

The Fragrant Aroma

☒ Have you ever been tempted to restrain your emotions in a worship service because someone might misunderstand or become uncomfortable? Often women have been accused of being overly sensitive or sentimental. But when your outpouring of love and thankfulness goes beyond words to tears, don't be embarrassed. I believe the Lord receives those tears as worship.

Four times in the gospels, the story appears of a woman's lavish gesture of worship—anoointing Jesus with a very expensive jar of perfume. Three of these reports are likely descriptions of Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, whose ministry to Jesus occurred during the final week of His earthly life (see Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:1-9; John 12:1-8).

The fourth account, however, though similar in detail, is a report of a separate event involving a different woman and occurring earlier in the life and ministry of Jesus than the week of His passion (see Luke 7:36-50).