

# John 12

Sunday 2/13/2022

Well, if you have your Bibles this morning, I know you are expecting to turn to John 11, but let us turn to John 12. We will be back in John 11 next week. We kind of bounce back and forth here.

I was talking to Mike here yesterday when he was taking his pictures, and I was telling him, in my years going around the world 44 times, in every place I have been, I have preached just about everywhere there is to preach. I could write a book on some of the preaching experiences I had. I one time actually out in Seattle, Washington, preached for a convention of midgets. It was the Christian Midget Association. I think I was the shortest I could find that could preach the Bible. It was an amazing experience. I got a standing ovation and did not even know it until somebody told me what was going on.

But I said, I have preached everywhere. This is without a doubt the greatest place to preach. I was telling Mike yesterday the acoustics here. Back in the day when they built this, back in the middle 1800s, they did not have the sound systems that we have. So they built the buildings to be acoustically designed for preaching and singing. Boy, I will tell you, this is the way it is here. I really enjoy just getting up here and spending time with you in the Word of God and just really enjoying all that we are going to do today in the Word of God.

## I. Introduction and Review of Martha

Last week we were in John chapter 11. We started our study on the inspirational, on the practical side of this story. Up to that point, we had been looking at it prophetically and all the great doctrinal aspects. But we looked at Martha. I told you this family and how they will represent the different kinds of Christians you find today in Christianity, in an inspirational, practical way.

You will remember that I laid out last week the two key doctrines in the Bible for our really understanding how God works in our life. Of course, the one was God's plan for our life, which is different for everybody in this room. Then for God's will for your life, which is the same for everybody in this room. That is to be more like Christ every day. Through those two, when properly in place, God will develop in our lives all that we need to do whatever work God has called us to do, developing us for His perfect work.

Going through, as we saw last week, our trials, our tribulations, the catastrophes in life that we have to face by learning patience, and then through that experience, and then the hope of the principles of the Word of God. I showed you that those tough times, or times of tragedy, that is when God will be behind the scenes. Most of God's people can never see this. They are so caught up with all the emotion of what they are going through, that they really cannot see God operating behind the scenes through the circumstances to get the honor and glory out of it, God just using the natural cycle of life and what comes along with that.

I showed you last week in James chapter 1, verse 3 and 4, it tells us that the trying of our faith is what works and brings patience in our lives. It is through these trials that patience, the Bible

says, will have her perfect work. It will develop us to a point. In Romans chapter 5, verse 3, when patience does that perfect work, it will result in experience. You learn not only what you are going through and why, but why God is doing it, and you learn more about the Lord and what He is doing and how He does what He does. Then hope, the fact that my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. You learn those things as you go through the things of life.

We looked at Martha, who has none of these things in her life. We looked at how she is a picture of so many of God's people today who will never allow God to develop them. They will never make Jesus Christ Lord of their life. They will always want to be the main chandelier. Mel Sabaka, my father in the Lord, used to say that everybody today wants to be the main chandelier in the ballroom, but nobody wants to be the light bulb on the back porch. Martha wants to be that main chandelier. She wants everybody to see what she is doing. She is totally unteachable because she thinks, as we saw last week, she knows everything. She is so busy doing that she has no time to build her relationship with Christ.

Much like the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees in the New Testament time, we are told in Luke chapter 11, verse 43:

*Luke 11:43*

*Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.*

Matthew 23:5 says that all their works they do for to be seen of men. That is Martha. Unfortunately, that is so many of God's people. She loves to be seen by everybody as she is so cumbered about, as we saw last week, with much serving, but nothing on the inside. It is all on the outside. It is all show. Martha is just, as we say, going through the motions. She is a picture of so many of God's people today who never, never, never really fulfill God's plan in their life. They just never see God and understand God the way He wants to use them.

I am sure that most of you husbands last week, after you left church, on the way home or maybe in the privacy of your kitchen or your home someplace, your wife asked you if you thought she was a Mary or if she was a Martha. It is times like these where you learn to use and put together two fundamental biblical principles that will always keep you in good favor. If you messed it up last week, tomorrow is Valentine's Day. I am sure that many of the women in your life asked you, "Darling, am I a Martha or do you think I am a Mary?" It is like sometimes they will say to you, "Does this dress make me look fat?" Here is where you learn to use your Bible by applying two principles where Proverbs chapter 12, verse 22 says clearly:

*Proverbs 12:22*

*Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.*

But Psalm 46, verse 1 says:

*Psalms 46:1*

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

You try to do the best you can.

## II. The Pastor as a Spiritual Father

I want to begin today to look at her sister Mary, and this also will be an incredible study, helping you put your Bible together. I have been in the business for a long time, and I have dealt with many, many, many parents on many, many, many different situations. I really believe that most parents want the best for their kids. I really do. I know many times it does not turn out that way, and it does not work for your good. But I think that most parents want the best for their kid. They may make bad choices in doing it, but I think that the underlying motive is they want the best for them.

In my years, I have seen some horrific examples of parents, moms and dads. I am not kidding you. I have seen mothers who literally would abandon their kids for some guy, that they just would leave those kids in the most vulnerable time in their life to go be with some idiot someplace, and just cared nothing about their kids. Their whole world was around what they wanted, and the kids obviously will pay the price for it. I have seen dads destroy their own kids. I mean, I have seen them beat them. I have seen them verbally abuse them. I have seen them in those young kids' lives where they would tell them how stupid they are, how ugly they are, how they will never amount to anything. I have seen them abuse them verbally. I have seen them abuse them physically. I have even, God forbid, seen them molest their own children sexually. But that will be a very small number in the overall parenting that I have been involved with. You are always going to have dirtbag parents who care nothing about their kids that will destroy them. I think honestly, most parents really want the best for their children, even though many times it does not work out that way.

