

# The Anointing of Jesus by Mary of Bethany

## Matt. 26:6-16

by R.A. Torrey

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*R.A. Torrey's sermon explores the profound act of love by Mary of Bethany in anointing Jesus, contrasting it with Judas' betrayal and the disciples' misunderstanding.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 26:6

**Topics:** "Betrayal", "Devotion"

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### Description

R.A. Torrey explores the profound act of Mary of Bethany anointing Jesus, emphasizing her deep love and understanding of Him, which contrasted sharply with the criticism from Judas and the other disciples. He highlights how Mary's uncalculated devotion brought joy to Jesus amidst His impending suffering, while Judas's betrayal stemmed from a heart hardened by greed. The sermon illustrates the significance of true love for Christ, which often goes unappreciated by others, and the eternal recognition that comes from acts of genuine devotion. Torrey also reflects on the nature of Jesus, who was both divine and human, and how He valued love over material concerns. Ultimately, the message calls believers to express their love for Jesus without reservation, regardless of societal judgment.

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### Transcript

#### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Jesus Anointed by Mary, the Sister of Lazarus, 6-13 When did the scene recorded in this lesson occur? (John 12:1.) When does it seem to have occurred according to the account in Matt. 26:1, 2? Why does Matthew record it in this way? Where is Jesus in this lesson? What light is thrown upon home life and the way Christ regards it? What thoughts filled the mind of Jesus at this time? In the midst of these grave and overwhelming thoughts, what did He find time to do? What was the purpose of these days of communion with these personal friends?

What great event had happened at Bethany before this? What was the result of that event? (John 11:45.) Did His present visit to Bethany have anything to do with the faith that had been engendered in the hearts of others by the raising of Lazarus? Was Jesus in the habit of going back to places where faith had been awakened, to quicken and nourish and strengthen that faith? (John 4:54.) Any lesson here for us? How does the real humanity of Jesus Christ come out in this lesson?

In whose house was Jesus stopping in Bethany (v. 6)? Who was Simon the leper? Who brought the most joy to the aching heart of Jesus during this visit? Why did she bring more joy to Him than any one else? How did Mary show her love? How much did this box of very precious ointment cost? Had she just bought it or bought it before and kept it for this purpose? (John 12:7.) What had Mary understood that no one else had understood? Why had Mary understood Jesus better than any one else? (Luke 10:39.)

How much time had Mary spent in calculating the cost of the ointment and whether she might not better save part of her money for future needs? What characteristic of true love does this illustrate? What proved the safer guide, Mary's uncalculating love to Jesus, or the calculating prudence of Judas and the rest of the disciples? How was Mary's act looked upon by Judas and the rest of the disciples? Who was the ringleader in the harsh criticism? (John 12:4-6.) Why could they not understand Mary's act?

If we live out true love to Jesus Christ in daily life, what may we expect? What compensation was Mary to have for the criticism of the disciples? What did the disciples call this use of the oil? What does it reveal regarding their own love to Jesus Christ, that they regarded such a use of the ointment as a "waste"? Do we ever see the same spirit today? What other use for the money expended on the ointment did they suggest? Whose money was it that they wanted to give to the poor?

Who are most willing to criticize others for not giving their money to the poor (10-13)? How did Jesus treat the act which others criticized? What did He tell the critics regarding the poor? (Mark 14:7.) What three words in Mark 14:7 have a gentle touch of irony in them? What praise did He bestow upon Mary's act? What is the very loftiest praise that can be bestowed upon anybody's life or acts? What is all that Christ asks of any one? (2 Cor. 8:12.) What was Mary looking for when she performed this act?

What did she get? How great fame did she get? What remarkable prediction did Jesus make regarding this act? What made this prediction remarkable? When Jesus made this prediction, did it seem at all likely that it would come true? What testimony is there to Christ being a prophet of God in these words? With what was Martha taken up at this supper? With what was Lazarus taken up? With what was Mary taken up? Of the three which most satisfied the heart of the Lord? What were the characteristics of Mary's love?

With what was the house filled? (John 12:3.) With what has the whole world since been filled? What had begotten this love to Jesus in Mary's heart? (v. 12, R. V.) 2. Judas Iscariot Bargains with the Chief Priests to Betray Jesus, vv. 14-16 What effect had this gentle rebuke upon Judas? How did Judas show he was cut to the heart? How did he seek to get back part of the money he had lost by Mary not putting the three hundred pieces into the bag? What did he find the priests doing when he went to them? For how much did he sell his Lord? From that time on, to what did he devote his whole thought and effort? Has he any successors? CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

## 1. Jesus Christ

### (1). His nature:

Divine, 10; human, 12.

### (2). How He was treated:

Loved by Mary of Bethany, 6-13; betrayed by Judas Iscariot, 14-16; not appreciated by the disciples, 8.

### (3). What He did:

Read hearts and thoughts of men, 10; appreciated acts of love, 10-13; commended the one who "did what she could," 10-13; saw through and exposed pretended interest in the poor of the hypocrite, 11.

## 2. Mary of Bethany

Understood the Lord's words when no one else did, 12; loved the Lord Jesus with all her heart, 7-12; brought her most precious possession and poured it all upon the Lord she loved, 7; misunderstood by the disciples, 8; appreciated by the Lord Himself, 10-13; won praise for herself throughout the world, 13.

## 3. Judas Iscariot

Considered anything lavished on the Lord as a "waste," 8; compare John 12:4; moved with indignation that precious gifts should be lavished on the Lord and not put in his own purse, 8, 9; compare John 12:5, 6; his hypocrisy unmasked by the Lord, 10, 11; compare John 12:5-8; betrayed His Lord for thirty pieces of silver, 15; sought opportunity to deliver his Lord to His enemies, 16.

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