

Daily Tasting the One Thing Jesus Said You Need

Intimacy is first in the Lord's heart—and He wants it to be first in ours.

In reply to a question about legal requirements meant to trick Him into exposing Himself as a fraud, Jesus instead gave an answer that exposed Him as the God of love: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matt. 22:37–38).

Loving God with all we are will lead us to intimacy—nearness with God—but how do we love Him deeply in a world that is so often busy and stressed? What does it look like to come close, really close, and to give Him everything?

But let's pause. Instead of starting with ourselves, let's look at what the Lord did to draw near to us.

Our God wanted to be intimate so badly that He came down in the person of His only Son, Jesus, took on a human body and lived among us.

Christ endured the temptations, pains and problems of our sinful world, yet He never once sinned. He then submitted Himself to the punishment and shameful death we each deserve. He died on a cross—the worst penalty for criminals in the world at that time—to pay for all of our wrongs. Three days later, He rose from the dead, triumphing over sin and death, giving us access to the throne of grace and eternal fellowship with the Father.

Our part in this? To simply have faith that His atoning sacrifice completely frees us from sin and ushers us into eternal life. It also connects us now with our Father and the

life we were always meant live.

So how, then, shall we live? Perhaps we should look at a woman who wasted everything at Jesus' feet.

During Jesus' farewell address to His disciples, He summed up His ministry and time with them. Jesus called on His followers to abide in Him because, just as a branch cannot bear fruit unless it is connected to the vine, "without Me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5, NKJV).

Mary had understood this all along. She believed with all her heart, all her soul and all her mind that Jesus was God in human flesh, and so she sacrificed everything to be with Him.

When Jesus visited her home in Bethany, Mary sat at His feet and listened to His every word instead of helping her sister Martha prepare the meal. This made Martha angry, and she asked Jesus to tell her sister to get up and help. But He refused.

And Jesus answered her, and said, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42).

Our God desires our extravagant worship. Mary, who sat at Jesus' feet worshipping Him with her heart wide open, understood Him when He said He was going to die on a cross. His disciples didn't—couldn't—believe Him, but Mary did (Luke 18:34).

And with a heart brimming with love for the sacrifice He would willingly make for her, for all of us, she poured out her life's savings in the form of a costly vial of anointing oil. She poured it over His head and so said: I see what You plan to do. I accept what You plan to do. I will do this for you now, and you will know that someone understood.

The disciples criticized her extravagant worship, calling it a

waste, but Jesus rose to her defense: “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me” (Mark 14:6).

Then Jesus says something shocking: “Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her” (Mark 14:9).

Gazing on Jesus’ beauty and responding with all we are is one thing in life that we are all called to. Not only does the Lord reward those who seek Him with abandon (Heb. 11:6), He sees every act of worship, every time you pause and give Him your heart all over again. He is worthy of everything we can give to Him. Can you give Him all of your worship? Time with Him may look foolish to others, but it’s not foolish to Jesus. He will reward you with His presence.

If you are seeking a special place to worship Jesus with thousands of other lovesick worshipers, we invite you this year to Onething 2016, Dec. 28–31, in Kansas City.

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