

True Worship or Just Lavish Squander

Jn. 11:55-57; 12:1-8

- A. Giving Value - Consider what Mary has done unto Jesus: Is it just a lavish squander of resources or is this true worship? How do we place value on someone or something? How we treat people will be based on how we value them.
 - 1) A favorite sitcom of not so long ago, entitled 'John en Marsha', had for its main character a mother-in-law who would always bawl out her son-in-law uttering the punch line, "How much are you worth?" How much is everyone worth anyway? According to an issue of Readers' Digest in 1991, the chemical assay of an average human being is made up of the following: iron-medium sized nail file; lime (apog) enough to whitewash a chicken shed (kulungan ng manok); magnesium for one dose of salt; phosphorus-2,200 matchstick; potash for a firecracker; sulphur enough to rid a small dog of fleas; sugar to sweeten 7 cups of tea; fat to make 7 bars of soap. When all is summed up, an average human being is worth a measly P300. Small wonder, the mother-in-law of the favorite sitcom would have the impudence to say "How much do you cost?"
 - 2) In the various debates about abortion and pro-life, a question about the worth of the fetus surfaces. How much is the worth of a 2 to 3 month old fetus being aborted and abandoned wantonly? In the same manner, how much is the worth of ageing citizens who become liabilities to the state when they have lost their productivity?
 - 3) I believe in this truism: a person's worth to someone is shown how he is being treated. If you had a very important guest in your home, would you not feed him on your finest china which you very rarely use?
 - 4) Now, I would like to pose this question to you: How much is the worth of the Lord Jesus Christ to you? Perhaps your answer would be: "He is of infinite value." He is priceless. The question is of the essence because this would be the basis of how you would treat the Lord Jesus Christ. We can only sing the song "I Surrender All" when we have truly and absolutely surrendered our all to the ownership of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. In the Bible verses we have read, if we were to make a survey, there are 4 kinds of people who have different valuation or treatment to the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's find out which group you are in.
 - 1) In John 11:55-57, a lot of people went over to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Passover¹, or Pesach (Heb. or Paskua (Tag.)), and a lot of them are the inquisitive type: who snooped on about everything that they see. During those days the Lord Jesus Christ was considered by the Pharisees, scribes and the high priests as a 'wanted' man; Public Enemy No. 1. These nosy

people would often ask “Will Jesus come to the feast?” These people are often seen in all gatherings about the Lord Jesus Christ; be it Bible studies or worship services, spying on everything and weaving rumors around. They wanted to see Lazarus raised from the dead.

- a. Question: How about you? Why are you here? To spy on everything? Take note on John chapter 12, these people who welcomed the Lord Jesus Christ with shouts of “Hosanna; Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Jn 12:13) were the same people (in spite of the fact they were witnesses to the miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ and in spite of the fact that Pontius Pilate declared Him faultless), who shouted to Pilate: “crucify Him”. For this reason, the Lord Jesus Christ in Matt 23:37 said: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
- b. But how much is the Lord Jesus Christ worth to them? Nothing but a piece of conversation. So long as there is something to spy upon, talk and spread rumors about. These are the most unpredictable people; they could be your friends at one time, then next time, they could be your enemies.

2 The second group of people: The High Priests and scribes

- a. These are the religious leaders who are powerful and influential only because they made themselves subservient to the Romans; “live and let live policy”. The popularity of the Lord Jesus Christ posed a threat to them as they would lose the loyalty of their constituents. Therefore, in order to nip off this apparent threat to them, the Pharisees and the Saducces, though in conflict with each other, decided to join forces and plan to kill the Lord Jesus Christ. In reality, these are not religious leaders, but mere politicians. In politics, you do not have permanent friends nor permanent enemies; only permanent interests. What matters most is whatever is expedient at the moment (pragmatic, practical).
- b. How much is Jesus worth to them? Expendable. The head of Jesus; that is what's important to them. The power and glory of this world, that is what's of value to them. (Matt 16:26)

3 On the other hand and entirely opposite of the first two groups, there is one named Mary, in the household of Simon the Leper in Bethany, although Martha and Lazarus were also in the household of Simon.