I have told you for years and years and years that the best child training book was not written by Dr. Seuss or Dr. Spock, but it was written by God. That is another message.

I say this because for many of you, I am more than just your pastor. If I could just speak to you heart to heart for a moment. To some of you, many of you, maybe most of you, I am more than just your pastor. You look at me like I looked at Mel Sabaka in my life, who helped me and brought me along after my dad died and I had nobody. He was my father in the Lord. To many of you, I am your spiritual father, like Paul and Timothy. Some of you, your dads were unsaved, and they were good guys, but they were unsaved and they did not care really anything spiritual for you. Your whole family maybe was in that situation. But God cared enough about you to bring you here. You found people here in this family that love you. To many of you, I make up that spiritual father. I must tell you, it is a privilege for me to be able to do that.

I know that some of you had parents, fathers who were maybe saved, but they are just idiots. I mean, they are absolutely just worthless as far as any spiritual insight. You had to get away from it to even get to the place where somebody could take you and teach you the Word of God. That was Timothy's case. It looks like his mom was saved, but his dad probably was not. I found myself in that situation where when I lost my dad, who was saved, and my mom remarried to a

nice guy, but I was left by myself, and God used somebody in my life to keep me. God knows where I would be today if it was not for that. So I count that as a real privilege.

I say that to tell you this: I am certainly not the best preacher you will ever hear, nor do I know the Bible as good as some people do. But I am going to tell you right now, nobody on this earth will work harder to make you all God wants you to be than I will. Everything I do, I do it for one reason: it is you. To make you better, to help develop you, to help you live by the principles of the Word of God, to understand them, but even more important, to apply them. To get you to see all that God has for you the way God sees it. I know in this world that is not going to happen, but that is still my goal. God knows that everybody is not going to get saved, but He died for them anyhow. My job for you is to try to make you better, to get you to the place where God can really use you, and for you not to waste your life.

I know I am old school. I was raised in a generation of preachers that you do not find today. They were hard, they were tough, but boy, I will tell you what, they loved the Book. I look at them as the old breed. I think to myself, those are the guys who laid the foundation in my life that I could lay that same foundation in your life, that you might be able to fulfill being called according to His purpose. Romans chapter 8, verse 28 and 29. My job is to give you the vision of who you really are and who you need to be, then help you get there.

### III. The World in Crisis: Survive, Thrive, and Passion

We are all living in some really tough times. Our country and this whole world is on fire and fast burning to the ground. There is not anywhere that you look in this world and in our country that there is not some unbelievable catastrophe going on. We sit here this morning and we are on the verge of World War III in the Ukraine. There will be guys in this city who will lose their jobs or be laid off next week because of a trucker strike up on the Canadian border. I am not getting into whether they are right or they are wrong. That is not my point. My point is we are in a mess in this country. It is in a terrible situation.

I was reading this last week about the Roman Empire, and the Roman Empire has always fascinated me in history. I was reading that in 64 A.D., this is still in the time of the Bible, that Rome burned for six days. Nero was the emperor during that period of time, and during those six days over 90 percent of the city of Rome was burnt to the ground. Thousands died. Tens of thousands were made homeless. As I read that story, it was sad that while Rome burned, Nero was playing his fiddle. In fact, the expression is that Nero fiddled while Rome burned. I do not know if they even had fiddles back then. What do you think, Donny? You think they did? I do not know. But I tell you this, the point is very well made because while Rome burned to the ground, he was enjoying. He was not even there. He was in his villa enjoying life, enjoying everything while the city that he was supposed to take care of was burning to the ground. He was enjoying everything and he was incapable of helping alleviate the suffering of his own people of what they were going through. I thought to myself, "Wow, history does repeat itself." We have so many issues today and nobody really cares. Nobody wants to investigate. Nobody wants to do anything. Everybody just wants to get what they want politically, and we pay the price for it.

I feel like this country is like the great ship in 1912, the Titanic. They were having church services here in 1912. Like, why the Titanic sucked? I am just kidding. The Titanic hit an iceberg, and the Titanic was a ship that sank in a couple of hours. I look at this country like we have rammed into an iceberg and we are sinking so fast by the stern, and what the captain of this ship and all the leaders of this ship are doing, they are rearranging the deck chairs for the next event, which by the way, will be held underwater. Nobody cares.

Many of God's people, I get it, I understand it. This is not a criticism. Many of God's people, I am telling you, they feel like it is just all they can do is to survive. People are scared. People are afraid. I am neither scared nor afraid, but God's people are today. Many of them are lost in a fog of confusion. We can all look back just two short years ago. Our life all changed. Our life changed drastically, not only in our families and in our city and in our state or in the country, but around the world. COVID-19 hit. It changed everything in the world. It changed everything in America.

It is amazing to me. It just further, it became a political issue for somebody's political gain, and all that it did was to divide a country farther that was already divided. It was amazing to me from a Christian standpoint. You see so many of God's people who I thought really had the Bible down. I thought that they really had a handle on the Word of God just by the way they talked, that any situation in life was going to be something that they could deal with. I must tell you, I was saddened. I was shocked and I was disappointed. So many of God's people, they basically changed religions. They went from Bible Christianity to covertism, a system by where Bible Christianity is built on the principles. Covertism is built on the science, which the Bible says is falsely so-called. Here we are two years later. Science is so confusing today that nobody even knows what they are talking about.

