FROM HEARTH TO HEART

By Kathy Hillman

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DEDICATION

To Joy Fenner and the women of Texas Woman's Missionary Union for their faithfulness to God and their inspiration to me.

- The Playwright

STORY OF THE PLAY

God has gifted women to be the keepers of the hearth where friends and family gather for food and conversation in the traditional center of the home. The three drama skits in FROM HEARTH TO HEART demonstrate how women use their homes as a base for spiritual growth, ministry and missions. But of course, no woman is perfect, and the poignant lessons of "Share and Prayer," "Mary and Martha" and "The Wild VBS Bronco" allow the audience to chuckle at themselves while gaining valuable spiritual insights geared to today's busy lifestyles. Simple den setting. Three 5-7 minute skits for easy inclusion in worship services or as theme interpretations.

CONTENTS

Mary and Martha
Share and Prayer
The Wild VBS Bronco

MARY AND MARTHA

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARTHA: A modern woman much like the Biblical Martha.
MARY: A modern woman much like the Biblical Mary.

Setting: Martha's den. A sofa and chair with end table between.

(AT RISE: MARTHA hurries in and out of the den busily folding and packing linens and clothes into stacks and into laundry baskets. MARY is seated on a couch with her coffee cup nearby and a Bible in her lap preparing for the two to pray and study together. Martha's Bible lays unopened in the empty seat. Martha's keys are on the end table. Some of Martha's dialogue may be delivered from off stage as she goes in and out the door.)

MARY: Martha? *(Pause.)* Martha, where are you?
MARTHA: *(Offstage)* Yes, Mary, just a minute.
MARY: *(Calling again.)* Martha? You do remember that this is Thursday and you've invited me over every Thursday morning so we can study the Bible and pray together. *(Opens the Bible in HER lap.)*
MARTHA: *(Entering with a laundry basket of unfolded linens.)* Of course, I remember.
MARY: Martha, you just don't know how much our time together means to me. Without careful Bible study and prayer, no one can grow spiritually. When I think about Jesus - listen to this: *(MARTHA exits.)* 'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God.' Isn't it wonderful that God wants us to talk to Him? *(Pause.)* Martha?
MARTHA: *(Entering.)* Yes?
MARY: Did you hear any of what I read?

MARTHA: I'll be with you in a second, Mary. *(Busily folding a blanket and ignoring MARY.)*

MARY: *(Loudly.)* I was reading the Bible. About prayer. *(To HERSELF.)* She's not listening. She never listens to me.

MARTHA: I really <u>am</u> listening to you! I'm just busy right now, Mary, that's all.

MARY: You? Busy? That's a surprise!

MARTHA: *(Exiting.)* Go on, go on.

MARY: 'And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in...*(Looking up to see MARTHA gone.)*...Christ Jesus.' *(Sighing again and turning eyes up to heaven.)* Do I mention it or not?

MARTHA: *(Entering again.)* What?

MARY: Oh, nothing.

MARTHA: I thought you were talking.

MARY: Not to you.

MARTHA: Then who were you talking to? *(MARY looks and points upward.)* Oh. Would you like some more coffee? *(Hurriedly takes the cup and exits.)*

MARY: *(Calling.)* We had great news from the Forts. *(Use a current missionary known to the audience and an example of recently answered prayer if you like.)*

MARTHA: *(From offstage.)* Really?

MARY: Many are becoming Christians - more than through our church. Several have surrendered to preach and been trained and sent out.

MARTHA: *(Entering, handing the cup to MARY.)* Out where?

MARY: They've gone to another part of Zimbabwe to tell people about Jesus.

MARTHA: Who went?

MARY: *(Disgusted.)* We're talking about the Forts - Greg and Donna - and their three sons. Do you remember them?

MARTHA: Oh yes, I remember them speaking at our prayer retreat just before they left for Africa. They hadn't even had Nathan yet.

MARTHA: *(Cont'd.)* They did seem a little inexperienced to me. *(Exits again.)*

MARY: And we know all about experience and maturity, don't we, Martha?

MARTHA: *(Reentering, not upset.)* I just meant they seemed a little young when they left.

MARY: Yes, the Lord does help people grow. *(To HERSELF.)* At least some people.

MARTHA: Missionaries keep busy, you know. I can't imagine having to bake my own bread, soak all the vegetables, grind the meat, make everything from scratch.

MARY: You'd probably be good at it. *(MARTHA exits again.) (Sighing, almost dreamy.)* I wish God had called me to be a missionary. Oh, the things I could tell the lost, the spiritual insights I could give the new Christians. *(Hugging HER Bible. Angrily.)* Martha!

MARTHA: *(Reenters and stops.)* What? Did I do something wrong?

MARY: Oh, Martha, it's not what you're doing wrong. It's what you're not doing right.

MARTHA: *(Sitting down beside MARY. Puzzled.)* What am I missing here?

MARY: Prayer. *(Waving HER prayer list.)* We need to pray for the Forts and Lynn Yarbrough, and the Carpenters, and the Palmers. *(Use the names of missionaries that your church supports.)* We need to pray for these missionaries so God will bless them and bring many people to know Him!

MARTHA: *(Quietly.)* Yes, we do.

MARY: And we need to pray for our own church and for our own spiritual maturity. *(MARTHA nods and gets up again.)* And *(With exasperation.)* we need to study the Bible. We need to digest the spiritual truths. We need to apply the scriptures to our daily lives.

MARTHA: I agree.

MARY: Then why don't you do it?

MARTHA: What? *(Still moving items.)*

MARY: Martha, do you remember several years ago when you had Bobbie and Bill Pinson to dinner while he was

MARTHA: *(Cont'd.)* leading our revival? *(Use the name of a pastor or spiritual leader well known to the audience.)*
MARTHA: Of course, I remember. Dr. Pinson ate enough!
MARY: I'm not surprised that's what you recall. It seemed like entertaining them was all you worried about. You got upset with me because you had invited John and me over so I could help. But I wanted to listen and learn from two such spiritual and giving people.
MARTHA: *(Perching on the arm of the couch.)* I do recall we later laughed about how well our parents had named us for that Mary and Martha story in the Bible.
MARY: Well, don't you see?
MARTHA: See?
MARY: *(Reads the Scripture.)* 'Martha, Martha - you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.'
MARTHA: So? *(Waiting for MARY to continue.)*
MARY: You've been running around all morning folding clothes and doing a lot of chores but denying yourself the best! We could have been praying and studying the Bible, but you've been too busy!
MARTHA: *(Grabbing the last items and HER car keys.)* I'll be right back. *(SHE begins to leave.)*
MARY: Where are you going? In your car?
MARTHA: *(Sighs.)* Don't you know? Haven't you read the paper or listened to the news? There was a terrible tornado that hit the other side of the county late yesterday. Several homes were destroyed, and some families are staying at the church. I'm just trying to make sure they have enough bedding.
MARY: *(Quietly, embarrassed.)* I was too busy gathering the prayer lists and our study materials to listen to the news. Why didn't you tell me?
MARTHA: Oh, Mary...we're so different. God made us that way. I learned a long time ago that I shouldn't try to make you like me.
MARTHA: *(Cont'd.)* I guess I...I didn't want to stunt your spiritual growth.

End of Freeview

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