

Is Jesus Worth the Cost?

Read: Mark 14:3-9 (see also, John 12:1-8)

Mark records for us an account of a woman who has done something good. Jesus said, "*She has done a good work for Me.*" And those who were there did not see it as something good. In fact, they scolded her harshly because of what she did.

So what did she do that was so wrong in the eyes of "*some*"? She broke open a flask of spikenard oil, very expensive fragrant oil from India (it cost a year's worth of wages – today it would be the equivalent of about \$50,000.00) and anointed Jesus' head with the oil. The oil was such that in order to keep it preserved it had to be kept in a sealed alabaster flask. The flask of oil was most likely passed down to the woman from her mother who got it from her mom.

This was the second time in that final week before His crucifixion that Jesus was anointed with expensive oil. Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anointed Jesus' feet earlier that week (John 12:1-8). That time Judas, the disciple who would betray Jesus, complained about the "*waste*." This time though we are not told who complained about the wasting of such expensive oil, I am sure it was most likely not any of His disciples; hopefully they learned their lesson the last time. Regardless, Jesus told those who had complained that it was not a waste but rather she had done something good, "*a good work*" for Him. He said that she had anointed His body in preparation for His burial.

Those who had complained only saw the cost, but Jesus saw compassion and a thankful heart that desired to a good and right thing for Jesus. She valued Jesus more than the cost of the fragrant oil; she saw that Jesus was worth more than what it cost her to express her love and thankfulness to Him. The sacrifice that Jesus was about to make was very costly; it would cost Him His very life. But He would do so willingly, driven by His abounding grace and everlasting love for His people; He counted them of more value than His own life. The value of His love and compassion He showed sinners like you and me was greater than what it cost Him. How much do we value compassion – is it greater than what it would cost to show it to others, especially in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to them?

How often do we grumble and complain about how much it costs to express our love and thankfulness to the Lord for what He has done and is doing to keep us from falling into sin, to hold us safe in Him all the days of your life in this trouble world? What do we treasure up more, the kingdom of God in Christ or the things we possess in this life? Do you value Jesus more than what it costs to show your faith in Him from a thankful and loving heart? Is Jesus worth the cost, the cost of serving Him in His Church, the cost of time and money, or even a valuable possession? May God grant us all His grace in the power of the Holy Spirit to consider carefully how much we value Jesus! – To God be all glory, honor, and power, forever! Amen!