

The Gospel of John Part 60: The Heart of Devotion

John 12:1-8



John 12:1-8 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha

was serving; and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. 3 Mary then took a litre of perfume of very costly pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was going to betray Him, said, 5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to take from what was put into it. 7 Therefore Jesus said, "Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. 8 For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."

have many opportunities to honor the Lord through their gifts, service, worship, and obedience. The question is not simply what we are doing, but why we are doing it. Whatever we offer to Christ should flow from sincere love and be directed toward His glory alone.

2) Wasteful Devotion is Always Self-Centered. Judas's objection appeared compassionate, but John exposes the selfish motives hidden beneath his religious words. His concern was never the poor—it was himself. This reminds us that outward displays of religion can conceal hearts that are far from Christ. Wasteful devotion elevates self, criticizes others, and seeks personal advantage rather than Christ's honor. As believers, we must regularly examine our own hearts. Are we serving Christ for His glory or our own? Genuine devotion refuses to use religion for selfish gain and instead seeks to honor Jesus with humility, sincerity, and a willingness to sacrifice for His name.

3) Jesus Will Decide What He Accepts From Us. Jesus settles the debate by defending Mary and revealing that her act of devotion perfectly aligned with God's redemptive purpose. While caring for the poor remains important, Christ teaches that all true devotion must first be centered on Him. He alone knows the motives of every heart and determines what is pleasing in His sight. This challenges every believer to seek Christ's approval above human opinion. Our worship, service, generosity, and obedience should never be driven by appearances but by a sincere desire to honor the Savior who gave Himself for us. In the end, His verdict is the only one that matters.

1) Faithful Devotion is Always Christ Centered. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus each demonstrate that faithful devotion to Christ can be expressed in different ways—through service, fellowship, and worship. Though their actions differ, they share one common focus: Jesus Himself. Faithful devotion is not measured by a particular activity but by a heart that is intentionally centered on Christ. Likewise, believers today