

## GIVING MY BEST TO JESUS

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### MARK 14:3-9

In this very touching scene Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, came to Jesus with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume during a supper meal and poured it on his head and feet (John) as he reclined at the table.

The perfume was worth more than a year's wages for a common laborer or soldier. She also broke the expensive alabaster jar, making her act even more costly.

But, what did it signify? Why is this story so important that it is included in the Gospels? Because of the lesson it teaches (v. 9). Mary gave her best to the Lord Jesus.

## What can I give to the Lord Jesus?

### 1. I can give Him the best of my love.

This was Mary's real gift—her love. In this adoring act of love and honor Mary poured out her soul in worship even as she poured out the perfume.

Without hesitation she offered her most expensive earthly possession to the Lord in an act of effusive, adoring worship. This is what Jesus desires most of all from us—our love—our worship—our giving ourselves to him.

Mary's only thought was to show Jesus her devotion. The cost of the perfume was the last thing on her mind.

True love never calculates; it never asks "what is the least it can give?" Its one desire is to give to the uttermost. And when it has given all it has to give, it still thinks the gift is too little.

Mary had always been especially attentive to Jesus' teaching. One time when her sister Martha was preparing a meal for their guest, Jesus, Mary wasn't in the kitchen helping.

She was sitting at Jesus' feet soaking in everything he said (Lk. 10:39). Here in Mark 14, it

seems that she had some understanding of the significance of Jesus' impending death better than the Twelve Apostles.

She understood what the disciples did not want to understand, that Jesus had to die in order to be raised again. She seems to have sensed that somehow in his tragic death lay her redemption.

Did she understand perfectly? No! But she carefully listened to his teaching. She heard him say repeatedly that he would suffer and die in Jerusalem, and be raised to life again three days later.

His words penetrated her heart. She worships him with the most valuable thing she owned. This is what Jesus wants from each of us—our complete love and surrender to him.

More than anything Jesus wants you to give your love and yourself to him. Not just an hour here and another there. I can give him the best of my love and devotion.

## 2. I can give Him the best of my years.

I think most of us realize by now that life has an orientation, a final end toward which everything moves. This life is a journey to our forever life—where Christians will live eternally with Christ. Those who are not Christians will live eternally without him.

I also realize, however, that we know this for sure only because we are Believers. We believe the Bible. We trust Jesus for our salvation. And we know that this adventure we call life moves on to fulfillment in glory with him.

For those outside of Christianity the human adventure is just an endless spiral with no meaning of its own. Oh, most people have vague notions of a sweet by and by and they hope for heaven, and all kinds of false religions have formed to support the notion.

But we know the truth; we know the rest of the story. The death and resurrection of Jesus is our assurance and proof that one day we will be like him; we will be with him; and we will live forever in our eternal home, heaven.

Because of this truth it just makes sense to give him the best of our years here! It is a wonderful privilege to serve the Lord with our whole life. Jesus Christ and him alone is worthy of our years and our time.

Time may be the most valuable commodity we have. Everything in time is valuable and important and meaningful. It is of urgent importance that everything we do in our lives should be related to what we eternally are.

Our relationship with Jesus and the eternal life he promises is the sole sanction for the values of this life. Yes, we can also give him the best years of our lives.

### 3. I can give Him my best with my gifts.

The Bible teaches that God spiritually gifts every Christian. In two or three places in the New Testament these gifts are described such as, prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, helping, giving, leading, and governing, and so on.

The listed gifts in the Bible are not exhaustive—God supplies us with whatever He wants. Yet, some of us get scared off thinking, “I don’t know what my gift is.” Let me make it easy for you. What do you like to do? What talents and abilities, whether natural or learned, do you have?

The spiritual gifts that God gives will always be related to your talents, skills, abilities and the things you enjoy doing. His gifts are very diverse. You are enabled to do things to help the church. Your gift fits with other’s to help the church fulfill its mission.

You may think, “I can’t do anything. I don’t have any gifts.” Yes you do! Your fellow church members look at you just as you look at them and they think that you have wonderful gifts and abilities.

