

Memorable Offerings in the Bible

Can you think of someone whose offering is mentioned in the Bible? The most famous would probably be the widow who gave just a mite. Her gift proportionately was greater than all the gifts given. Jesus used her offering to highlight how we should give and that it is not simply the amount that matters but what your gift represents. We don't know the widow's name but the widow's mite is known by even those that don't follow Christ.

This week I thought about another offering that is seldom talked about or even seen as an offering. It occurs just days before Jesus is crucified. Jesus was eating at the house of Simon the leper. Martha the sister of Lazarus was serving dinner when Mary her sister came and took an expensive oil and poured it upon Jesus head. If you know the story some there criticized that act as a waste of money. Jesus however hushed them saying Mary, "has done a good work for me." He said, "She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial." He then went on to say that wherever the Gospel is preached her gift would be remembered as a memorial to her.

Here are a few things of interest about Mary's gift and the spirit behind it...

- **She gave to Jesus the best of what she had.**
- **She did what she did out of love which is why the cost of the gift did not matter.**
- **Jesus says of her, "She has done what she could."**

Jesus knew what the others did not. Mary's anointing was for his soon to come burial. Days later Jesus would be crucified for our sins and then raised from the dead, our celebration today.

Thinking this week about the cross, the resurrection and this story reminded me of that old hymn by Isaac Watts entitled, "**When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.**" The words say this,

When I survey the wondrous cross On which the Prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ my God! All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to His blood.

See from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down! Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.

To me these are fitting words as we come to the time of our offering. Your gifts allow us to spread the Good News of Jesus to a world that is in need. Today, will your gift reflect the spirit of Mary's? Will you do what you can despite the cost? Doesn't He deserve our soul, our life our all? Let's give today in the spirit of Mary!