

Washing Jesus Feet

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

Introduction:

A. Matt. 26:6-13 - Read and exegete

I. MARY WASHED JESUS FEET

A. Mary, Martha and Lazarus' sister - John 12:1-8

1. Mary loved Jesus. Three times her name is mentioned in the gospels, each time she is at the feet of Jesus.

a. Luke 10:38-42 - she is at his feet, listening to Him teach

b. John 11:28-32 - she mourns her brother's death at His feet

c. John 12 - she anoints Him with perfume, at his feet

d. Not the immoral woman of Luke 7:36-39

e. Tragic irony is that while Mary is bestowing such a signal honor on Jesus, the Pharisees are plotting to kill Lazarus, her brother, simply because Jesus raised him from the dead - John 12:9-11

2. The alabaster is a species of marble, distinguished for being light, and of a beautiful white color, almost transparent. It was much used by the ancients for the purpose of preserving ointment

4. Ointment of spikenard. In the original it is nard. It was procured from an herb growing in India, distilled from the root. It was liquid, so easily to flow when the box was open. John says there was a pound of this; the Roman pound was 12 Troy ounces.

5. Mark 14:5 - "For this perfume might have been sold for over three hundred denarii..." A year's wage for a man

6. Mark 6:37 - "And they said to Him, Shall we go and spend two hundred denarii on bread and give them something to eat?" 5000 men and their families.

7. Some commentators believe it was an heirloom, perhaps the most valuable thing she owned.

8. To pour ointment on the head was common. To pour it on the feet was an act of distinguished humility, and deserved to be noted.

B. It was the property of Mary. She had a right to dispose of it as she pleased, answerable not to them, but to God.

1. The apostles had no right over it, and no cause of complaint if it had been wasted.

2. Christians now are at liberty to dispose of their property as they please, answerable only to God. The world considers it to be waste when Christians use it to spread the gospel

C. Mary's good work

1. Was an act of faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed. To signify that she believed in him as God's anointed, she anointed him, and made him her king.

2. Was an act of love and respect to him. Where there is true love in the heart to Jesus Christ, nothing will be thought too good to give him.

- D. Jesus praised Mary for this extravagant sacrifice
1. Vs 10 - "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me."
 2. Vs 12 - "She did it for My burial." - She was one of the first witnesses to the resurrection
 3. Vs 13 - "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."
- E. The Disciples' offence, "To what purpose is this waste?"
1. Lack of tenderness toward this good woman, in interpreting her kindness to be wastefulness. Love teaches us to put the best construction upon everything that it will bear, especially upon the words and actions of those that are zealously doing a good thing
 2. Lack of respect to Jesus. They were saying that the great honor given to Jesus by Mary was wasted.
 3. "The disciples were indignant," verse 8; defined as exasperated, hostile, incensed and seething.
 - a. Do you think they would have been indignant if she had kept the perfume for herself?
 - b. Do you think they would have been indignant if she donated the perfume to a social cause, like feeding the poor?
 - c. Do you think they would have been indignant if she cashed it in to pay for a child's education?
 4. They justified their outrage with religious talk - Matt. 26:9
- F. Judas' covetousness - John 12:6 - 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.
1. That it is not a new thing for members of the church to be covetous.
 2. That such members will be those who complain of the great waste in spreading the gospel.
 3. That such persons are a blight to any congregation

Lessons:

- A. No gift given to the Lord is extravagant when it is given freely with a willing heart and mind
- B. The Lord is pleased with the spirit behind such gifts (Widow's mites)
- C. No disciple has a right to criticize the generosity of others.
- D. Religious talk cannot cloak covetousness.
- E. There is a connection between the size of the gift given to the Lord and the strength of the faith of the giver.