

Loyal Heart MINISTRIES

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Walking in the Light of the Son

A Study for Women by *Stephanie Little*

Key Verse: *"Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil."*

John 12:3

Mary of Bethany – Strength through Worship

As Jesus was reaching the end of His earthly ministry, six days before the Passover, He came once again to the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. It is at this time that Mary commits one of the most beautiful acts of worship found in the Bible.

- 1. Read John 12:1-8 and Matthew 26:7.** Jesus was partaking of a meal at the home of His beloved friends: Mary, Martha and Lazarus. What does Mary do to show her adoration of Jesus as her King and Messiah?
- 2.** Ointments were used for two very specific purposes in the Old Testament. Use a Bible dictionary or concordance to find out about the uses of ointment, especially spikenard.

What type of ointment is spikenard?

Where does it come from?

How was it used?

- 3.** What would be the significance of this particular ointment used to anoint the head, body and feet of Jesus?
- 4.** Why was Judas so upset about the extravagance of Mary's act?
- 5. