

**J.R. Miller:**

**"When Martha heard that Jesus was coming" she went out to meet Him" John 11:20**

The coming of Jesus to this Bethany home was never so welcome as on that day. It is the same still, in people's homes, even in those where He is most loved: Christ is never so dear and precious to us as when we are in trouble! Our need reveals His preciousness.

Many people who do not desire the minister's presence during their days of prosperity and gladness are quick to send for him when sorrow comes. This was not Martha's way, however; she had welcomed Christ to her home in the happy days when there was no sorrow and that was what made His coming such a blessing to her now.

We get this lesson: that the only true preparation for affliction is personal friendship with Christ. If we never turn to the Bible for comfort until some great grief is upon us it will not give us much light. But if we meditate on it in the bright days, and its words are hung up then like lamps in our heart's chambers then when it grows dark, the beams will shine out and change night into day.

When visitors to the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky are preparing to enter that astonishing cavern, the guide puts a lighted lamp into the hand of each tourist. It is noonday, perhaps, and it seems very foolish to walk down the green bank carrying little lamps in the bright sunshine. But when the party enters the mouth of the cave and goes a little distance they then understand the use of their lamps. In the utter darkness they would perish but for their little light.

Some people do not think, when they are moving along in joy and gladness, that they need Christ; but by-and-by it grows dark in some path of sorrow and then they learn the blessing of having Christ beforehand. If they have Him in their hearts, they find it light all around them; if they have Him not, the gloom is turned to despair.