I get it. People want to survive. You want your families to survive. You want your kids to survive. You want your grandparents to survive. Everybody in the midst of what we are going through just wants to survive. I understand that, but I want you to be crystal clear on something that I am going to say to you. I am not interested in just helping you to survive. I want you in the midst of everything that is going on around us, not only to survive, I want us to thrive. I want us to keep going. I want you to keep growing. I want us to let God through all of this develop us. I want Him to be able to get the honor and glory out of whatever that we go through, whether it is what we have been going through, what is going on around us now, or what is coming in the future. I do not only just want to teach you how to survive and thrive, but I want God to through all of that to develop a passion in us. We need to be passionate about some things. When there is no passion involved, then it really does not make any difference. People will not come to church. They do not get involved in anything because there is no passion for it. We will quit reading our Bible because we lose the passion for it. A passion for His Word and to live and over above everything that comes our way. The only platform for that is that God will not only teach you to survive, but He will teach you to thrive. Through that, He will give you passion.

#### IV. The Passion of Mary

Driving someplace the other day, I am not a country western fan, but when your radio is broke, it only gets one station. You have to take what you get. Of all the country western songs that I do not care about, there is one that I really love. Bubba is out there. Donnie is back here. Marty Robbins, "El Paso." Remember that, Bubba? Donnie? You boys ought to learn that and sing it. That is a great song. He did that back in the 60s, I think, maybe late 50s. I do not know. When he came out with it, it went four and a half minutes. Now the average song only goes two minutes. Everybody said it will flop because it is way too long. It was the success of successes. To this day, anybody knows Marty Robbins' song "El Paso."

It was a story about a cowboy that found a Mexican gal named Katrina. "Out in the west Texas town of El Paso, I fell in love with a Mexican gal." That is how it went. He goes down there and he falls in love. She is swishing around, as they do with her. He falls in love with her. Well, another cowboy comes in. He likes Katrina. Marty's guy, he gets offended. So the guy drops his hand down to his gun and he outdraws the guy and shoots him and kills him over a bimbo. Happens all the time, man. Happens all the time.

I have listened to this song and I never really thought about it this way, but I was getting ready to preach this today: passion. I thought to myself, "Boy, this is it." So he gets on his horse, runs out of town, gets out, and they do not catch him. So he is out there all by himself, but his heart is back in El Paso. He cannot stop thinking about Katrina, his Mexican gal. The song goes on and he says, "Maybe tomorrow a bullet may find me. Tonight nothing is worse than this pain in my heart." So he goes back down to El Paso. He braved everything for this gal. Why? Because he had passion. He said, "Maybe tomorrow a bullet may find me, but tonight nothing is worse than this pain in my heart." So down he goes.

He is down there and he starts, and they are waiting for him. I must have heard the song. They are waiting for him. So he sees them and he says, "Riding and shooting, I cannot let them get me. I must get to Karina's back door." Then he comes down and he says, "I see the white puff of smoke from the rifle. I feel the bullet go deep in my chest." He is shooting. He must make it, falls off the horse, and he says, he looks up and there is Karina kissing his face. Then he ends the song like this: "One little kiss and Karina, goodbye." Now that is passion. That is passion. Here is a guy who got away, has that passion for this lady, that he risked that, goes back and dies.

I listened to that. I thought to myself, "You know what? If God's people could just get one ounce of that passion. If they could come in their life where they are willing to go through anything, to get to that door where they could fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ." I am telling you, ma'am, as God does His perfect work in you and me, yes, you will survive and you will thrive and you will develop passion. Then God will take you and me to the next level. Through all that, He will develop compassion, love for others. Four levels: you are to survive, but you are to thrive. You are to learn passion, but then God will teach you compassion. This is what our story in John chapter 11 is all about. It is about a woman with passion in the midst of other people who have no passion. It is an incredible thing.

Understanding that what we go through, our testimony of God's grace. In Romans chapter 14, verse 7 says:

*Romans 14:7*

*For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

Let us face it, in the midst of whatever we are going through, people are watching. Wherever you go, whatever you do, wherever you work, whoever you hang out with, if they know you are a Christian, they are watching. In the midst of any tragedy or trial, God will get the honor and the glory out of it all. We will all face and go through, just like Mary and Martha, some tough times. So through any tragedy or pandemic or crisis, we can be used of God to reach others.

It is a proven fact. I have witnessed this many times in my own ministry down through the last 50-some years. It is a true fact that when a disaster takes place, when the norm is in upheaval, when everything begins to go sideways and people's daily routines are fractured, busted, broken, there is always a tendency for them to look toward God and a great opportunity for evangelism. I go back to the Titanic in 1912. The Titanic was built during what we call the industrial age. She was the greatest ship that ever had been built. In fact, it was said that she was a ship that even God Himself could not sink. On her maiden voyage, I guess God took an interest in that. It showed us how the biggest, greatest ship that could ever be built could just be sunk by a big ice cube that God would probably put in His glass of iced tea up in heaven. Down she went.

You know what it did? 1,500 people died in the Titanic. I watched a documentary a couple of weeks ago named "The Aftermath of the Titanic," which focused on the ships that went out to recover the bodies. Incredible. 1,500 people. Never found most of them. 600 survived. I think they brought in about 500 or 600. The rest of them were never found. But you know what it did? It rocked this world so much that a great revival broke out. When man came up with something that he said God could not sink, and God sunk it, and 1,500 people lost their lives, back in that day, that was an incredible thing. A great revival broke out. Many, many people got saved.

## V. Mary's Act of Worship: The Supper and Anointing

Today we are going to look at Mary. My goal for all of you will be for you to be a Mary and not a Martha. To do this today, as I said already, we will need to jump into chapter 12 for a minute. Then next week we will be back because the two chapters go together. So we have to get in here. But let us read chapter 12 today, verses one through eight.

