

WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY

The Infinite and Inestimable Glory of Christ

INTRODUCTION

What we value, we worship.

Every single person – every person, live their lives according to their values – what they think is important, at the time. Every moment of every day is determined by what we value. If you are a breakfast person you choose your breakfast meal by what you value. If you want quick and easy instead of a prepared meal, you value quick and easy as more important.

In a split second of time we make choices through the day based on value assessment – or simply: what we think is important.

The Bible has a lot to say about spiritual values. Think of these well-known ideas:

1. Moses thought that suffering on behalf of God's people (like Christ did) is more valuable than all the riches of Egypt (Hebrews 1:26).
2. Jesus said, *“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?”* (Mark 8:36, ESV). Jesus said that the soul of a person is more valuable than all the wealth of the world.
3. Our Lord taught us that seeking His kingdom is more important than food or clothes (Matthew 6:33).
4. Paul had an impressive resume, yet when he did a values clarification, he found that his impressive upbringing and accomplishments were nothing as compared to knowing Christ (Philippians 3:7f).

Christians understand that our values are formed from our hearts. Solomon wrote, *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life”* (Proverbs 4:23, ESV). Secular society suggests values are formed from evolutionary survival. Sinful values come from within. Jesus said, *“The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.”* (Luke 6:45, ESV)

This morning we see before us, in John's story of Jesus a picture of contrasting values. The story is found in:

TEXT: [John 12:1-11 \(ESV\)](#)

THE STORY

There are some fascinating things about this story. The first eleven chapters of John cover about three years of Christ's public ministry. Chapter 12 and to the end of John's account of Christ covers around one week of Christ's life. This is the forty-eighth sermon in the Gospel of John, and we are just over halfway. The detail that John will provide for us of Christ's Passion Week is phenomenal.

Jesus had retreated for a time after the resurrection of Lazarus to Ephraim, but now He is moving toward Jerusalem with a brief stopover in Bethany. He attends a Saturday evening supper in his honor. We learn from other evangelists that He was in the home of Simon, the Leper; but the meal was catered by Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. Just think of this, in that home that even was a man healed of leprosy and a man raised from the dead. Imagine the conversation.

During the meal Mary took an expensive pound of fragrant oil or perfume. It had a street value of a year's wages and she anointed Jesus from head to toe. She undid her hair (an action only a wife would do in the presence of her husband) and wiped his feet. It was an act of extravagant love. Jesus accepted her unusual expression of affection and said that the leftovers could be used at his burial. Mary performed this act to signal her devotion but, as in the case of Caiaphas (11:49–52), her act revealed more than she realized at the time.

Present for this meal were the disciples including Judas. He saw the expression as a waste. That perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor. John provides for us another Spirit-inspired editorial comment: *"He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it."* (John 12:6, ESV). Written years later, John soon learned the real heart of Judas. Rather than a philanthropist he was self-serving.

Jesus responded to Judas' criticism by saying, *"Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."* (John 12:7–8, ESV). Jesus was not suggesting that one should not care for the poor. On the contrary He was saying that we will always have opportunities to care for the poor. But for this group of disciples, His presence gave them the opportunity of a lifetime.

John's account ends with this fascinating detail. *"So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus."* (John 12:10–11, ESV). How would you feel? You have been dead four days, resurrected back to life and now there is a death threat on your life?

MAIN POINT

Why is this story in the Bible? What did all the Gospel writers include this account? I think to grasp this we need to remember who the story was written for? Remember that John was writing to people who

lived nearly fifty years after this event took place. He is writing them so they might see Jesus in all His glory. He is writing them so that they would put their faith in Christ. These scattered Jews around Asia Minor now see that many Jews put their trust into Jesus.

Secondly from Mark's account we learn that this episode was the straw that broke the camel Judas' back. It is after this dinner that Judas decides to betray Jesus. He made a values choice. He valued a pound of perfume at a year's wages. He valued the life of Christ as thirty pieces of silver – enough to buy a loaf of bread for some people. It was the price of a worthless slave.

Mary's expression of worship falls into the category of exorbitant, lavish, even excessive. This response of Mary is characteristic of her heart. Remember another occasion when Jesus was staying with them and Martha was fussing with the meal? She wanted help from her sister, but Mary was found taking the opportunity to sit with Jesus. Remember what Jesus said? *"But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.'"* (Luke 10:41–42, ESV)

Do you see what Mary valued? In making a choice about household duties, in making a choice about earthly treasures, when Mary had the opportunity to spend time with – to worship Jesus, that is what she chose. At this same dinner we see a different display of values: Judas spoke not out of concern for the poor but as a tight-fisted treasurer of the disciples.

This is the main point: **We worship what we value and what we value reveals our heart.**

APPLICATION

Billy Graham is quoted as saying, "Give me five minutes with a person's cheque-book, and I will tell you where their heart is." The same could be said of you and I: "Show me your timetable, your daily planner and it will reveal our hearts.

Paul David Tripp in a disclosure about a time of suffering he went through wrote this about what he learned from suffering, "First, it has exposed an *idol of self* I did not know was there. Pride in my physical health and my ability to produce made me take credit for what I couldn't have produced on my own." He went on to say, *"Suffering draws out the true thoughts, attitudes, assumptions, and desires of your heart."*¹

Three months ago, none of us would have imagined we would be going through what we are today. Some of us have lost our jobs. Some of us are lonely and tired of the isolation. Some of us may be concerned about our health. Many of us have concerns for our loved ones. There are some of us who have witnessed our retirement security plummet. I could go on. But what is clear from God's perspective is that this unprecedented time is going to reveal, in a clear way, the values of our hearts.

¹ <https://www.crossway.org/articles/how-suffering-reveals-your-true-self/>

Our hearts will tell us what we value. Our hearts will tell us what we worship. How we spend our time, money and pursuits is the expression of our worship.

Jesus put it this way, *“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field”* (Matthew 13:44, ESV). This parable emphasizes the supreme value to the treasure. The treasure is undoubtedly Christ Himself.

At the age of 23 George Beverly Shea had a hard decision to make. He could accept a job offer in a secular singing position in New York City with a great salary and wide respect; or he could continue singing in churches and for Christian radio programs. While sitting at the family piano, he started to prepare a special hymn for the Sunday service. On the piano he found a poem by Mrs. Rhea F. Miller. He immediately began to compose the music for the poem and used the song that same morning in his father's church service. It went this way²:

<p>Verse 1</p> <p>I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold I'd rather be His than have riches untold I'd rather have Jesus than houses or lands I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand</p>	<p>Verse 2</p> <p>I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause I'd rather have Jesus than worldwide fame I'd rather be true to His holy name</p>
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We are living at a time where our hearts are being exposed. We are living at a time where what we worship, what we think is valuable is being revealed. May we find in ourselves the heart of Mary – a heart of extravagant love for Christ Jesus. May you truly learn that:

He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom
 He's sweeter than honey from out the comb
 He's all that my hungering spirit needs
 I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead

² George Beverly Shea | Rhea F. Miller © Words: Public Domain Music: 1939. Renewed 1966 Curb Word Music (Admin. by WC Music Corp.)