The point here is, we are all different, but whatever gift we have, God gives them to us for His use to grow and minister in His church.

And if we will give our gifts to Him, He will use them in a wonderful way. Instead of suppressing your gifts and talents, try to understand them and put them to proper use.

I read this cute story about Pastor Stevens who took over as pastor of a large southern church after spending eight years ministering in Moscow and other Eastern European cities.

In those 8 years things had changed a lot in America, especially in the world of technology. Cable, computers, cellular phones—it was all a bit confusing.

One day pastor Stevens complained to his new secretary that he didn’t think his pager was working. She gently pointed out that he was wearing his garage door opener. That of course explained why his pager wasn’t having much success opening the garage door.

Some of us are like Pastor Stevens. He had all the tools. He just needed to learn how to use them. Sometimes we face a similar information crisis when it comes to spiritual gifts.

God does not bring interests, experiences, abilities, or limitations into our lives capriciously or by mistake. Whatever we have, we have because God in his grace and generosity has given to us.

When we realize this, there comes into our lives a joyful gratitude for what we do have, and we are freed from resentment and anxiety over what we don't have, and we can give Him the best of our gifts.

## Why should I give my best to the Lord Jesus?

### 4. Because He is worthy of my best.

Jesus Christ is worthy for two reasons: First of all he is God who stepped out of heaven to become one of us.

Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, (Philippians 2:5-7) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And secondly, he is worthy because he is our Savior. Paul reminds us in 1 Tim. 1:15, Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners... And in Rom. 5:8, Christ died for us while we were still sinners... Yes, he is worthy of our best.

### 5. Because He gave His best for me.

Remember what Jesus has done for each of us. Paul said in 1 Cor. 15:3-4, Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

And Peter wrote, 1 Pet. 1:18-19. 18For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

One of the hardest things for us to believe is how much we matter to God. All men and women matter. You matter, I matter. All of us are the most important thing in the universe to God.

There was no sin in Jesus. None! He was perfectly pure and healthy. There was no duplicity. There were no secrets. There were no ulterior motives. There was nothing underhanded.

His life was perfect truthfulness and candor. Both outwardly and inwardly there was no sin in his life.

Jesus is the absolute perfect gift of God. He is not simply a product of human history; he is the humanity of God who graciously identifies with us and shares our human condition.

He was no less human for that, for God's identity and solidarity with us requires his full human-

ity. But human as God's self-gift to humanity, as "Immanuel"—God with us.

What will be the result of giving my best to Jesus?

## 6. Some will object.

Judas and the other disciples were upset. All of a sudden they became "holier-than-thou" and began thinking of how the money could have been spent on the poor (vv. 4-5).

When you live your life for Christ; when you give him your love and devotion and dedicate your gifts for his use, there will be people who either don't like what you are doing, or they will be jealous.

## 7. Some will be helped.

What Mary did had such lasting significance that Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her" (Mrk. 14:9).

What Mary did 2000 years ago was recorded for posterity. She has been talked about, wondered about, and emulated throughout the centuries.

It is a memorial to her love and generous worship. What she did, just as Jesus predicted, has been spoken of in memory of her.

The example of Mary has helped us today. She is perpetually an example to us—to all Christians of unselfish, sacrificial adoration.

## 8. Jesus will be pleased.

Just as he commended Mary, Jesus is pleased with our devotion. "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "She has done a beautiful thing for me." "She did what she could."

What a wonderful commendation. She must have been hurt and confused by the reaction of the other disciples. But Jesus commended her. He acknowledged her love and devotion, and taught the disciples a valuable lesson.

Always remember, if Jesus is pleased with you, what does it matter what the rest of the world thinks.

## Application:

Genuine worship is the supreme service we can offer to Christ. There is a time for ministering to the poor, the sick, the naked, and the imprisoned. There is a time for witnessing to the lost and seeking to lead them to the Savior. There is a time for discipling and helping new believers grow in their faith. There is a time for careful study and teaching God's Word. But above all else, the Lord Jesus requires our true worship—giving our best to Him.