*John 12:1-8*

*Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.*

*There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.*

*Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

*Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,*

*Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?*

*This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.*

*Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.*

*For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.*

Father, we ask You to bless us today to help us to see and understand. These are really good people. These are my people, and I love each and every one of them, and I only want the best for them. I know that will not work out for all of them, but that is beside the point. I want them to be everything, to have everything, to see everything, to experience everything that You have for them. Help me today to have the passion and yet the compassion to lay out the Word of God to these dear folks, and we will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

There will be some added information here to our character cast from an inspirational standpoint. I want you to notice verse two. First of all, you are going to learn some things today. There is a supper here, and it is connected with a table. You should already know that that is a picture in the Bible of our fellowship with God around His Word. Then I want you to look at our three people built around the table of fellowship, building around the supper: Martha is serving, Lazarus is sitting, and Mary is worshipping. That is a great picture of God's people today. Some people actually serve God, some people do nothing and they are just sitting, and there are some that worship. I am telling you, you need to look deep inside yourself today. I cannot do that for you. I can just give you the truth of the Word of God, and hopefully you are somewhat in tune with the Holy Spirit of God that you can look down inside. You find yourself in all of this today.

Verse two, the table here, as I said, will represent a picture of our fellowship with Him in the Word of God. You will find that back in Revelation chapter 3, verse 20, that you have the church of the open door and the church of the closed door. You know all about that. But He says in Revelation 3:20 that if a church would open up the door that He would come in and sup with them, supper, fellowship.

*Revelation 3:20*

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

Of course, back in the Old Testament in Exodus chapter 25, you have the table of shewbread. That table of shewbread is a picture of God's table with the Word of God on it. The shewbread was made fresh every morning. There were 12 loaves of it, put one, two, three, four, five, six, one, two, three, four, five, six on a table, showing you that on the table of God's fellowship, there would be a book of bread. The bread of life has 66 books in it. See how it works?

In Psalms 23, verse 5 says:

*Psalms 23:5*

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

That is fellowship. What a great illustration of this, of our learning and our worship and learning of the Word of God. Remember Luke chapter 10, verse 39, a couple of weeks ago, Mary sat at His feet, worshiped Him and heard the Word of God.

*Luke 10:39*

*And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.*

I will take all that and boil it down for you for this: You will never learn the Word of God just sitting around that table. You will never learn the Word of God and get an end from God by out there busy doing things. If you are ever going to learn the Word of God, you are going to have to get it through worship. You are going to have to get Jesus sitting at the table, and you are not sitting at the table, but you are sitting at His feet and you are learning from Him, His feet at the table through worship.

What follows here, and this is John 4:24, that we worship God in spirit and truth. Our human spirit, His truth, the Word of God.

*John 4:24*

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

What follows here will be a picture of what my work, my relationship, my ministry should be based on: the anointing of His feet with precious ointment, which is very costly. This will open up even more studies to look at. What you are going to see today is another good example, how that when you get into one story of the Bible, it just keeps unfolding itself into different stories and different studies.

## VI. The Significance of Feet and Spiritual Aroma

Let me point out this to you, Bible students. She anoints His feet with a precious ointment. The Lord gets His feet anointed two times in the Gospels. The first one will be here, and then you will find the same exact account in Mark 14 and again in Matthew chapter 26 by Mary. The second place will be found in Luke chapter 7, verse 37, and the Bible says there it is by an unknown woman. You are taught by guys who really do not care much about the Bible or do not study the Bible very much that they try to make all these accounts the same. But they are not if you have the trained eye. You will notice that these two places where He gets His feet anointed will mark the beginning and the end of His public ministry.

In Luke chapter 7, verse 37, this will take place at the start of His public ministry. In John chapter 12 where we are at today, Matthew chapter 20, same one, in Mark chapter 14, same account, will take place at the end in the final weeks of His ministry. You will note in John 12:1 it is the fourth Passover, and it is right before His triumphal entering into Jerusalem. It is the week before He is crucified in John 12:13. So one represents the beginning when He started His ministry, and one represents the finalization of His ministry. Of course, this will be a great

picture of the first coming and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which in Luke chapter 4, verses 18 and 19, He is called the Lord's anointed, so they are anointing His feet.

*Luke 4:18-19*

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

The next thing you should know, here is another study unfolding here: feet in the Bible. Feet in the Bible will be an incredible study because there are two times in your Bible where somebody is told to take their shoes off their feet, that the ground they are standing on is holy. One is in Exodus chapter 3, verse 5, that will be Moses.

*Exodus 3:5*

*And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

The other one is in Joshua chapter 5, that will be Joshua.

*Joshua 5:15*

*And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.*

There is a reason why you have those two places. One is at Mount Sinai, the other one is at the Mount of Olives. What you have by His feet, "take your shoes off because the ground you are standing on is holy," will be a picture of the route of the second coming of Christ, which starts at Sinai and then goes down to King's Highway up through Paran and all those places and winds up at the Mount of Olives on the other side of Jordan.

You will find in Song of Solomon chapter 7, verse 1 where it says:

*Song of Solomon 7:1*

*How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman.*

Talking about the Lord's feet. Isaiah 52, verse 7 says:

*Isaiah 52:7*

*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*

That is Christ's feet. You will find it again in Nahum chapter 1, verse 15.

*Nahum 1:15*

*Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.*

You will find it in Romans chapter 10, verse 15.

*Romans 10:15*

*And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

All in all, it is a great study of what His feet represents, of why she is anointing His feet and why those feet are anointed twice. Of course, for you and for me in Ephesians chapter 6, verse 15, once you get saved, we are to have our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, all based on His feet. Incredible study. Incredible study.

Remember, Martha is serving, Lazarus is sitting, and in verse 3, our defining verse on Mary and her picture of our worship at His feet. So let us read verse 3 of chapter 12.

