

John 12:1-8. Mary Anoints the Lord Jesus.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Mary's act of love and service to Jesus is a powerful reminder of the importance of doing what we can for the Lord, and the value of our love and devotion.

Scripture: Matthew 26:6, Mark 14:3, Luke 7:36, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Colossians 3:23

Topics: "Jesus' Ministry", "Christian Devotion"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer reflects on the last week of Jesus' life, highlighting the peace and love shown at the beginning of a week filled with suffering and sorrow. The act of Mary anointing Jesus with costly perfume is examined, revealing the contrast between her genuine love and the disciples' misunderstanding. Despite criticism, Jesus commends Mary's act, emphasizing that her love and devotion will be remembered and praised throughout the world for generations to come.

Transcript

We have now reached the last week of our Savior's life. On the Saturday evening the Jewish Sabbath was over, and the new week began--the most eventful week that had been known since the beginning of the world--the most suffering week that the Son of man passed upon earth--and the most sorrowful week that his Church has ever seen. But though it was to be full of suffering and of sorrow, it opened with a scene of peace and love; for Simon the Leper made a supper for the Lord at his house. If we observe the dealings of God, we shall find that a cordial is often granted to us before a trial is sent, and that we are permitted to enjoy some unwonted refreshment before we are called upon to drink a cup of unusual bitterness.

How must the gracious Savior have delighted in the scene he now beheld at Bethany! The tears that had touched his heart were now dried; the sisters saw their brother, who was so lately sleeping in his tomb, seated at table with their Lord. Martha testified her love and joy by waiting on the blessed company. It is probable that she superintended the arrangement of the supper, and gave directions to the servants. We know that such an office was suited to her active disposition. Mary, who seems to have been of a more thoughtful, and sensitive, and retiring character, found another way of expressing her love and joy. She brought an alabaster box full of very precious ointment, and poured it on the feet of Jesus. It seems as if she came behind him as he reclined upon his couch at supper, and sought to perform the loving office in secret. But she could not be hid, for the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Its exquisite fragrance attracted attention, and led the guests to discover who had poured it forth. Should we not have conceived that in such a company the love that Mary had shown would receive the highest praise? But

Matthew records, that not only Judas, but the other disciples said, "Why was this waste of the ointment made?" How could they thus insult their Lord? Was there anything too precious to be dedicated to the Son of God? Did the wise men who came from the East think so, when they laid gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, at the infant Savior's feet?

We know the motive that led Judas to make the unfeeling inquiry--it was covetousness. He was disappointed to think that so rich a treasure as this alabaster box should have been kept back from his dishonest hands. But why did the other disciples unite in his complaint? It might be that some secret envy of Mary's surpassing attachment to their Lord, may have prompted their censure. But if for one moment the gentle and diffident Mary felt cast down by their disapprobation, she must soon have been consoled by hearing her Master's defense of her conduct. High, indeed, was the commendation he bestowed on her--"She has done what she could!" These words imply, that as she could bestow a precious gift, she would not be content with presenting an mean one. Had Mary been poor, she could not have anointed his feet as she did. She could do much, and she did much. She anointed her Lord with a costly perfume, that was worth nearly ten pounds of our money. May it not be more often said of the poor than of the rich, "They have done what they could?" Too often the rich give no more to the service of Christ than the crumbs that fall from their table.

Though the disciples blamed this act of love, yet Jesus declared that in distant countries, and in future ages it would be commended. For he said," Wherever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this, also, that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." (Mark 14:9.) Mary had not sought for human praise; but even that was to be awarded her. Who has ever read the account of Mary's offering, and has not inwardly approved it? Where is the believer who has not wished that he enjoyed the same opportunity that Mary did, of showing his love to the Lord?

When once a poor sinful woman washed the feet of Jesus with her penitent tears, a Pharisee reproached the Lord for permitting one so wicked to touch him, and thus tacitly accused the weeping sinner of presumption. But did the Lord deem her presumptuous? Mary, who bore an honorable character, was not accused of presumption, but of extravagance. But did the Lord deem her act of love extravagant? Does the church of God now accuse either of these devoted women of presumption or of extravagance? Let us judge nothing before the time. If actions of such devoted love were blamed in former days, similar acts may be blamed now. Even true Christians are apt to censure those who go beyond themselves in zeal, in feeling, and in self-denial; but the Lord will never think we can love him, adore him, or honor him too much.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/favell-lee-mortimer/john-121-8-mary-anoints-the-lord-jesus/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net