

Are We Giving Jesus Our Best?

The room is filled with the fragrance of the most exquisite and costly perfume known to man at that time. Mary has broken open a flask of nard and is pouring it on the feet of Jesus. What does this mean? Why does she do it? What is nard?

Let's begin to unpack these verses. Who are the players in the story? They are Jesus, Mary, Lazarus, and Martha. Mary and Martha are the famous sisters who argued over who should serve and who should sit and listen when Jesus came for dinner in the book of Luke. Interesting here to note that Martha is serving while Mary is humbling herself at Jesus' feet. Lazarus is the same one whom Jesus just raised from the dead. Why does Mary do what she does? She does it out of pure gratitude for what Jesus has done for her. (raising her brother from the dead) What is nard? Nard is a general name for an expensive perfume that was rare in Jerusalem. It is made from a plant that is only found in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains of India, so you can see why it was considered so expensive. I could find no reference that said nard was used in burial preparation however it could be that had nard been easier to get it would have been used instead of myrrh.

I believe that Mary was simply trying to express her gratitude for what Jesus had done for her. She demonstrated her gratitude by giving the most precious thing she had to Jesus. There is an obvious lesson in this for us, not only during Lent but anytime we contemplate what we should do to show Jesus we love him. Is there anything that we value that we would not willingly place at Jesus' feet? For Mary no cost was

too great, and nothing so precious that she couldn't give it to Jesus. What about us? Is there something that we are holding onto that is more precious than our love for Jesus? Is there something more that Jesus needs to do for you? Mary was showing her love by her actions. As I said to the children, she was a living sermon for us. What can we do to live out our love for Jesus? That's the question of the day isn't it? What can we do to live out our love for Jesus? How you answer that question depends on how comfortable you are with demonstrating your love for others. You'll remember it was Mary pouring the oil on the feet of Jesus, not one of his disciples. It was Mary who ignored social taboos to let her hair down in front of other men, and wipe the feet of Jesus. Men by nature are not as emotional as women—that's not chauvinist—it is a fact. The men eventually do show their love for Jesus by becoming martyrs for him according to some traditions, and by raising up churches in other areas, and by spreading the gospel to everyone they met.

So I repeat my question—what can we do to live out our love for Jesus??? I have some suggestions—

1. Begin everyday with prayer! Pray for those you love—pray for your family—and pray for your church.
2. End everyday with prayer! Pray for those you love, pray for your family—pray for your church.
3. Invite someone to come to church with you on Palm Sunday and then see if they will come back with you on Easter Sunday. The early Easter service will start at 8am and be followed by breakfast.

There are more suggestions I could make, but if you are praying everyday, then God will give you other suggestions. Just don't be afraid to let your feelings show

when it comes to Jesus. After all, He hung on a cross for
you and me.