

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Much is made in our society today about making a name for ourselves and becoming successful. We live in a culture that magnifies the praise and the opinion of others when it directly benefits us. As a society we spend much energy and time in our appearance, education and social in order to garner the favor of others so that we may gain something. Tonight we are going learn how to waste our lives.
- B. Sadly, this expression for some becomes the same way in which they relate to God. They are willing to spend much energy, time and money on God *as long it directly benefits them* in some tangible way. Many are willing to attend churches or ministries as long as things continue to benefit them.
- C. However, this model of relating to God is both unbiblical and unsustainable. Many suffer discouragement when God does not meet their sense of expectation. They grow tired about the state of people around; they spend much of their time complaining about “what isn’t,” rather than rejoicing in “what is.”
- D. But there is a better way; it’s called “wasting your life on Jesus.”

## II. THE GREAT WORTH OF JESUS

- A. When we look in the bible at the way people responded to the person of God we see that their response is often far different than the response that we see commonly see today.

***Moses – 4...God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses! And he said, “Here I am.” 5 then He said, “...take your sandals off your feet...the place you stand is holy ground...”6 ...And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God...”***

***Children of Israel - 16...on the third day, in the morning, that there were thundering and lightnings , and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. (Ex. 19:16)***

***David - You are fairer than the sons of men. Ps. 45:2***

***One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek....(Ps. 27:4)***

***The Shulamite - Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His [words]. Song 1:2***

***Isaiah - Woe is me, for I am undone!...I am a man of unclean lips....for my eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts. Is 6:5***

***Daniel - 9 the Ancient of Days was seated....His garment white like wool...13 His throne was a fiery flame...behold One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven!....28 my thoughts troubled me...and my countenance changed.... Dan. 7:9, 13***

*John -13...One like the Son of Man clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about with a golden band...14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like flames of fire...17 and when I saw him, I fell at His feet as dead...(Rev. 1:13-17)*

*The elders and creatures - 14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" and the twenty-four elders fell down and worshipped Him who lives forever and ever. (Rev. 5:14)*

- B. This worship is a direct result of the revelation of God. Worship is directly connected to seeing.. They see God, and then they respond in this way.
- C. Every person has a desire within them for this response. We long to be captivated, *fully given over to something or someone.*

### III. CHRIST'S OBJECTIVE VALUE

- A. In heaven, when they see God, this is how they respond to Him: ***they do not rest day or night saying: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty...*** This is not because filling a calendar and clock are so important. The four living creatures are not trying to prove to other creatures out there that they are so radical.
- B. Their expression of ***day and night worship*** is a direct result of their revelation of the beauty of God. The greater the revelation the more extravagant their expression.
- C. We see that in heaven the worship that occurs reflects a very important truth about Jesus: His objective beauty and worth. It is not subjective. We do not get to vote on how beautiful and glorious God is.

***<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God...<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:5-11)***

### IV. SEEING HIM AS WORTHY

***<sup>3</sup> And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman [Mary of Bethany] came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. <sup>4</sup> But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, "Why was this fragrant oil wasted?" <sup>5</sup> For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they criticized her sharply. <sup>6</sup> But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me [ESV: she has done a beautiful thing to me]. <sup>7</sup> For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. <sup>8</sup> She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. <sup>9</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her." (Mark 14:3-9)***

- A. Every time that Mary of Bethany appears throughout the gospels she is found in reverence at the feet of Jesus. Her life and expression of devotion to the Lord is given as an example of the type of heart that Lord is longing for. She loves Him and expresses that love in a public way.
- B. Here is seen bringing her alabaster flask of oil to Simon' house. This **very costly oil** was most likely her entire savings and worth. Some believe that it was her inheritance left to her by her deceased parents. Either way, it was the most valuable thing she possessed. As far as we know it was the only thing of significant value that she had.
1. The value of the oil and flask was around 300 denarii which was nearly a year's wages for a worker in that day.
  2. In today's economy we could estimate it at being worth 40-50 thousand dollars.
- C. **VS 3 *She broke the flask*** – Mary has this revelation of Jesus and thinks to herself, *"It's not just enough that sell this and give the money to Jesus, I need to entirely waste it."* She breaks open the flask and pours out her inheritance on the head of Jesus.
1. Her inheritance was her *entire life*. That oil affected every single part of her life. There was no reservation; she didn't hold back.
  2. In this act Mary is declaring, "Jesus, you are my inheritance."
- D. **VS 4 *Some where indignant*** – In the story, Jesus is surrounded by his followers and disciples. These are people that genuinely loved Jesus. Yet, they did not see Jesus' worth in same light as Mary did.
1. They were upset at her devotion and gift to Jesus. In other words, they were offended because they did not think that Jesus was worth this costly oil being "wasted" on Him.
- E. **VS 5 - *they criticized her sharply*** – Mary bore the criticism of her worship. Many will bear disapproval from others when see to please God. They will be scoffed at and mocked, even by well-meaning Christians.
- F. **VS 6 *Let her alone...she has done a good work*** – Jesus *defends* the extravagant form of Mary's worship. He silences the accusation against her. In the end, wasting your life on Jesus will be justified in front of all the nations.
- <sup>19</sup> ***... But wisdom is justified by her children.*** (Mt. 11:19)
- <sup>26</sup> ***For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. <sup>27</sup> But God has chosen the [so called] foolish things of the world to put to shame the [so called] wise, and God has chosen the weak things [like our extravagant devotion] of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; <sup>28</sup> and the base things [considered overly simplistic] of the world and the things which are despised [by others] God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, (1 Cor. 1:26-28)***
- G. Before we fully grasp what she is doing, let's look at what she isn't doing:

1. She is not evangelizing the lost
  2. She is not giving money to the poor or caring for them
  3. She is not ministering to others in the body
  4. She is not preaching or teaching the Word
  5. She is not even interceding for a cause
- H. ***She has done a beautiful thing to me...*** - This is the only time in the gospels that Jesus attributes beauty to something. The thing that He calls beautiful is this extravagant expression of devotion through Mary.
- I. ***Me you do not have always*** – Jesus here is testifying of His great worth and value. He IS highly exalted and there isn't an expression of worship or extravagance that fully matches His value.
- J. ***Told as a memorial to her*** – That word memorial is the same word used to describe part of a sacrifice which was burned on the altar together with the frankincense, that its fragrance might ascend to heaven and commend the offerer to God's remembrance. Mary's worship offering was mingled together with Christ's bodily sacrifice on the cross. When we preach the gospel do we tell the story of Mary's extravagant love?

## V. CONCLUSION

- A. I want to love Jesus in the way that Mary loved Jesus.
- B. This so called "wasting our lives" on extravagant devotion to the Lord is the wisest thing we can do.