

Gospel Talk Bible Study
God With Us
A Study of John's Gospel: "Mary Anoints Jesus"
John 12:1-8

July 1, 2020

"Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair." – John 12:3

I. A Loving Anointing

- a. The story of the anointing, which appears in all four Gospels, confirms its significance to the overall presentation of the good news
- b. The scene is a "thank you" dinner to Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus was reclining (eating) to further indicate he lived.
- c. Martha's role was to thank Jesus by seeing to the details of the dinner, and Mary's role was to thank Jesus by pouring this expensive ointment out on Jesus.
- d. Mary took about a pint of very costly ointment (scented oil) and poured it on Jesus' feet.
 1. Nard is an oil-like perfume extracted from the root and spike of the nard plant from India.
 2. Large quantity (pound: *litra*). About the size of a soda can.
 3. The oil was normally poured on the head, but Mary poured it on Jesus' feet.
- e. The lowliest part of Jesus is infinitely more precious than the highest gift of man.
 1. Mary is taking the lowest possible place in honoring Jesus, bowing at His feet.
- f. A woman unbinding her hair, in public, was regarded as improper. Mary is so moved by deep adoration for Jesus, she is willing to face any social disapproval.
- g. When you see your dead brother come walking out of the grave, is there a limit on gratitude, affections and praise?
- h. Mary's physical and emotional posture coupled with the aroma of the fragrant oil, impacted the entire house. This was pure and uncompromised worship. (Gen 8:20; Psalm 141:2; 2 Cor 2:14-15)

II. Judas, Leave Her Alone

- a. Judas responds without any regard for the moment of thankful worship on full display.
- b. Judas is the type of man who has money on his mind and views everything from the aspect of monetary value. He did not think Jesus was worth the extravagance.
- c. Eleven ounces of nard was worth about \$25,000 (an annual salary at minimum wage). Judas would betray Jesus for \$1,000 (thirty pieces of silver).
- d. Jesus could have said, "Judas, shut your mouth", but He uses this as a teaching moment.
- e. Jesus defends Mary and gives three reasons why Judas should leave her alone. (vv.7-8)
 1. *She may keep it for the day of my burial.* Let her now express love, wonder and joy of Me in the face of My death. Let her keep that same love and hope when she stands by My grave in six days.
 2. *The poor you always have with you.* If you really care about the poor you have the rest of your life to serve them with all your heart. The desire for riches has blinded your eyes.
 3. *You do not always have Me with you.* Her heart is right. She feels My worth.
- f. Christ had made known to her that He is the Resurrection and the Life. Leave her alone!

III. Application of the Word

- a. Do you feel the Lord's worth?
- b. When was the last time you engaged in undignified worship for what the Lord has done?
- c. If any voice tells you to restrain or lessen your love for Jesus, do not listen.