*John 12:3*

*Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.*

What you have here is a great illustration for us as we try to build our own relationship with Christ. This will be the will of God that we talked about last week. Here comes another study. A key part of all this will be the word "odor" of the ointment and what it gives off. In the Bible, you are going to find that places that God will be associated with will always be connected to a pleasant smell or an odor.

In the Old Testament, when they made the Old Testament sacrifices, because I know the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin, but it was a temporary thing that God required. The Bible says in Genesis chapter 8, verse 21, that when they burnt that altar, that sacrifice of something innocent dying for something guilty, when that flesh burned, the Bible says that God smelled that savor of that burning innocent flesh, and He was appeased in His wrath toward that person.

*Genesis 8:21*

*And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.*

You find it in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians chapter 2, verses 14 through 16, where he says this:

*2 Corinthians 2:14-16*

*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*

*For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:  
To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life.  
And who is sufficient for these things?*

You know what he is saying? He is saying when Christ died on the cross, He was the fulfillment of those Old Testament sacrifices. The Bible says that when Christ died on the cross, God smelled the savor of His Son dying on that cross from the third to the ninth hour, paying the sin debt. That sacrifice appeased God's wrath toward me and you. Right now, when we speak Christ, when we tell somebody the story of Christ, it reminds God of that sweet savor in the nostrils of God of His Son dying on the cross, and it pleases God. It does not matter whether the person gets saved or the person rejects Christ. That is not the point, though God wants everybody to be saved.

You want to triumph in all things in your Christian life? You want to have the triumph in all things? Then simply understand this: when you witness about Christ, when I preach the story of Christ, when you tell the story of Christ, no matter what the person does, God is pleased because it brings back the remembrance of the obedience of His Son, and it is a sweet savor in the nostrils of God. The results are unimportant. I mean, they are important, but they are unimportant. I mean, I want to see people get saved and I want to see people trust Christ, but at the end of the day, that is on you, man. I pray for you. I would do anything to help you. But my life always triumphs in everything because I want to please God. When I tell somebody the story of Christ, it is a sweet savor in the nostrils of God.

Maybe I ought to pray so some of you can get out of here. In the Song of Solomon, that whole book, we have a picture of our relationship with Christ, do we not? Have you ever looked at what the book of Solomon was all about? It is about pleasant smells. It is about trees. It is about fruit. It is about spikenard. It is about ointments that give off a pleasant aroma. He talks about cedar trees. Cedar is one of the most pleasant aromas that you will ever smell. It is incredible. We like to put our clothes, back in my day, probably not today, every family had a cedar chest. My sister Sharon has got ours. Every time as a kid I opened that up, Mom would put things in there, you could smell the aroma of cedar in it. The Bible talks about roses. It talks about lilies. It talks about apple trees. Pomegranates. It talks about a garden. It talks about camphor, spikenard, pleasant fruit, garden of spices, sweet-smelling myrrh. In Psalm 45, verse 8 it says:

*Psalms 45:8*

*All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.*

That is what our relationship with Christ really should be: a sweet-smelling savor to God. A garden.

I know we know the story of Adam and Eve and all of that stuff, and that happened what, four, five, six thousand years ago, and it is something a distant past that we do not ever relate to us. But did you ever see the spiritual side of that? God has fellowship with Adam and Eve in a garden in a physical sense. That garden was pleasant. What it must have smelled like. I have

been to Hawaii years ago, and at night we would go out on a ship to have dinner someplace, and you could actually smell the fragrance coming off the plants and the flowers back on the shore with that nice warm tropical breeze. That garden must have been an incredible place. There was no curse yet. There was not anything to disrupt the smell that God had put in that beautiful garden. It was just Adam and Eve walking hand in hand through that garden having fellowship with God and the beautiful smell of Eden, the garden of God.

Spiritually, that is what God wants with us today. We ought to live in the Garden of Eden spiritually. We ought to have that relationship with Christ that is the most beautiful aroma that you could ever have, that God is pleasantly pleased by what we do and what we say. That we walk in fellowship just like Adam and Eve did in the cool of the day. Except the difference is we do not hide from Him. Let us face it, most of our walk with God and our fragrance is like going down to the city dump. There is no sweet smell of the fragrance of our relationship with God. My personal Garden of Eden. Me and Him.

One time years and years ago, we were in South Africa, a group of us, and we were preaching down there doing discipleship with the churches. One of the greatest experiences of my life is they took us way into the jungle, and they had a camp there that was completely surrounded, that you were locked in at night. You could not get out, nothing could get in. It had big high fences that you could see through, but it was like a place with all kinds of luxuries. Beautiful little places to sleep, a nice restaurant, all kinds of nice things right in the middle of the African jungle. At night, when all the lights went on, everybody went to bed, you could hear all around you the wild animals of the jungle. You could hear the lions, you could hear the elephants, you could hear the hyenas. You could hear all of the animals out there that if you were out there at night, they would rip you apart. But you were safe within the compound, and the fragrance, the flowers, the fruit. I have often thought to myself since that time, that is exactly what my relationship with God should be. I am in this beautiful compound, protected and safe, but out there in that world is everything growling that wants to destroy me. You know what God's people have done? They have opened the gate. They said, "Hey, I am not worried about it. I will go out there in the jungle. I am not afraid." Some lion over there picking his teeth with a toothpick. My garden of God, me and Him. God wants that for all of us. He wants us to have that kind of relationship where it is just like Adam and Eve in the garden, except we do not hide from Him. We do not run from Him. I never want God to come down in fellowship and say to me what He said to Adam, "Adam, where art thou?" I want to be standing there waiting for Him.

