

# **This Follower ‘Got Jesus’ Like None Other in Scripture**

If we were first-century historians looking at events in the life of Jesus to write down, a lot of things would come to mind.

Rome was at the zenith of its power, so we could talk about the great accomplishments of Rome. We could talk about the philosophers who came out of Greece or some of the wars that were fought.

But when we read the Bible, we see Rome presented merely as a backdrop for the greatest story ever told. The great King Herod was a big player, and Scripture simply references Caesar.

That’s because God sees things differently than we do.

In fact, John wrote in his Gospel, “There are also many other things which Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that not even the world itself could contain the books that would be written” ( John 21:25).

Yet we find a certain event singled out in the New Testament and mentioned more than once. In the eyes of God, what one person did was of the greatest importance, and we’re still talking about it today.

This person seemed to really get why Jesus had come. But it wasn’t John, who was known for his spiritual perception. And it wasn’t Peter, James or Andrew, either. For that matter, this person wasn’t even one of the 12 apostles.

This individual had great spiritual insight—greater insight, for the most part, than those who’d spent every waking hour in the presence of Jesus Christ. Her name was Mary.

Now, the New Testament mentions a lot of people named Mary, so it's easy to confuse them. But this Mary was the sister of Martha. We probably best remember her for the time when Jesus came over to visit, and Martha was busy cooking a meal for Him. Meanwhile, Mary saw a wonderful opportunity to sit at His feet and drink in His words.

This only frustrated Martha, however, and eventually she couldn't contain herself any longer. Martha wanted Jesus to correct Mary for not helping her prepare the meal.

But ultimately it was Martha whom Jesus actually corrected. He said, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed. And Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her" (Luke 10:41-42).

Mary seemed to grasp something that was lost on many others. Led by the Holy Spirit (no doubt because she'd spent so much time sitting at Jesus' feet), Mary understood that Jesus had come to die. And because of this, she wanted to bring him a wonderful gift, something sacrificial to demonstrate that she loved Him and appreciated all that He had done.

So, she gave Jesus a gift so significant that He said, "Wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be told in memory of her" (Matt. 26:13).

What was this gift that so touched Him? We read about it in John's Gospel: "Then Mary took a pint of very costly ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment" (John 12:3).

At this point in Jesus' ministry, things were coming to a head. He'd had a number of confrontations with the religious leaders, and they were fed up with Him. Plain and simple, they wanted Him dead.

The problem was that it was Passover in Jerusalem. The city was teeming with millions of pilgrims, and if they executed Jesus, it could potentially cause a riot.

Jesus, aware of all this, went to visit his friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus. He liked to hang out at their house in Bethany and spend time in their presence. His last encounter with them was when He'd brought Lazarus back to life.

Once again, Martha was serving a meal while Mary was taking it all in. I can imagine it was a fascinating conversation because Jesus had just delivered what's known as the Olivet Discourse, giving a bird's-eye view of end-time events. Surely there were some follow-up questions about that.

No doubt people had a few questions for Lazarus as well.

Meanwhile, Mary was seeing what the others weren't seeing. She saw something in the face of the Lord that touched her deeply. And she was so moved with emotion, love and devotion for Him that she took out some very costly oil of spikenard and anointed His feet.

Basically, this was concentrated perfume, probably imported from India. It would have been a family heirloom, worth around \$25,000 to \$35,000 in today's economy. A few drops would have been more than appropriate, but Mary used the whole bottle.

The aroma filled the room, and then Mary wiped the feet of Jesus with her hair.

But Judas Iscariot, mentally calculating what he perceived as waste, said, "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" (John 12:5).

Jesus, however, defended Mary. He said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ... She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial" (Mark 14:6, 8).

Judas Iscariot is typical of so many people today. They try to get by with the bare minimum. They'll read the Bible—if they find the time in their busy schedules. They might offer a quick prayer here or there—when they get around to it.

Mary did what she could because she understood that Jesus would do what He did.

I've heard it said, "I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything. But I can do something. What I can do I ought to do, and what I ought to do, by the grace of God I will do."

The more we know of what Jesus did for us, the more we should want to do for Him. And we must do all that we can while we can. So do what you can. Start where you are. {eoa}

*For the original article, visit .*

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