"SHE DID A GOOD WORK"

Matthew 26:1-16

2-3-2019

INTRODUCTION: Verses 1 - 6

A great contrast:

The religious leaders hated Him,

The disciples dishonored Him,

Judas Iscariot betrayed Him,

But Mary (sister of Martha & Lazarus) loved and worshipped Jesus.

***What will you do for Jesus?**

Six features of Mary's good work for Jesus Christ:

I. **Mary Made a Great SACRIFICE**(v. 7a)
when she did a good work for Jesus

II. **Mary Showed Great HUMILITY and AFFECTION** (v. 7b)
when she did a good work for Jesus

III. **Mary Overcame Great OBSTACLES**(v. 8-10a)
when she did a good work for Jesus

IV. **Mary had Great PRIORITIES** (v. 10b-11)
when she did a good work for Jesus

V. **Mary Revealed Great FAITH**(v. 12)
when she did a good work for Jesus

VI. **Mary Left a Great MEMORY**(v. 13)
when she did a good work for Jesus

CONCLUSION: Verses 14-16

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I. Mary Made a Great _____(v. 7a)
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II. Mary Showed Great _____ and _____ (v. 7b)
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III. Mary Overcame Great _____(v. 8-10a)
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IV. Mary had Great _____ (v. 10b-11)
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V. 1

"When Jesus had finished all these sayings" - After the Olivet Discourse, in which Jesus gave specific details regarding His second coming, He now gives the disciples details about how His first coming would end.

V. 2

"After two days" - If Passover (14th Nissan) occurred on Friday, this would have been Wednesday that these events occurred.

The omniscient Christ knew that on Passover, He (as the Passover Lamb) would be killed. He also knew how He would die: by crucifixion (Gal. 3:13).

V. 3

Religious people (priests, scribes, elders) gathered at a religious place (the palace of the High Priest) to do Satan's work!

Just because people are religious doesn't mean they are of God!

Caiaphas was like the powerful pope of Judaism who served as High Priest from A.D. 15 to 37.

V. 4

"Consulted" = to plot together

"Subtilty" = by guile, trickery, or deceit

Because they didn't know who Jesus was, they actually thought they could trick Him and kill Him without His suspecting it (however, He was one step ahead of them and had already on numerous occasions foretold His death - Mt. 16:21, 17:22, 20:18, 26:2).

V. 5

"Not on the Feast Day" - not on the Passover. Yet that was the very day Christ said He would die (v. 2).

"Lest there be an uproar" - They would have to seize Christ quietly and privately so as to not stir up the crowd who were "pro-Jesus."

Judas would become their man for a quick and easy betrayal (Lk. 22:6).

V. 6

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany" - Matthew deliberately takes an event (v. 6-133) which occurred *"six days"* before the day of Passover (Jn. 12:1) and thematically interjects it in the midst of Christ's rejection by the religious leaders (v. 1-5) and by Judas Iscariot (v. 14-16) to make a point.

[Christ's rejection by the religious leaders occurred two days prior to Passover - v. 2]

The point God is making by moving this account out of chronological order is this:

--The religious leaders hated Him
--Judas betrayed Him
--But a woman loved and worshipped Him

"In Bethany" - In the same town of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead (Jn. 11).

"In the house of Simon the leper" A man who no doubt was cured from leprosy by Christ. In the house was a former leper! Plus a former dead man raised to life!

"Lazarus" - sat at the table while his sister Martha served the food (Jn. 12:2).

V. 7

"A woman" - Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus (Jn. 12:3). The same Mary whose devotion tot Christ was evident when she sat at his feet and listened to Him (Luke 10:39).

Mary no doubt had heard Jesus state that He would be crucified, and she believed Him and anointed Him as a parting kind deed (v. 12).

This Mary is not:Mary Magdalene (who had 7 demons cast out of her by Jesus - Mk. 16:9)
Mary, the mother of Jesus'incarnation, the wife of Joseph

Matthew gives us a definite contrast between Mary's worship and Judas' betrayal (Wiersbe, p. 94); between Mary's worship and the religious leaders plot to kill; between Mary's worship and the disciples' misplaced priorities.

A great contrast:

The religious leaders hated Him,
The disciples dishonored Him,
Judas Iscariot betrayed Him,
But Mary (sister of Martha & Lazarus) loved and worshipped Jesus.

***What will you do for Jesus?**

Six features of Mary's good work for Jesus Christ:

I. **Mary Made a Great <u>SACRIFICE</u>**(v. 7a)
when she did a good work for Jesus

"Alabaster box" - contained about a pound of ointment; half a liter (Jn. 12:3).

"Precious ointment" - spikenard (Jn. 12:3)

Very costly perfume of pure nard, valued at a <u>year's wages</u> for a common worker or soldier.

In ancient Israel, such an anointing of fragrant oil would have been extremely refreshing (cp. Ps. 133:2).

"Being absolutely controlled by adoration for her Lord, she lost all sense of restraint and economy" (MacArthur, p. 134).

God loves a *"cheerful giver"* (II Cor. 9:7).

II. **Mary Showed Great <u>HUMILITY</u> and <u>AFFECTION</u>** (v. 7b)
when she did a good work for Jesus

"Poured it on his head" - John, who also was at the table, records that Mary also anointed Jesus' feet with the ointment and wiped His feet with her hair filling the whole house with the aroma of the perfume (Jn. 12:3).

"A woman's hair is her glory (I Cor. 11:15). She surrendered her glory to the Lord and worshipped Him" (Wiersbe, p. 95).

