

JESUS BEFORE THE PEOPLE A FAMILY WHO LOVED THE LORD (JOHN 12:1-11)

OPEN: It's encouraging to see a family that loves the Lord and serves the Lord.

- ✓ After raising Lazarus from the dead, the Pharisees and leading priest conspire together to put a stop to Jesus...they began to plot His death.
- ✓ Jesus leaves Jerusalem for Ephraim (an out of the way village, on the edge of the Judean desert, approximately 15 miles north of Jerusalem).
- ✓ It's 6 days before Passover, things are about to get critical...our passage today provides a little peace before the storm.
- ✓ There is a shift in ministry emphasis. Jesus' focus is on His closest followers (chapter 13-17). Raising Lazarus from the dead is His last miracle until His own resurrection.
- ✓ Jesus is not out evangelizing but He is preparing the 12 for His departure.
- ✓ We pick up our reading in John 12, Jesus is back in Bethany (2 miles outside of Jerusalem).

Text: John 12:1-11

- This family is no stranger to us...two sisters and a brother.
 - ✓ **Matthew 18:20 (NKJV)** – For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.
 - ✓ Every church needs a Martha, Lazarus and a Mary.

1) Martha the worker. *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

- ✓ Apron on, sleeves rolled up...she does her magic (serving) in the kitchen.
- ✓ She loved to cook...when we first meet her (Luke 10:38-42) that is what she was doing.
 - Now she cooked without complaining or criticizing her sister.
- ❖ Often when we have a passion for something (homeless ministry, standing against abortion, loving on our widows, helping a children's home) we feel everyone should serve in this area and we can become critical of those who don't.
- ❖ Doing nothing for Jesus is not an option, but choose our passion (ministry) and give yourself wholeheartedly to it.
 - ✓ **1 Peter 4:10-11 (NLT) - ¹⁰ God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. ¹¹ Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.**

? Do you have a serving gift; speaking gift? Are you using it to honor and glorify God?

2) Lazarus the witness. *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

- ✓ We expect that Lazarus had lived in Bethany all his life. As far as we know, he had been a law abiding moral, decent, synagogue attending man.
- ✓ Prior to his "graveyard" miracle no one had ever gone out of their way to visit him...talk with him
- ✓ Today, he would be a sought-after guest on a talk show... "come meet the man that died, went to Heaven and returned."

- ✓ What made the difference? He had experienced the power of resurrection.
- ❖ God's Son gives life to spiritually dead people. A transformed life becomes a witness to a world trapped in sin.
 - People came from all over to see this miracle (He was living proof that Jesus was the Son of God).
 - ✓ The religious authorities didn't know what to do with Lazarus.
 - Jesus took a dead man and gave him life.
 - The religious leaders wanted to take a live man and put him to death.

3) Mary the **worshipper**. *(Pro Presenter Slide Bulletin Outline)*

- ✓ Once again, we see Mary at the feet of Jesus (Luke 10:39, John 11:32 and here – John 12:3).
- ✓ She expressed her love for the Lord by giving an expensive gift.
- ✓ Pure nard – oil extracted from the root of a plant grown in India.
 - Imported in white alabaster bottles, often passed down from family to family as an heirloom.
 - It was of such value that people used it for investment purposes...like buying gold today...liquid gold.
- ❖ Why such extravagance?
 - Mary had been listening...she was one of the few that got it.
 - ✓ Quietly she sat at the Lord's feet, she heard Him talk of His death and resurrection.
 - ✓ She watched Him raise her brother from the dead and came to believe that "He is the resurrection."

- ✓ She would anoint His body prior to His death.
 - She would send flowers while He was alive...she wouldn't put them on His grave but in His hand.
- ❖ Do your giving while you live, then you'll be known where it's going!
 - Her gift recognized His royalty.
 - ✓ Nard was used to anoint a new king. Mary was anointing Jesus as King Messiah.
 - ✓ Matthew's Gospel tells us she anointed the head of Jesus...a ritual performed on a king.
 - ✓ John tells us she anointed His feet with her hair. A woman's hair was her glory...she laid her glory at His feet.
 - Her selfless act of generosity is criticized.
 - ✓ Judas spoke up and placed the value at 300 denarii (vs. 5 KJV) or one year's wage.
 - ✓ He covered his tracks quickly by suggesting the money could have been used to help the poor.
 - ✓ John with the benefit of hindsight, looks back after 50 years of reflection, and says: **vs. 6 – It wasn't that he cared for the poor, He was a thief and he often had his hand in the bag.**
 - Thief – kleptes from which we get our English word – kleptomaniac (an urge to steal without regard for need or profit).
- ❖ When you give generously your time, talent or treasure some will think you foolish.
 - Mary gave it all...Judas wanted to keep it all!
 - Jesus comes to Mary's defense (**vs. 7) Leave her alone...**2000 years later we are still talking about her gift.

