

*Second Baptist Church of Doylestown*

*Wed. Eve. Bible Study - 10/28/15*

*Living Successfully In Christ*

**OUR BEST FOR THE LORD JESUS**

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Mark 14:3-9 "While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head. <sup>4</sup> Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? <sup>5</sup> It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly. <sup>6</sup> "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>7</sup> The poor you will always have with you,<sup>l</sup> and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup> She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. <sup>9</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

**Key Verse:** "...a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on His head." (Mark 14: 3)

The incident recorded in **Mark 14:3-9** is a very touching one. Simon had provided a feast in his house out of gratitude to the Saviour for the blessings he had received, and Jesus, His disciples, Mary, Martha and Lazarus were all there. Quite suddenly, Mary moved towards the Lord. She was holding in her hands a beautiful alabaster box which contained very precious delicately perfumed ointment, and to the surprise of everyone there, she broke the box and poured its contents over the head (Mark 14:3) and the feet (John 12:3) of our Lord and anointed Him. The alabaster box and the ointment were worth a considerable amount of money. But what did Mary's act signify? It signified that she was giving her very best to the Lord Jesus - indeed her all, for as she broke the alabaster box and poured out the precious nard she was saying, in effect:-

- "Take my love: my Lord, I pour
- At Thy feet its treasure-store;
- Take myself, and I will be
- Ever, only, all for Thee."

In those days, every young woman would prepare a box of precious perfume. This she would keep until the time came when the man she loved would ask her to marry him, and if she were willing and could give him her love and devotion, she would break the precious box of ointment and pour it at his feet. No matter what she paid for the box, it was counted as her best, and this is what she gave to him. That is what Mary did with her Lord, the One who loved her so much that soon He would die for her upon the cross. Mary wanted to be spiritually betrothed to Him (Isaiah 62:5 "As a young man marries a young woman, so will your Builder marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride, so will your God rejoice over you.; Hosea 2:19), and therefore she gave her very best, her all, to Him."

## 1. WHAT CAN WE GIVE TO THE LORD JESUS?

We have no alabaster box of precious ointment, so what can we give? There are at least three gifts which all of us can bring to Him:-

**We can give Him the best of our Love.** This, supremely, is what Mary did; though the ointment was costly and the box was of great value, the real gift she brought to Him was that of her love. We can all give Him our love, and it is this above everything else which He most desires. Have you given Him the very best of your love? - compare **Matthew 10:37** "**Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.**" with **John 21:15-17** "**When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."**<sup>16</sup> **Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."** <sup>17</sup> **The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."**

**Jesus said, "Feed my sheep.**

1. **We can give Him the best of our Years.** What a privilege it is for anyone to give to the Lord his or her whole life in all its freshness and vigour! Is He not worthy of our best - the best of our strength, our manhood or womanhood? It is possible to know that we belong to the Lord and yet to keep the best of our strength, time and gifts for ourselves instead of giving them to Him.
2. **We can give Him the best of our Talents.** Everyone has some talent. What is yours? Whatever it is, the Lord wants to use it. If you will only place it at His feet and yield it wholly to Him, He will use it in a most wonderful way. Have you ever read through Frances Ridley Havergal's "Consecration Hymn", and really given over to the Lord your "moments...days...hands...feet...voice...lips...silver...gold...intellect...will"?

## 2. BUT WHY SHOULD WE GIVE OUR BEST TO THE LORD JESUS?

Here again, there are three answers to this question:-

1. **Because He is worthy of our best.** Who is He? He is the eternal Son of God (**John 1:1** "**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**"; the Lord of glory (**1 Corinthians 2:8** "**None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory**); the Saviour of men (**1 Timothy 1:15** "**Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.**); our Saviour (**Galatians 2:20** "**I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.**"). Is He not worthy of the very best that we can give to Him? - worthy of our all?

2. **Because He has given His best for us.** He has given His all for us and has shed His precious blood upon the Cross for us in order that we might be redeemed (1 Peter 1:18-19). It was when Mary realized all that her Lord had given and would give for her that she was constrained to give her best, her all, to Him. From **Mark 14:8** "**She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial**", we learn that it was Calvary that constrained her - **2 Corinthians 5:14** "**For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died**"

**Because only by giving Him our best shall we enjoy His best.** This moment of dedication was for Mary the happiest moment of her life, and from now onwards she would know deep joy (John 15:11), and abiding peace (John 16:33), for she had given her very best, her all, to the Lord. If we give Him little we shall only have the capacity to enjoy a little (of Him); but if we give Him our very best, our all, He will become to us unspeakably precious (**1 Peter 2:7** "**Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, 'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,'**")

### **3. WHAT WILL BE THE RESULT OF GIVING OUR BEST TO THE LORD JESUS?**

1. **Some people will object.** Immediately Mary gave her best to the Lord there was indignation, murmuring, criticism and misunderstanding - look up **John 12:5** "**Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages..**" Judas was very quick to speak of Mary's act of dedication as "waste", and this is how the world often assesses the dedication of a life wholly given to the Lord - look up **Matthew 26:8** "**When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. 'Why this waste?' they asked.**"
2. **The Lord Jesus will be pleased.** The greatest thing in the world is to have His commendation - look at **verse 6**. Does it matter what the world thinks, so long as He is pleased with us?
3. **Others will be helped.** What a marvellous result there was from Mary's simple act of devotion and dedication! - look at **verse 9**. Who can estimate the far-reaching influence of one life which is utterly given to the Lord? Is your life completely given over to Him?