

Mark 14

Friday, April 18, 2025 8:00 AM

THE SERVANT IS WORSHIPED, BETRAYED, AND DENIED

There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii[b] and given to the poor.” And they scolded her. But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.” **(Mark 14:4-9)**

John 12:1-8 tells us that it was specifically Judas who was indignant about the expense. His indignation was entirely self-serving. John 12:6 says, this 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. They criticized her sharply: It’s easy to criticize those who show more love to Jesus than we do. We sometimes want to define a fanatic as someone who is more devoted to Jesus than we are. Judas may have started the criticism, but he wasn’t alone for long. Mark made it clear that they criticized her sharply. Each one looked at the oil on Jesus’ head and considered it wasted. Mary probably started to wonder if she did something wrong.

The disciples thought that this extravagant anointing with oil was a waste, but Jesus received it as a good work. With her simple love and devotion to Jesus, Mary understood what the disciples did not — that Jesus was about to die, and she intended this gift as a preparation for his burial.

Jesus gave her the highest compliment: she has done what she could. God expects no more from us than what we can do; but beware of setting your sights so low that you believe that doing nothing is doing what you can. “There can be no higher commendation than this. All cannot do great things for Christ, but it is well if each one does what he can as unto the Lord Himself.” **(Ironsides)**

What she has done will be told in memory of her: The disciples longed for fame and influence, but this woman found an enduring memorial. She found it not by longing for a position, but simply by loving Jesus and serving Him. There is a tendency within us all to look at this story and to say, “I love Jesus also. Tell me

what I should do to show it.” But part of the woman’s great love was displayed in the fact that she came up with the idea to express her love for Jesus in this way. If there was a command to do this, it would never be this precious.

Lord, I desire to love you like Mary. Help us to be more concerned about loving You than what people around us think.