❖ Questions to ponder:

- a) What has God given you to give away? Money, talent, time?
- ✓ Your teaching, singing, speaking, leading, hospitality, encouragement, service?
 - ✓ Will you pour your life out as an offering unto God?
 - ✓ Will you be able to say like Paul: **2 Timothy 4:6-7 (NLT)** - ⁶ As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful.
- b) Who needs what you have to give away?
- ✓ It might be someone you work with (they need a witness), a single parent needs some help, a child needs some of your time.
 - ✓ Be alert and look for ways to meet the needs of those around you.
 - ✓ Here is an old story told among teachers:

I read about a fifth-grade school teacher named Miss Thompson. She was a terrific teacher, but, of course, she was human and there were students she just did not seem to click with.

Teddy Stallard was a boy that Miss Thompson really did not care for. He was not interested in school. He had a blank expression on his face and his eyes had a glassy, unfocused appearance. When she spoke to Teddy, he always answered in monosyllables. His clothes were dirty and his hair was unkempt. He was not an attractive boy and he was not liked by the other students either.

She should have known better, she had Teddy's records and knew more about him than she wanted to admit. The records read:

- 1st Grade: Teddy shows promise with his work and attitude, but poor home situation.
- 2nd Grade: Teddy could do better. Mother is seriously ill. He receives little help at home.

- 3rd Grade: Teddy is a good boy, but too serious. He is a slow learner. His mother died this year.
- 4th Grade: Teddy is very slow, but well-behaved. His father shows no interest.

Christmas came and the boys and girls in Miss Thompson's class brought her Christmas presents. They piled their presents on her desk and crowded around to watch her open them. Among the presents, there was one from Teddy Stallard. She was surprised that he had brought her a gift, but he had. Teddy's gift was wrapped in brown paper and was held together with Scotch tape. On the paper were written the simple words, "For Miss Thompson from Teddy."

When she opened Teddy's present, out fell a rhinestone bracelet, with half the stones missing, and a bottle of inexpensive perfume. The other boys and girls began to giggle and smirk over Teddy's gifts, but Miss Thompson, at least, had the sense to silence them by immediately putting on the bracelet and applying some of the perfume to her wrist. Holding her wrist up for the children to smell, she said, "Doesn't it smell lovely?" and the children agreed.

At the end of the day, when school was over and the other children had left, Teddy lingered behind. He slowly came over to her desk and said softly, "Miss Thompson, you smell just like my mother...and her bracelet looks real pretty on you too."

When Teddy left, Miss Thompson got down on her knees and asked God to forgive her. The next day, when the children came to school, they were welcomed by a new teacher. Miss Thompson had become a different person – now not just a teacher, but an agent of God, committed to loving her children. She helped all the children, but she began to pay attention to the slow ones, and especially, Teddy Stallard. By the end of that school year, Teddy showed dramatic improvement. He had caught up with most of the students and was even ahead of some.

The next year she did not see much of Teddy...and months blended into years. Then, one day, she received a note:

Dear Miss Thompson,

I wanted you to be the first to know. I will be graduating from high school second.

*Love,
Teddy Stallard*

Four years later, another note came,

Dear Miss Thompson,

They just told me I will be graduating first in my class. I wanted you to be the first to know. The university has not been easy, but I liked it.

Love Teddy Stallard

Four years later, another note read,

Dear Miss Thompson,

As of today, I am Theodore Stallard, M.D. How about that? I wanted you to be the first to know. I am getting married next month, the 26th to be exact. I want you to come and sit where my mother would sit if she were alive. You are the only family I have.

*Love
Teddy Stallard*

So, Miss Thompson went to the wedding and sat where Teddy's mother would have sat.

She deserved to sit there, because years earlier, she had broken a vase and poured out love on a little kid.

CLOSE: Martha gave Jesus the gift of a meal. Jesus was able to eat, be strengthened, spend time with friends before heading out to face a cruel world.

Lazarus gave the gift of true friendship...he was one of the few who would be willing, at this early stage, to allow his name to be on the Pharisee's "hit list."

Mary gave Jesus the gift of worship...her love for Jesus was extravagant and because of her love she gave her best...an expensive bottle of perfume.

- The fragrance of her act filled the room that day.

❖ Every church needs workers, faithful witnesses and generous worshippers. What will you do for your Lord?

**Pastor Ralph Schneck
First Baptist Church of Lexington
Message Notes
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