- a. Mary did not count the cost. There was nothing she withheld in praising and thanking the Lord Jesus Christ. She was unfazed by the fact that she could be arrested for harboring an alleged criminal; the Lord Jesus Christ. According to the law harboring a criminal makes you an accessory to the crime. But Mary was the perfect picture of a believer who would be ready to suffer for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. True worship is very costly, in fact, it is without cost. She poured the precious perfume that is worth a year's pay for an ordinary laborer. The perfume she poured on the Lord seemed to shout – “For His sake, I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as refuse, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him...” Her love for the Lord Jesus Christ was without any reservations. Mary kept the most precious not for herself but for the Lord Jesus Christ. The ordinary mortal would keep what is best for himself, but Mary gave the best for the Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can change the selfish man in order for him to say, “Not I but Christ lives in me.”
- b. How much is the Lord Jesus Christ worth to Mary? As far as she is concerned, the Lord is not only the most important thing in the world, “Christ is her all in all.” Jesus is the only reason for everything. True worship to the Lord Jesus Christ entails suffering. A lot of people worship the Lord Jesus Christ only when it is convenient for them. Others feel worship is an obligation. Love goes beyond obligation. When you love the Lord, worship is not compelled. It flows spontaneously; it takes all of you. Mary was saying, “Here I am, broken and spilled out for my love for Jesus.” It is an offering of total self. Nothing left, nothing kept behind. For Mary, worship is equivalent to love for the Lord Jesus Christ. Then worship is no longer based on what is convenient; it is no longer an obligation. It has become a fragrant aroma to the Lord Jesus. This is true worship.

4 Someone else gave a price to the Lord Jesus Christ; but a humiliating 30-pcs of silver: The price of a bond-servant.

- a. “Every man has a price” so they say. As for Judas, a measly 30 pcs. of silver was his price to turn traitor to his Master.
- b. Many people consider Jesus as a celestial errand boy. They would ask Him for a lot of things; “Give me this, give me that, give me those...”. After having obliged by the Lord, these ungrateful people would desert and drop Him ‘like a hot potato’.

C. How about you friend, how much is your price? Will you turn the Lord Jesus Christ over to His executioners as Judas Iscariot did?

- 1 Unless one would honestly say; “I have left all and followed You”, everyone will have his or her own price. It may not be one million dollars, 10 million dollars, or even 100 million dollars. But if satan offers you the world (Matt. 4:8-10), will you betray Jesus and leave Him? Many have left Jesus for the world but the Lord said, “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mat 16:26) You may think you have gained the world, but, in fact, you have lost everything because you have rejected Jesus Christ, your only Savior and eternal life. A lot of people nowadays would desert Jesus for the sensual pleasures of this world; booze, cigars, games of chance and all vices.
- 2 **Praise is always with a price.** On the other hand, the Bible says, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Rom 12:1-2). David once said, when he offered unto the Lord in order to stop the pestilence ravaging Israel and Judah, Araunah gave David the threshing floor and the implements therewith, and the ox in order for David to make a burnt offering unto the Lord. But David said, “Nay, but I will surely buy it of thee at a price; neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing.” (2 Sam. 24:24)
- 3 **Your sacrifice for Jesus is too precious to Him to be forgotten. It will not be wasted and will be in the memory of Jesus.** Why? The Lord said regarding Mary, “Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” (Mat 26:13) WAnong sacrifice of praise mo para kay Jesus? Umaawit tayo, “We bring the sacrifice of praise unto the house of the Lord.” It’s truly difficult to praise the Lord when you are experiencing difficulties in life. Thus, if you can praise the Lord despite of all the tragedies you are experiencing in life and bringing the unto the Lord what is best. The Lord who is just will never forget that.
- 4 **I’m asking you this question, what is Jesus worth to you?** Will you stop praising Him because the price is too high? Or will the world buy you out of Jesus? Before you answer the question, remember that it was Jesus who was the first one to be bruised, wounded, striped and broken and spilled out for you and me. Jesus was broken that we might be made whole. Then we have no recourse “for the love of Christ constraineth us and we thus judge...that Jesus died for all so that they which are alive should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him who died for them and rose again.” (2 Cor. 5:14-15). Therefore, if that is the case, you will not withhold anything from the Lord. In the eyes of men, it is lavish squander. But as for

the Lord Jesus Christ, He will never forget what you have done for Him. in fact, the Lord Jesus has written your name in His book, the Lamb's Book of Life.

¹ **Pesah, Pesakh, Yiddish: Peysek** is a Jewish and Samaritan holy day and festival commemorating God sparing the Jews when He killed the first born of Egypt followed by the seven day Feast of the Unleavened Bread commemorating the Exodus from Egypt and the liberation of the Israelites from slavery.

²¹ A village, 15 furlongs (furlong=201 meters) or 3km from Jerusalem (John 11:18), on the road to Jericho, at the Mount of Olives (Mark 11:1 Luke 19:29), where lived "Simon the leper" (Mark 14:3) and Mary, Martha and Lazarus (John 11:18 f). This village may justifiably be called the Judean home of Jesus, as He appears to have preferred to lodge there rather than in Jerusalem itself (Matthew 21:17 Mark 11:11). Here occurred the incident of the raising of Lazarus (John 11) and the feast at the house of Simon (Matthew 26:1-13 Mark 14:3-9 Luke 7:36-50 John 1:2:1-8). The Ascension as recorded in Luke 24:50-51