

Lesson 7: *The Witness of Mary*

Monday, November 11, 2024

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Six days before Passover, Jesus came to visit Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus, whom Jesus had raised to life. Simon, who had been healed of leprosy, hosted a feast in appreciation for what Jesus had done for him. Martha was serving, and Lazarus was sitting at the table with the guests (*John 12:1–8*).

What was the significance of Mary's actions here? How was this a witness to who Jesus really was? *John 12:1–3*.

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ²There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

⁴But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵"Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

⁷But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always." —***John 12:1-8***

The perfume was very expensive, worth about a year's wages for the common laborer. Mary probably brought this gift as an expression of gratitude to the Savior for the forgiveness of her sins and for the resurrection of her brother. She intended it to be someday for the burial of Jesus. But then she heard that He

would soon be anointed King. In that case, she would be the first to bring Him honor.

Mary probably did not intend for her gesture to be noticed, but John notes, “the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume” (*John 12:3, ESV*). Judas responded with a quick rebuke, stating that the perfume should have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor. Jesus immediately put Mary at ease by stating, “ ‘Let her alone; . . . The poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always’ ” (*John 12:7, 8, NKJV*).

A recurring theme runs through the Gospel. Jesus knows what is in people (*John 2:24, 25; John 6:70, 71; John 13:11; John 16:19*). In this instance at Simon’s feast, Jesus knows what is in Judas. John is careful to point out who Judas was—a self-serving thief (*John 12:6*).

Jesus knew what was in the heart of Mary and the heart of Judas. He knows what’s in your heart, as well. What should this truth tell us about the need of Christ as our righteousness, transforming us and covering us, as well?

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.²² Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!”²³ But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.” —***Matthew 16:21-23 (Mark 8:31, 32; Luke 9:21, 22)***

²² Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men,²³ and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.” And they were exceedingly sorrowful.—***Matthew 17:22, 23 (Mark 9:30-32; Luke 9:43, 45)***

¹⁷ Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them,¹⁸ “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death,¹⁹ and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again.” —***Matthew 20:17-19 (Mark 10:32-34; Luke 18:31-34)***

Alabaster Box

⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.

⁵ But He *was* wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.—***Isaiah 53:4, 5***

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.—***1 Corinthians 6:19, 20***

¹⁸ knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.—***1 Peter 1:18, 19***

⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.—***Romans 5:8***

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.—***2 Corinthians 5:21***

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace—***Ephesians 1:7***

let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.—***Hebrews 12:1,2***