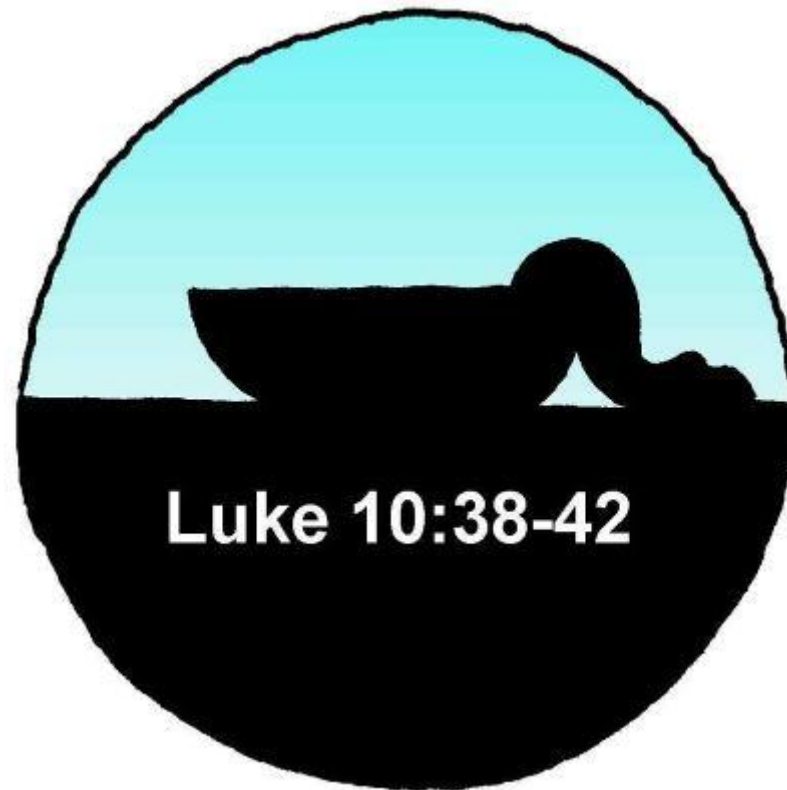


MARTHA AND MARY

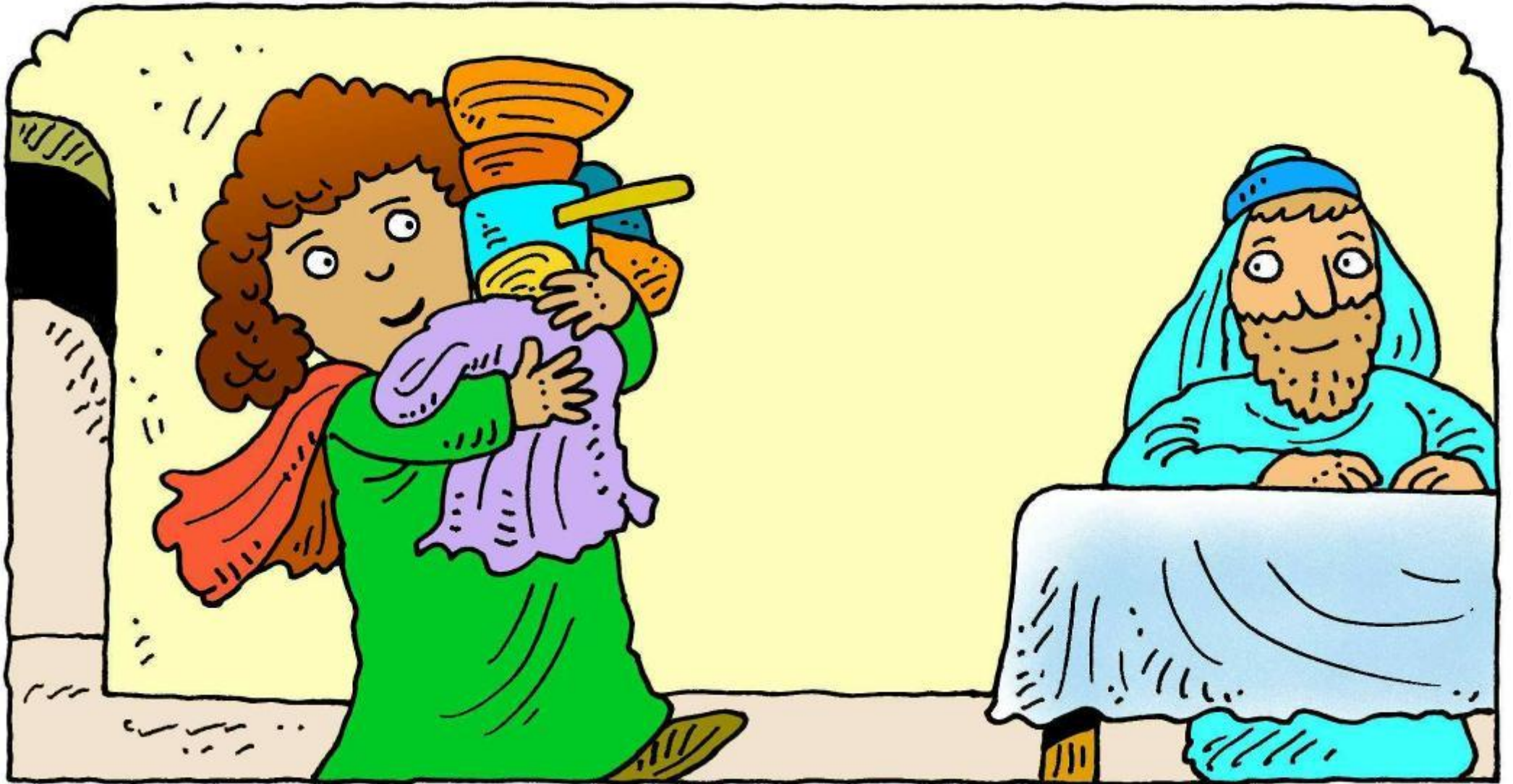
By Jill Kemp

Illustrated by Richard Gunther





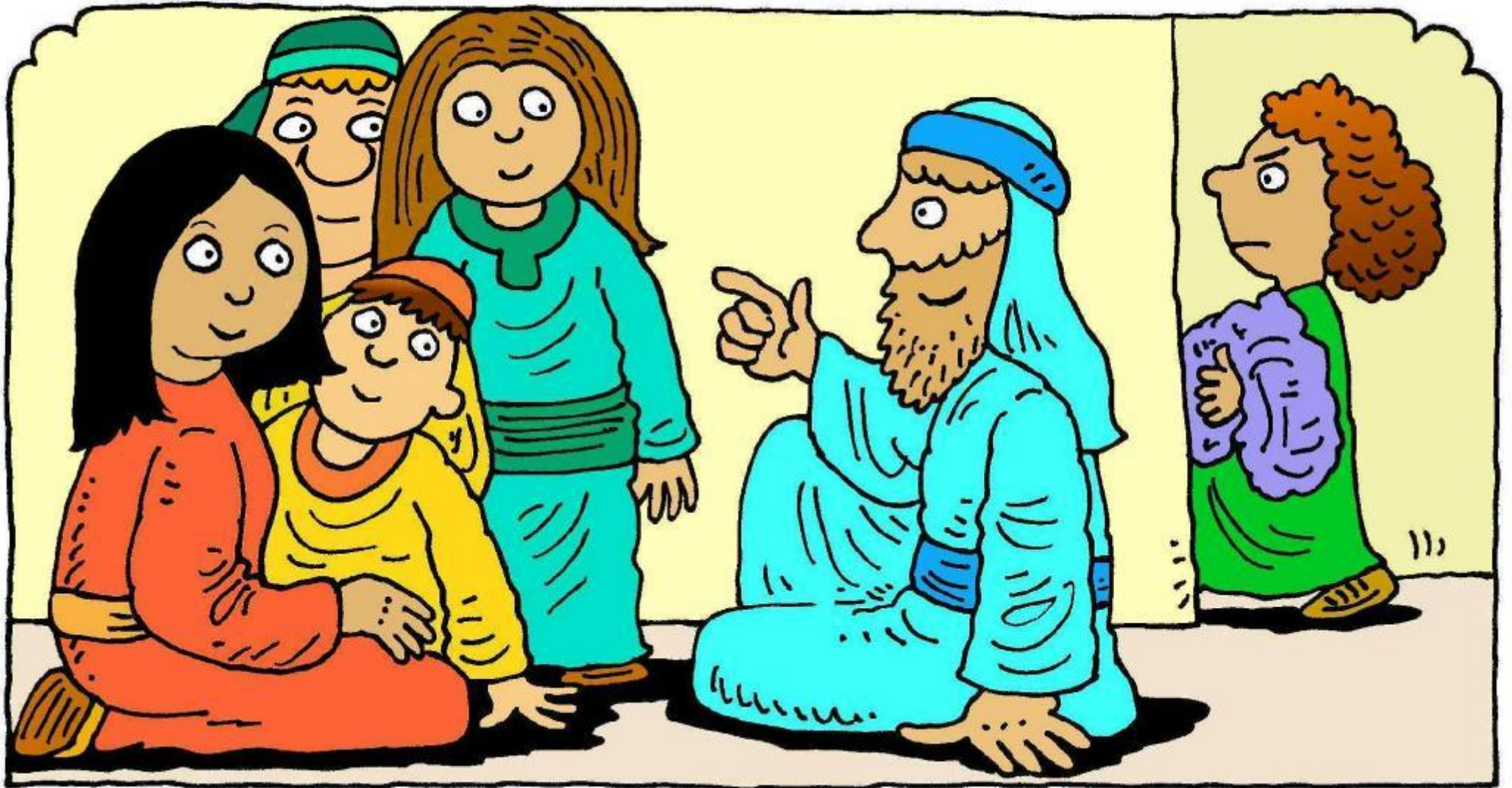
Jesus loved staying at Martha's home in Bethany, where she lived with her sister Mary and brother Lazarus. It was a place where Jesus could really relax and rest, away from the crowds of people who followed Him.



Martha loved cooking. As soon as Jesus arrived she began to prepare a delicious meal for Him and his friends. There was a lot to do and she would need Mary's help, so Martha cheerfully set to work.



She hurried back and forth to the table with plates of food, while still making sure that nothing was burning on the stove, or in the oven. But where was Mary? It wasn't fair that she had to do all the work by herself!



Mary was sitting listening to Jesus talk about God's love and His wonderful plan for people everywhere. He was an inspiring teacher and Mary didn't want to miss a single word. But, Martha was getting very annoyed!



“Jesus,” Martha said, “Tell Mary not to be so selfish and lazy and make her come and help me. I can’t manage so much work by myself.” Jesus loved Martha and He spoke to her gently.



“Martha, Martha, when you serve me, it is your gift to me. Do it because you really want to, with a loving heart and a smile on your face. It is more important that Mary spends time with me. Let her stay.”



Martha listened to the wise words Jesus said and went back to her work with a new attitude about what she was doing, who it was for and how much she and Mary loved their friend Jesus.