Mary's life is only recorded 3 times in the Gospels, and at each time she is at the <u>feet</u> of Jesus -

1) To hear the Word (Lk. 10:38-42)
2) In sorrow after her brother's death (Jn. 11:28-32)
3) Now, to anoint Him

"Mary was a deeply spiritual woman. She found at His feet her <u>blessing</u>; she brought to His feet her <u>burdens</u>; and she gave at His feet her <u>best</u>" (Wiersbe, p. 94-95).

Out of a grateful heart, Mary worships Jesus for what He did for her personally and for what He did for her brother Lazarus.

Another woman offered a similar act of worship in <u>Luke 7:36-39.</u>

III. Mary Overcame Great <u>OBSTACLES</u>(v. 8-10a)
when she did a good work for Jesus

V. 8
"Indignation" - The indignation was *"within themselves"* (Mk. 14:4).

"<u>Disciples</u> (plural) ***saw it, <u>they</u> had indignation" -*** perhaps <u>all</u> of the disciples became upset by what they viewed as a "waste."

"To what purpose is this waste?" - "A whole year's income wasted in one minute!", They thought. "Why this waste of ointment?! Mary, why didn't you sell that perfume and put the money to real use?!"

*Nothing we give to Jesus is a waste!

(EX: the person who happened to see the size of a check a believer was putting in the offering plate -- looked horrified at the large amount and said, "Why don't you give that to me? <u>I</u> need it!")

It was actually Judas which instigated the murmuring (Jn. 12:4-6 - *"Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray Him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."*).

Satan always seems to have his tares among the wheat, which spread their poison to others.

It was not "waste" but <u>worship</u> she gave Jesus.

If anything was a waste, it was the life of Judas Iscariot. He wasted privileges, opportunities, his life, and his soul! Jesus called him *"son of perdition"* (Jn. 17:12) which literally means "son of waste" (Wiersbe, p. 95).

V. 9
"Sold for much" - *"more than three hundred pence"* (Mk. 14:5) (300 denarii, or approximately a year's salary of a rural worker - Ryrie note).

Their criticism of Mary sounded so "spiritual." They were totally blind to the very high act of spirituality Mary was showing.

"Everytime Mary sought to do something for Jesus, she was misunderstood. Her sister Martha misunderstood her when Mary sat at Jesus' feet to hear Him teach the Word. Judas and the other disciples misunderstood her when she anointed Jesus. Her friends and neighbors misunderstood her when she came out of the house to meet Jesus after Lazarus had been buried (Jn. 11:28-31). When we give Jesus Christ first place in our lives, we can expect to be misunderstood and criticized by those who claim to follow Him" (Wiersbe, p. 95).

V. 10

"Why trouble ye the woman?" - Mark records that they *"murmured against her"* (they scolded her; they rebuked her harshly).

Perhaps they thought that Jesus (being the practical Lord He was) would have agreed with them, that this was not "good stewardship."

"Why trouble ye the woman?" - Why are you bothering this woman who is serving me?

Well meaning people often do cause trouble to those who are expending time, money, energy, and service to Christ. Without realizing it, because they are walking in the flesh, or listening to disgruntled instigators, they are a bother rather than a blessing to those living for Christ.

IV. **Mary had Great <u>PRIORITIES</u>** (v. 10b-11)
when she did a good work for Jesus

V. 10b

"She hath wrought a good work upon Me" - She did not <u>waste</u> her perfume, she invested it!

Rather than letting it gather dust at home, or using it solely on herself, she gave it all to Christ!

What good works have you done directly for Jesus lately? (works you did <u>not</u> do to receive the recognition of others, but to simply please Jesus?)

V. 11

"For ye have the poor always with you" - This was not a calloused or cold remark toward the poor; rather, Christ is saying, "You will have many, many more opportunities to do kind deeds for the poor, but this was her last chance to do something for me (in the flesh) before my death and burial."

We must make time for meeting the needs of the poor (Gal. 6:10), for evangelizing the lost (Mk. 16:15), for discipling the saved (Mt. 28:19-20), for teaching God's Word . . . but at the heart of all ministry lies the necessity to worship Jesus!

V. **Mary Revealed Great <u>FAITH</u>**(v. 12)
when she did a good work for Jesus

"Though the disciples ignored Christ's many predictions of His approaching death, apparently this woman (Mary) believed them" (Ryrie note).

"She did it for my burial" - Rather than using it to anoint His body when He was dead, she used it *"aforehand"* (Mk. 14:8) before He died.

(We often think to do something for someone after they are dead and neglect them while they are alive!)

VI. **Mary Left a Great <u>MEMORY</u>**(v. 13)
when she did a good work for Jesus

"This gospel" - What gospel?

The gospel of His <u>death</u> (v. 2) and <u>burial</u> (v. 12). The Gospel is Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (I Cor. 15:1-3).

"A memorial" - Mary's memory will be as sweet as the fragrance that filled that room the day she spent a year's wages on the Lord.

What memories will you leave behind?

After your life's work is ended and God calls you home, what will people remember you for? What will come to their mind when they recall your name? What legacy will you leave? What will the wording be in your eulogy?

Her memory encourages us to love and serve Christ with our very best.

CONCLUSION: Verses 14-16

V. 14

"Then . . . Judas . . . went" -Upon seeing what he viewed as a tremendous waste of money, he became so indignant that he could not stand it any longer. This was the "last straw" (the "straw that broke the camel's back").

His self-centered anger was all it took to open the door for Satan (Eph. 4:26-27).

No doubt, the Lord's rebuke also moved Judas to anger.

"Judas Iscariot went" **-**Satan literally entered into Satan (Lk. 22:3).

V. 15

"What will ye give me?" - Judas' god was not Jesus Christ, but money.

What price tag would pull you away from Christ? One million? 100 million?

For Judas, the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32) was all it took.

"So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver" (Zech. 11:26

What is it that you would not give up for Jesus?

Isn't He worth your time, energy, money, possessions, your very life?