## VII. The Three Aspects of Mary's Worship

Mary will do three things that will define our relationship and our worship with God. Verse 3 says the first thing she does, this is not one of the three, is she takes a pound of ointment of spikenard, and then it says it was very costly. Then she does three things, and this is what I want to talk about just for a few minutes here.

- 1.) She anoints His feet.
- 2.) She wipes His feet with her own hair.
- 3.) The Bible says the odor of that filled the house.

Ready? Here we go. Remember God's will versus God's plan. Let us talk about the precious ointment first. The Bible makes a point here to tell us that it is very costly, and you may miss that, not think much about that, but I am going to tell you right now that that is a great picture that the ministry and service for God and worship of God, it is going to cost us something. There is a price to be paid. If you are going to decide, I will tell you right up front, if you are going to decide that you are going to have this relationship, you are going to build this garden, and you are going to be a sweet savor to the nostrils of God, and you are going to fulfill the calling and the purpose and the worship that God has called you, it is going to cost you something. You know why it is going to cost you something? Because it cost Him something to give it to you. We are the kind of Christians that do not care that it cost Him everything that it did for Him to give us what we have. We are just willing to not give Him anything and not count the cost of what it is going to take. God's people will never count the cost of serving God. This is a price that has to be paid.

Luke chapter 14, verses 25 through 30 tells us the story of a man who started to build a tower.

*Luke 14:25-30*

*And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,*

*If any man come to me, and hate not rather his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

*And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?*

*Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him,*

*Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.*

That tower is another study in the Bible, goes all the way back through the book of Psalms. He started to build a tower and he laid the foundation for that tower, but he never finished it. You know why? Because he got seeing what it was really going to cost to finish it, he never finished the tower. That tower is a picture of your relationship with Christ. Many of God's people, you laid the foundation, you got saved. 1 Corinthians chapter 3. But when you started to build it, it just cost you too much, did it not? It always amazes me how God's people will spend tens of thousands of dollars on what they want, but never pay a price for what He wants.

Building something, whether it be a house, a room addition, a deck, anything you decide to do in your physical world. Your wife says, "We need to put on a deck." Your wife says, "We need a new room, we need a new bathroom, we need this, we need that, we need windows, we need this, we need that, we need a new roof, we need new gutters." Yes, those are all the things that I had to do in the last two years. Not saying it did not need to be done. When you know this, everything we are going to do in our house, around our house, you can count on three things: it will take longer than you thought it would, it is going to be harder than you anticipated, and it is going to

cost you more than you thought. The hidden cost of serving Him. God's people are just willing to pay it. You see, you do not see the cost when you get saved, and that is a shame. When you get disciplined, which you should be disciplined to get taught in the Bible, then you realize the price that He was paid for you. Then you understand the price that you need to pay for Him. But the problem is most of God's people never get past that foundation stage. They want to spend every dime they have on new cars, new this, new that, new houses, do this, do that, new boat, new train, new plane, new jet, everything you want, and never flinch a muscle about what they pay for what they want. But we will never consider one time to pay anything for what He wants. That is God's people today. That is us.

So you pay the price, but the price will always have to be paid as you sit at His feet because that is the best place to pay it. At the end of the day, Revelation chapter 4, verse 10 says when the Lord comes back, everything that we have ever gathered, we put at His feet anyhow.

*Revelation 4:10*

*The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

I have always reasoned that this way: I do not have a problem with being at His feet and putting it at His feet now because that is where it is all going to go. Right now, for me, just looking at it from the easy way, I will not have to haul it over there. So in understanding worship, in understanding God's will versus God's plan, her first act of worship will be God-ward. Worshiping Him in spirit and truth by anointing His feet, paying the price, not caring who is watching, not caring who is looking, focused on His feet, spending the money to put on His feet.

The next thing she does after putting the ointment on His feet, she uses her own hair to wipe His feet. She could have got a towel. She could have got anything. She used her own hair. I must tell you right now, if you were there, this had to create quite a mess. You know that God's people really do not want to get into that kind of mess with God. They want to keep it cleaner than that. Most of God's people, if they even got to the point where they were going to anoint His feet, they would have a stack of towels about 12 inches high, hand sanitizer, a basin of water, clean up the mess. Not Mary. She just sat at His feet and she took that. She broke it all over His feet and then she took her hair and she wiped His feet with her hair. You see, the first thing she did in her act of worship was God-ward. The second aspect of her worship was inward. She got involved personally. She used her hair.

A couple of things I want to say about that, but the first thing I want to say is this: she just used what she had in her worship to Him. It is like Moses when he was back there before Pharaoh, and Pharaoh, he was scared of Pharaoh, and he said to the Lord, "He is not going to listen to me. I am scared to death. He is not going to." And God says, "I want you to be a great deliverer." He says, "A great deliverer?" He says, "How am I going to do that?" And Moses, God said, "Moses, what do you have in your hand?" He says, "Well, I have a stick. I am a shepherd." And He said, "Well, then I will just use that." That was the same stick that turned to snakes. That was the same staff that smoked the water to blood. That was the same staff that he dipped into the Red Sea and it split. You know what you learn from that and learn from here? Your worship with God does

not take a college education. Your worship with God does not take a seminary education. Your worship for God takes nothing more than your spirit and His truth, and you just using what you have in your hand today. She just uses what she has to sit and learn the Word.

She used her hair. Here we go. Here is another great study. 1 Corinthians chapter 11, the church at Corinth are having a problem with the women, and you find there that in that story, without getting into it, that the Bible tells us that the glory of a woman is her hair, and it is a picture of her submissiveness to God. So here what we have is Mary, picturing you and me, using her own hair, a picture of her submissiveness to her Lord, getting involved and wiping His feet with her hair. She went God-ward, then it went inward.

