



A Waste of Money

You can always tell what's important to a person by how they spend their money.

“Moses said, ‘Give to the poor!’” The Rabbis told all good Jewish boys in synagogue school. “Isaiah said, ‘God wants you to remember the poor!’” the Rabbis announced at Sabbath at the synagogue. And Jesus himself said, “Blessed are the poor.”

And the disciples had learned the lesson well: God wanted you to watch out for those who had less than you. He wanted you to watch out for the defenseless, for the poor, for the widow, for the orphan.

They were good Jews. They had learned the lesson well, and what Jesus taught fit in very well with that – and of course you would expect nothing less from the Messiah!

And then one night Jesus and his disciples had dinner at the home of a man named “Simon the Leper.” And as they lay down on those couches to prepare to eat, a woman entered holding a clay jar. And she approached Jesus, popped the cork out of that little clay jar, and a fragrance filled the room like nothing that the disciples had ever smelled before. Scents washing, wafting through the room... This wasn't just perfume. This was... *the best*. This was expensive perfume that cost not a little bit of money.

Ah! The woman was going to anoint Jesus – put a few drops of this perfume on his head. What an act of devotion! Yes. This is something that is very –

--wait a second; what is she doing?

She just dumped the whole thing on Jesus's head. That's not just some mistake. It's not like she tripped. She intended to do this. She just poured the whole thing of perfume on his head and it's dribbling down his cheeks and dribbling down his beard like oil... What is going on here?

That was a lot of money that she just wasted. Do you know how many mouths you could feed with that? Do you know – God wants you to watch out for the poor. God wants you to watch out for the poor! It had been drilled into the disciples' head for so long. And didn't Jesus himself say, “Blessed are the poor?” What is this?

And the disciples were indignant. “Didn't Moses say --? Didn't Isaiah say?” And they sputtered and they blathered and finally they asked, “Why this waste? This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.”

The woman wasn't paying any attention to them, though. Oh, no. She was looking down at Jesus.

And he was looking at her with that smile of his. And then he turned to the disciples. “Why are you bothering this woman? She's done a beautiful thing for me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did

it to prepare me for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

You see, they weren't wrong in saying that God cares for the poor. Of course he does! It's written all over Scripture. But you can tell what's important to a person by how they spend their money.

And this woman made it very clear what was important to her as she poured out all of her savings on Jesus.

Now, brothers, sisters,

It is still true today: You can tell what's important to you by what you spend your money on. But let this not be a guilt trip for you. That is not the point!

Instead, consider what Jesus spent his life on: He spent his life on you. Gladly. Willingly.

The woman knew what was coming. She chose to spend all she had... on Jesus. Not because she had to, but because she wanted to serve the One who served her so well.

Learn her lesson.

Love Jesus.

And the story is true.

Matthew 26:6-13
<http://www.breadforbeggars.com>

