

A LIFE OF TRUE CONSECRATION

TEXT: *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 odor of the ointment.*

Love makes so-called 'economizing' and 'penny-pinching' look like treason. Love is ever outgoing and overflowing all banks of human self-restraint.

The scene of this Scripture is Simon's house. He was thought to be the father of Judas. Into the room comes Mary, weeping.



She falls at the feet of her beloved Master. She breaks a box of ointment over Him and upon His feet. Then, wiping Jesus' feet with her hair, in deepest love, she thus unintentionally shares in His Anointing.

Humility always shares the anointing with Jesus. She not only laid her heart at Jesus' feet, but her all. This is the most wonderful picture in the Bible of true worship and self-forgetfulness.

True consecration has an overwhelming desire to express love and devotion to our Lord. Love does not stop to think, but just acts. This is what sweetens the earth. There is only one thing that glorifies humanity. It is love — love of a mother, a bridegroom, a bride, a patriot's love for his country, and best of all, Christian love.

There is no substitute for love. This is what Jesus' heart responds to more than anything else.

Luke 10:42: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Love, unexpressed, will either die or will canker in the heart. Real love for Jesus will express itself in demonstrating faith in Him through worship. This is love in its deepest form. Nothing was too good for Jesus. That is why Mary gives her best, her all, her most precious and priceless possession, breaking it, so none other could share this love. It is for Jesus alone. When you understand Who He is and what He came to do and what He did do on the Cross, then no sacrifice can be too

great to make for Him.

We do not bring gifts to Christ because He is poor, but because He is rich. The Queen of Sheba brought her gifts to Solomon, not because he was poor, but because he was rich. When love declines in the church, the spirit of giving dies away. Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, and others, have raised monuments to perpetuate their memories. Real Christians give to make the Name of Christ the everlasting monument of blessing and salvation to this lost and dying world.

God measures our love by our sacrifices. Mount Moriah and Calvary are the golden standards. David cried: **“Shall I give to God that which cost me nothing?”** The largest gift Jesus ever acknowledged was one farthing from a poor widow, for she had given all her living.

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How much are you sacrificing for Him Who died and gave His ALL for you? It has been said, and must be true, that if the Christian women of the church would give their jewelry for the cause of missions, the missionary work would be doubled in one year. I cannot understand why more women will not sacrifice a few luxuries for Christ, with all that Christ has done for the womanhood of Christendom.

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True consecration will be misunderstood by most church members. Judas began to talk about waste. Men are still crying about waste. But there is no talk about waste when it comes to overstuffing their bodies with unnecessary food. There is nothing said of about the waste of buying smokes, candy, gum, entertainments, amusements, and pleasures. This kind of talk is conclusive proof that when one is in a backsliden condition, he speaks under the of guise or pretense of being concerned about ‘relief for the poor’.

A hypocrite, sniffing rich odors, will break into the spirit of true worship with a dash of cold water, or even muddy water.

A suffering and dying world is waiting for a demonstration of true Christians to show to them the love of Christ. Give the world your consecration now. If you wait, it will be too late. Your gift will save someone today. They may be lost tomorrow.

This offering of Mary, Jesus said, will be told as a memorial of her wherever the Gospel is preached throughout the world. That is the appraisal Jesus places on what anyone gives to Him.

A child offered her teacher a handful of weeds and grass, wilted, and said: "Here is a bouquet for you". The teacher saw the love in the child's eyes and the joy in giving this to her. The thoughtfulness of the gift, though poor, warmed her heart with new courage for the day.

If love does not carry us beyond ourselves, then it is not love. If love is always discreet, wise, sensible and calculating, never carried beyond the normal line of duty, then it is mere affection, or a warm feeling. Ask yourself, "Have I ever been carried away to do something for the Lord Jesus, not because it was useful, but just because I love Him"?

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Our abandonment to God is of more value than any personal gifts we might bring, even personal claims of holiness. Holiness often focuses the eye upon our own wholeness before Him, and not on our love for Him.

"She hath done what she could", is the Master's commendation as recorded in **Mark 14:8**. It is not love when it stops to scale the cost of its giving, and to make its offering the least possible expense to the giver. The **Old Self** goes through the world, living for, and getting for self. Saving for self, spending only on self, is self's creed. He gives nothing that costs. He looks for the cheapest gift that looks big and expensive at Christmas and birthdays. This is nothing short of counterfeit love. Real love looks for a way of sacrifice, for Love forgets self.



The Judas spirit can reckon the value in dollars and cents of 300 pennies worth, to the cent, for the ointment Mary poured out. People who care little for the poor can plead their cause loudly when it comes to hindering anyone from giving to the cause of Christ. They weigh in eloquently for the needs of "care" packages, and have no Christ in their hearts, and by so doing they can keep a few dollars from coming into the Church of Jesus Christ.

When Livingstone died on his knees in an African hut, his last breath was praying for the salvation of the darkened people. For them, he had given his life. What did the natives do? They reverently carried his body on their shoulders 1,000 miles through forests and swamps to the sea coast, that he might rest at home in England. Would it not have been as well to bury his body in the forest of Ilala? They could have used their strength and resources for other tasks. "Not so!" thought the black men who loved him.

Mary's call to service was motivated by a consecration that knew no sacrifice too great to make for Jesus. It came from a joyful abandon of a heart that loves.

If you would see service at its best, you must have the truest and purest motives. We preach about action, urge action, and point to the need of this hour for a new Church and Sunday School building. We might organize, plan movements which often do not move, and try so hard to awaken a response to the need of the Church. The question is, "will it come in?" The answer is, "Yes, when love cannot be reduced down to miserly coppers, or when nickels aren't squeezed until the Indian rides the buffalo".

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We must get back to the heart of the early church. I see a woman in Bethany sitting at the feet of Jesus, hearing the Words He speaks. Her soul is stirred, filled with love for Him for saving her lost soul. In the darkness of the great trial of Jesus' life, as He is nearing the Cross and death, she proves love's power.



It is enough for Martha to serve out of the spirit of the kitchen, but Mary will sit at Jesus' feet. It is enough that Simon and Judas have pinch-penny religion, but she will give service to Jesus through love with the alabaster box of precious ointment. And as though even that did not satisfy the deepest feelings of her heart, she weeps at His Feet and even washes them with her tears, wiping them with the hairs on her head. You need not bring any exhortation to Mary to do things. She is quite above exhortation. She does things until stupid men complain and say, "*Why this waste?*" This kind of service of giving is nourished and nurtured in close fellowship with Jesus, and bursts forth unbidden

in the life that knows Him in His fullness.

I think I shall stop preaching so much on sacrifice and giving, or doing for Christ. I will start preaching more on fellowship and consecration to Christ. Take time to be Holy. Get filled with love for Jesus. Then, let the inflow of His love so fill you that you overflow in streams of mercy, kindness, and gladness that comes automatically and has no need of prompting.

As Judas stood before one of the finest scenes of personal love for Christ, he saw nothing in Mary's joyous giving but disgusting fanaticism. In Heaven, such fanatics will shine as the stars forever and ever.

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This same Judas later sold Jesus for a lousy 30 pieces of silver. Now, in Hell, he weeps and gnashes his teeth in torment forever. Besides, he never got to enjoy that money, but came back to the priests and cast it down at their feet. He was condemned severely, even with a seared conscience. Think of that! Thus, he showed the greatness of his remorse.

There is a valuable lesson here for each of us in True Consecration. **If we are not sold out to Jesus in 100% consecration, sooner or later we will sell Him out for a mere song, a dance, a little froth of worldly pleasure, or worldly gain.** These are but sterile things to try to build upon for eternity.

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