

“True Love –Part 2”
Mark 14:1-9
(Preached at Trinity, November 19, 2014)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we saw last time, **Chapter 14** we find the Passion Week continuing. This chapter moves in rapid succession ending with His arrest and Peter's denial. In **Verses 1-2** we feel the sense of urgency with the chief priests trying to arrest Jesus. This scene breaks off at the end of **Verse 2** and doesn't pick up again until **Verses 10-11**.
2. At the heart of these opening verses of **Chapter 14** is **Verses 3-9** which form a parenthesis to this section taking us back to the previous Friday & Saturday evenings.
 - A. On Friday Jesus arrived at Bethany before sunset prior to the beginning of the Sabbath. Bethany was the home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha. He probably spent the Sabbath rest with these friends.
 - B. On Saturday evening a supper was held in His honor in the home of Simon the leper.
3. **Verses 3-9** record the stirring story of Mary anointing Jesus with the costly ointment. While the guests were relaxing, Mary takes position behind Jesus with an alabaster jar of filled with perfume. Alabaster was a translucent form of gypsum – it was considered a luxury item.
4. It was filled with an extremely valuable perfume. In **Verse 5** we read that the value exceeded 300 denarii, an amount exceeding over 300 days wages, roughly equivalent to almost a year's wages.

Looking at today's value it would be at least 40-50 thousand dollars.
5. She takes the jar filled with the perfume and pours the whole contents upon the body of Christ (v. 3). The smell fills the house.
6. The reaction around the room was one of indignation.

Mark 14:4 NAU - "But some were indignantly *remarking* to one another, "Why has this perfume been wasted?"

 - A. John's Gospel records that Judas led the protest quickly calculating the value of the oil.

John 12:4-6 NAU - "But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor *people*?"
 - B. Matthew, however, makes it clear that all of the disciples voiced their disapproval. As Mary looked around she found nothing but scorn for her actions.

Matthew 26:8-9 NAU - " But the disciples were indignant when they saw *this*, and said, "Why this waste? ⁹ "For this *perfume* might have been sold for a high price and *the money* given to the poor."
 - C. Jesus quickly comes to her defense.

Mark 14:6 NAU - "But Jesus said, "Let her alone; why do you bother her? She has done a good deed to Me."

7. Jesus was not going to be robbed of this glory being given to Him and He was not going to allow Mary to be robbed of this wonderful expression of her love for Him. Jesus is greatly pleased by our love for Him and when we live with Him at the center of our lives we discover what it means to be filled with the fullness of God.
8. Last time I began directing your attention to the significance of Mary's love. I focused on one particular aspect of her love - It was extravagant
- A. The perfume was expensive—an entire year's income. It was probably the most precious thing she owned. She broke the alabaster flask which tells us she had no intention of using just a portion. Mary took the most precious thing she possessed and spent it all on Jesus.
 - B. Love is not love if it calculates the cost – love's only regret is that it does not have more to give
 - C. Does this describe your love for Christ? Does He have your best?
 1. Is there anything in your life more precious than Christ?
 2. Have you given Him your life?
9. Tonight I want to continue to set before you the nature of Mary's love. It is the nature of true love. This is of infinite importance because it is the nature of saving faith. Those who have eternal life are those who love Christ.
- James 1:12 NAU** - "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him."
- James 2:5 NAU** - "Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?"
- 1 Peter 1:8-9 NAU** - " though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls."

This leads to my first point tonight:

- I. Extravagance towards Christ is inseparably linked to Regeneration
 - A. Jesus had linked her act to the preaching of the Gospel

Mark 14:9 NAU - "Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

 1. In other words, she stands before us as an example of one who has been touched by the Gospel. Those who have experienced God's forgiveness will love Him greatly
 2. Jesus clearly taught this to Simon the Pharisee

See Luke 7:36-47
 3. Those who come to Jesus will love Him supremely

Matthew 10:37-39 NAU - "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it."

- B. True love for Christ will always be demonstrated by our actions
John 14:15 NAU - "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."
John 14:21 NAU - "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."
John 15:10 NAU - "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."
1 John 5:2-3 - " By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."
1. Mary demonstrated her love by her extravagant actions toward Christ. Love is at the very heart of the Gospel.
2. Without love a man could give all of his goods to the poor and it would mean nothing
1 Corinthians 13:3 NAU - " And if I give all my possessions to feed *the poor*, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

II. True love is not self-conscious

- A. Mary demonstrated her love for Christ without regard to what other people might think
1. Everyone in the room was indignant over Mary's actions. Mary poured out her love to Christ in spite of the displeasure of everyone present
2. There are too many closet-Christians. There are too many who seek to appease others instead of demonstrating extravagant love towards Jesus.
3. Perhaps family complains that you have taken this religious thing too far. Some of them may be professing Christians who are satisfied with merely attending Church.
4. Mary wasn't concerned what others thought.
- B. Love creates humility – it creates selflessness
1 Corinthians 13:4-5 NAU - " Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, ⁵ does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own"
- C. To meet Christ is to find the greatest treasure of which we are willing to part with all else.
Matthew 13:44-46 NAU - "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid *again*; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it."

III. True love seizes the present opportunities

- Mark 14:7 NAU** - "For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them; but you do not always have Me."
A. God continually gives us opportunities of service – but they pass quickly
1. He gives us opportunities to glorify Him to others – to demonstrate our love for Him.

2. Life is filled with countless decisions. Our first thought should be, how can this be used as an opportunity to express my love to Christ? Will this glorify Him?
Where you go to school, who you marry, where you work, where you live.
 3. Sometimes this will come in the form of service to others.
 4. Our time on this earth is limited. Are you seeking to grow in your love for Him? Are you redeeming the time?
Mary did not want this moment to pass.
- B. We should also consider this with regards to others we love. We will not always have loved ones with us
1. How many people despair because a loved one died before they were told how much they were loved
 2. Today is the day to say those words
Today is the day to do that act of kindness
Today is the day to encourage, strengthen, help
 3. But more important than anything else. Are you redeeming the time today to serve and honor Christ.
- C. Life is fleeting – no one will stand before Christ grieved because they spent too much time serving Him, too many hours in worship, too much time praying

Conclusion:

May we demonstrate our love to Christ with extravagance giving Him our very best.
May others look upon us as fanatics. But may their scorn not prohibit us from our love gifts to our Savior