Here we go again, back in Song of Solomon. You have Christ describing the bride and then the bride describing Christ. In chapter 5, verse 12, it says that Christ has the eyes of a dove. In chapter 1, verse 15, it says that the church is to have the eyes of a dove. Most people miss the connection, but the connection is very clear. His eyes are the eyes of the dove. My eyes, your eyes, are the eyes of the dove. I should just simply say we ought to see things through His eyes. But chapter 4, Song of Solomon, verse 1 says:

*Song of Solomon 4:1*

*Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead.*

Talking about the church, me and you, in our relationship with Christ. "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Mount Gilead." That does not look like much to anybody, but you know what that tells me? That tells me that you and I, typified by Mary, we ought to see what He sees through the submissiveness of our willingness to give and submit ourselves to God through our locks, a picture of our submissiveness to the Lord. Then the goats, a sacrificial animal from Mount Gilead. You have to study Mount Gilead to see why all those things are in here.

I had a friend of mine one time that was a pastor. We worked together for a while, and he took this passage out of here where it talks about she has teeth like whatever and hair like goats, and he did a composite. He was kind of an artist, and he came up with this monstrosity of this woman who had teeth like whatever, head like goats, and eyes like what. It was grotesque, like Freddy Krueger on a bad night. He was really proud of that, and I always thought to myself, that is defining him. That guy could not have gotten the Bible and saw what I just gave you of his life dependent on it. All he could see about the woman in Song of Solomon was something for a comic strip. That is the way most of God's people are. There is no garden of God in our lives. There is no real fellowship. There is no, in our worship, we do not. We take the Word and basically we can spell it, but there is no God-ward. We do not understand what that means. You just got an example what she did God-ward and then she took it inward. It is no wonder we have the problems we have. It is no wonder our lives are a mess, our marriage is a mess, our kids are a mess. It is no wonder that we are struggling like we are struggling. We are a bunch of God's people who got saved and we built the foundation, but we gave up the cost. It cost too much. Seeing what God sees, doves' eyes, through making Christ Lord of our lives, through our

submissiveness, hair, and then the goats, a sacrificial animal from Mount Gilead. You have to study Mount Gilead to see why all those things are in here. This is God's will in action. There are two parts to God's will, which is the same for all of us: it is God-ward and then it is inward.

## VIII. The Outward Impact and Judas's Objection

Then the third thing that she does. Note now what she did God-ward and inward, and now it goes outward, and this will be God's plan. The Bible says in verse 3 that when she went God-ward and inward, the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Because of one little thing that she did of going God-ward and inward, now everybody smells it. Let me ask you a question. You have to answer this in your own heart. What do you smell like spiritually to other people?

Our flesh naturally gives off at a very short time a bad odor. It is because of bacteria. It is a thing where it gives off a bad smell. We all try to mask that. I have always, I walk through stores while my kids are shopping, they are doing something, and I have always just scanned the ladies' perfume thing. Man, they have everything over there, and it is all suggestive. I am not saying in a bad way, but it is suggestive. You have "Night Mist," "Obsession," "Total Passion." My favorite was "Holstein," "Midnight Under a Shanghai Wharf." We come up with all these names that suggest love, passion, and with the idea, if he smells my perfume, he is going to be obsessed with me. It is going to be like the night mist. It is going to be like the thing where two men and a woman on a mountaintop with flowers all around, and he sees her, she sees him, and they start leaping toward each other and meet in the middle, but they did not look down and there is a cliff and they both fall down and die. The same way we like to have their men's side. What do you have on? "I am a Brute." "Old Spice." "British Sterling." It makes it sound like you are really somebody. We do that because our flesh stinks, and we try to make it not stink. It is a thing where you can mask it all you want. I have never understood this. Please, this is just an observation: when a woman hits 80, they all buy their perfume at the same place. They do. It is like they get it sent from the government. It is one of those things.

Back in Exodus chapter 30, verses 35 and 37. This is the kingdom of heaven, and it is a literal thing, and they are dealing with a literal relationship. They are told there to make a special perfume to put on when they go in and minister before God. It was not "Night Mist" or "Fragrance of Paris" or whatever. It was designed by God, and every one of those ingredients is a picture of something, all to mask a bad smell.

*Exodus 30:35*

*And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy:*

*Exodus 30:37*

*And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.*

What do we do with our flesh? We wash every day. Hopefully you shower, bathe, or whatever, get soap, water, and you wash your body. You keep the bacteria down. That is a good thing. We

have all sat on planes next to people who never knew that. But you have to wash your spiritual spirit too. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 26 is by the washing of water by the Word.

*Ephesians 5:26*

*That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,*

You have to keep your spirit clean. I will tell you something, you cannot mask a bad spiritual garbage dump smell in a Christian's life.

Back in Genesis chapter 27, another great study. Jacob is deceiving his father. He is deceiving the father to get the blessing. That is Martha in action back in the Old Testament. He is doing something to get something spiritual that if he had just been patient and waited on God, he would have got it anyhow. But he is deceiving his father and getting the blessing. So what does he do? He dresses up like his brother Esau, and then he comes to his father, and he does three things to deceive him. When you learn these three things, you see these same three things in Christians' lives today to deceive everybody. He comes over there, and the old man is kind of feeble and blind, and he is trying to deceive him, and he leans his voice, and he talks to him, and he touches him, and he says confused, "Well, you have the voice, you have the hands of Esau, but you have the voice of Jacob." Then he got a little closer and he says, "Well, you sound like Jacob, but you smell like Esau." He put on one of his garments.

I look at that and I think to myself, there are three things that you can tell where somebody is at with the Lord by that thing right there.

