Jesus being with us; our faults and mistakes, the times when we ignore Jesus; we don't listen to Him; or we do hear what he says, but live our lives in another way, quite deliberately. These things get in the way.

Jesus doesn't force Himself into our lives. He knocks on the door and waits for us to answer. We hear the gospel and it tells us how much Jesus loves us and it asks us to believe Jesus; Jesus is knocking the door of on our hearts. Someone shows us love in Jesus' name and we are drawn to Jesus by their love and concern; Jesus is knocking on our hearts. He doesn't force Himself into our lives, but waits for us to answer the door and to invite Him in to be our Saviour and Lord.

Home: Jesus is with us at home and at school – how welcome does He feel in our homes? *Hands:* we use our hands to serve Him and help others, just as His hands are crucified hands, showing love and service to us. Last of all, our *hearts:* this is about what makes us the kind of people we are; this is about what we really want in life; what really matters to us. The one thing missing for Martha was to make sure that her heart was full of love for Jesus; Jesus' concern for Martha was that being busy doing other things got in the way of her learning to love God. Her heart was to be full of love for Jesus and that would help her make her home a place where Jesus was even more welcome; her heart was to be full of love for Jesus and that would help her to use her hands to serve Jesus and help others even more. It is exactly the same for us: our hearts are to be full of love for Jesus and so our lives will be a place where Jesus is at home and always welcome. Our hearts are to be full of love for Jesus and we use our hands to serve Him, at home, at school, at work, in church and help others. Home, hands, heart – our home and our hands are shaped by hearts that are full of love for Jesus, open the door and let Jesus in, our Saviour, our Lord, our Friend.