

Living The Good Life, Part 7

- **John 12:3-6 (NLT)** Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with fragrance. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples – the one who would betray him – said, "That perfume was worth a small fortune. It should have been sold and the money given to the poor." Not that he cared for the poor – he was a thief who was in charge of the disciples' funds, and he often took some for his own use.
- Every time we see Mary in the Bible she is at the feet of Jesus – to hear Him teach, to weep or to worship. She is an extravagant worshipper. She will let the housework pile up, or even let her sister do it, while she sits at the feet of Jesus. She's not lazy, she just has eternal priorities. After all, Jesus isn't at their house very often or for very long; you have to take him on his schedule, not your own.
- Mary is extravagant this day as well, as she throws away an entire year's wages in one single act of worship. Everyone in the room thinks she has taken leave of her senses, because they all know what that ointment is worth. What a waste! All she is doing is 'refreshing' Jesus; it's not a requirement, it's not expected, it's not customary, it's not even sensible! But it is WORSHIP! And real worship is always extravagant!
- EXTRAVAGANCE means exaggerated, excessive or immoderate behavior. It is often linked with wastefulness. Obviously, that can be very bad or very good depending on the type of behavior being talked about.
- Judas was angry on this day and said, "This ointment could have been sold for a year's wages and we could have given the money to the poor." But the Scripture reveals his heart immediately – he didn't care about the poor, but he wanted the money in the treasurer's bag so he could steal it for HIMSELF!
- There are many people today who get 'concerned' about the extravagance of true worship. They will tell you that their concerns are warranted, that there is just no need for all that noise, or all that emotion, or all that music, or all that singing, or all that volume, or all that excitement. They are like the 'Pentecostal police' whose key Scripture is 'let everything be done decently and in order.'
- But they don't realize that GOD'S ORDER is much different than OUR ORDER!
- They have the spirit of Judas, and the issue they talk about is not the real issue in their hearts. What they are really saying is, "I don't come into the presence of God concerned about refreshing HIM, I come here concerned about refreshing ME!" It's a waste to spend all that time singing; it's a waste to spend all that time praying; it's a waste to spend all that time just waiting on God. Why can't we just do something to help ME?
- These poor deluded souls don't realize that when a human heart, created to be a container for its Creator, reaches beyond itself to touch God ... miraculous things happen. Mary was blessed when she blessed Jesus in an extravagant way!
- **AND WHY SHOULDN'T WE BE EXTRAVAGANT?** After all, look how excessive God has been in His dealings with us!
- **Titus 3:5-6** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
- **1 John 3:1a** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.
- **Psalm 23:5-6** Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.
- **2 Corinthians 9:15** Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.
- **The economy of Heaven is opposite of the economy of earth.** Here, if we want to HAVE, we have to HOARD. Save it! Keep it! Don't spend it! Invest it! Tax-shelter it! But in Heaven's economy, if we want to RECEIVE we have to GIVE!
- **Acts 20:35b** ... remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
- **Malachi 3:10** Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in the mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

- **Luke 6:38** Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.
- **2 Corinthians 9:6-7** But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
- This certainly applies in our financial giving to God's work, but the same principle governs worship – when we are restricted, formal, confined, reserved, modest, limited, stiff, and restrained in our worship, WE LIMIT WHAT WE CAN RECEIVE FROM GOD.
- David was another extravagant worshipper of God. He wanted the blessing of God that had been poured out on the house of Obed-edom where the Ark of the Covenant was, and he was willing to do things God's way to get it!
- **2 Samuel 6:12** And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.
- David had tried this before with oxen and a cart – the 'sensible' way, the 'human' way. But this time, every six paces they would sacrifice an ox, as if to let both God and man know – NO MORE OXEN! The ox is a symbol of strength, but God wanted men to put forth the effort in worship. They carried that heavy ark for fifteen miles in the heat!
- David was so extravagant in his excitement that he began to dance before the Lord; he offended his wife, but he pleased his God. You can't seek God's Deity and maintain your dignity at the same time.
- **Psalms 84:10** For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
- David, you're a king – why would you want to be a doorkeeper? A doorkeeper at the right door has more influence than a king! And even Obed-edom couldn't stay away from the Ark!
- **1 Chronicles 15:24** ... and Obed-edom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.
- **John's seventh snapshot of the Spirit-filled man: He is unashamed to worship extravagantly.**