- 1.) The voice: you listen to what they say.
- 2.) The hands: you watch what they do.
- 3.) The smell: you take a good whiff. Does what they are doing really smell like it is of God?

Jacob is a Martha. This will be God's plan in action. You become something for Him, God's will, and then you take it outward, and that is God's plan. You give off a pleasant aroma, and people will want it too. Or you stink to the high heavens, as the saying is, and that will be the third heaven.

When you look at this, you see that that is what John chapter 4, verse 24 is talking about. Real biblical worship, learning God's Word, will develop you into three areas.

- 1.) It will be God-ward, at His feet, paying a costly price to be there, being still, being quiet, and just waiting on the Lord.
- 2.) The second aspect of your worship, it will go inward, and you will get involved to the point where you both now smell alike. You cannot tell one smell from the other, fulfilling God's will for your life.
- 3.) Then it goes outward. That is God's plan for your life.

Your relationship with God will impact everybody in using the words here, "in the house." It always starts in your home, in your own house, with the wife and the husband, and then the kids, and then anybody you come into contact with. There have been many, many times, and I keep my mouth shut because it is none of my business, there have been many, many times I would like

to ask so many of God's people that I have to deal with or see, "Can you actually smell what you are trying to sell?" I would like to say spiritually speaking, you need to go sniff your armpits. Guys are always doing that.

Not everybody was happy about this. I am happy about it. Hopefully you are, but in our story, not everybody was, and it is like today too, some things never change. Then saith one of His disciples, you might guess it was Judas, Simon's son, which should betray Him. "Why was not this ointment sold for 300 pence and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and held the bag and bare what was put therein. Then said Jesus, "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this." You see there it is again, verse 5, "Why was not this ointment sold for 300 pence and given to the poor?" That is Martha, that is doing. Verse 7, "Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this." That is Mary. "For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."

Judas is not happy. He looks at her sitting at the feet and worshiping as a waste of time and money. Notice I told you last week that both Martha and Judas both refer to Christ as "Master." To him, it is just a real mess of ointment, something that somebody else is going to have to clean up, something that has ruined the smell of probably his supper, and it is a thing where it just fills the house. You want to mark this down: people who are in Martha and Judas's category today as Christians will always be against those in Mary's category. They, just like Martha, can never see the big picture of what God is doing, and the smell gives them away. Sometimes it is the smell of the world, sometimes it is the smell of pride, sometimes it is the smell of attacking other Christians, sometimes it is the smell of gluttony, sometimes it is the smell of indifference, sometimes it is the smell of jealousy. The smell of the world will always give them away.

## IX. The Cost of Devotion and Finishing the Temple

Quickly, the last thing I want to say is this: look at verse 5. This costs 300 pence. Years ago, I was preaching in a Bible conference with a guy by the name of Dan Schmidt. He is Chris Schmidt's brother. Dan was a very good preacher. I always liked to listen to Dan, as Chris is a very good preacher, and I always liked to listen to Dan. We were someplace in a Bible conference together, and it was his night to preach, and he preached on Mary and Martha. I have never forgotten what he said, and I have used it for years and years and years, and I have never really told him how much I got out of that, how much I appreciated it, but I have never forgotten it. He really came down to the end of his thing talking about Mary and what she had done with the very costly box of ointment. He said it has been said that this cost was worth 300 pence, and back in the day, 300 pence was actually a year's wages for somebody. Then he said this: she spent a year of her wages to make Him smell good for just a moment of time. I thought to myself, what an incredible concept. She took a year of her labors to make Him smell good for a moment of time.

Her unlimited spending. What will be the limit of our spiritual budget? When do we say enough is enough? When do we say the cost is too great? When do we say, "I need what I need more than God needs what He needs?" When will the priorities even themselves out? How much of a building cost will we be willing to pay? Will we have unlimited spending and give God whatever

He wants, or be a cheapskate that comes after what we want? How much of the building cost are we willing to absorb for the building? We laid the foundation. We are in the process of building a tower, your own spiritual walk with God. How much cost are you willing to put into it? You laid the foundation. Now it is time to finish the temple.

Back in Ezra and Nehemiah, when they go back, they rebuild Jerusalem. They had the same problem back in Ezra and Nehemiah. They are all fired up and excited about rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, but there it was, when you get to some of the other books, the minor prophets, right now after 14 years, they still have not finished it. They are actually taking all the materials that were for God's building and they are building their own homes with it. That is God's people. We laid a foundation, but we just do not want to count the cost to finish the building.

Last Thursday night, somebody asked a question out of Exodus, and it was a very good question about the offerings and the colors that they were bringing to build that original tabernacle. I showed them and showed you that it was all based on somebody that was giving basically out of the willingness of their heart. We have to come to the place, if you are ever going to get where you want to be, and my goal for all of you is to be a Mary, you are going to have to come to the place in your life where you are willing out of the willingness of your heart, not only the foundation, but to put aside the cost and pay whatever it has to pay to get that temple finished because that is what it is going to take. I can give you the building blocks. I can give you the principles. I can give you the books. I can stand up here on Sunday morning, Thursday night Bible Institute, and I can give you all the building blocks, the principles, and all those things. The thing that I cannot give you is a desire to build. That has to be with you, based on your worship: God-ward, inward, and outward.

Next week, if you have somebody who is not saved, next week will be the week to bring them. Next week is going to be one of the most unique, incredible, fantastic lessons on salvation that you have never heard, right out of John chapter 11. It is an incredible thing. If you are here today and you are not saved, you can either see me now and we will show you how to get saved. But if you are here next week, you will have the opportunity to understand in an incredible way why you need to be saved. Let us pray. Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. Thank You.