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# Christian perspectives: poured out

In the Gospel of Mark Chapter 14:3-9, we see Jesus stopping and visiting Bethany and having dinner at the house of Simon the Leper.

His good friend Lazarus who he had raised from the dead and his 2 sisters Mary and Martha are among the dinner crowd. Martha is doing ?her thing? that is serving Jesus and the other dinner guests. Mary doesn't help her?. Instead her sister only has eyes and ears for Jesus; sitting at His feet taking in every single word. How inappropriate, how wrong, this was simply not done! Doesn't Mary know her place? Women were not supposed to sit at the feet of rabbi's. Is Martha the only one who notices the raised eyebrows and quiet whispers when the guests take notice of her sister?

All of a sudden an all overpowering but wonderful smell fills the room, people sit up and wonder: this is definitely not a smell of prepared food. The dinner conversations die down as guests look around for the source of this wonderful smell. Martha's face blushes with embarrassment? here is her sister Mary pouring out the entire content of a small flask on Jesus feet and head. She has simply broken off the small delicate neck of flask used to dispense only tiny drops. There are audible gasps from the guests as they recognize the smell and the substance being poured out: nard. This stuff is expensive, worth a king's ransom and Mary is pouring the entire contents out like it was nothing. People stare in astonishment, exchange knowing looks with each other. The entire room goes dead silent; all that is heard are the sobs of Mary, tears streaming down her face. Mary shakes off her head covering, her long hair falling down her face and wiping Jesus' feet wet with tears. Then the attention shifts to Jesus? His face is full of understanding and compassion and does nothing to stop any of it. Finally people start to softly murmur among each other. Finally Judas, the treasurer among the 12 disciples blurts out: What a waste! That flask was worth a year's wages, how many of the poor could we have helped with the money if she had sold it instead. Other angry voices chime in condemning Mary and her action.

Jesus looks up his face clouds over at hearing the condemning voices: ?Leave her alone, why do you bother her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. You will always have the poor with you and you can help them anytime you want. But you will not always have me with you. She has done what she could by pouring perfume on me to prepare me for my burial??

Everything Mary did pointed to Jesus: in vs. 3 we read that: ?the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume? Through Mary's insight and actions, ?the Fragrance of Christ? filled the entire house. It clearly focused the intention on Jesus as Savior and Royal Priest who will die for the sin of the world.

Jesus is the son of God who became ?Immanuel? that is: God with us. He became human, walked this earth, ?poured Himself out? and experienced all that we do.

Like Mary we need to make God first and foremost in our lives: spending time with Jesus, becoming more devoted to Him and surrendering all that we have.

Then, when we are filled with His goodness and grace, we need to become channels, springs of living water where ever God has placed us. As Jesus poured Himself out for us, so we need to pour ourselves out for those around us. Have your unselfish deeds raised eyebrows lately? Have your acts of mercy left people speechless?

We are like oranges, we are attached to the living branch of Jesus Christ. He pours into us all that is good. We grow and ripen to mature fruit. And like the ripe fruit we are meant to be ?squeezed?, all the goodness that Christ has poured into us, we pour into our world. In a dark and desperate world, we need and ought to be: goodness, hope, love, grace, mercy and light. This is what God wants us to be; this is what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

At the start of this New Year let us (re)commit ourselves to the complete devotion of our lord Jesus Christ. And allow this total devotion to motivate all that we do; Allowing His Grace and mercy to pour through us into this world. Until He comes again.

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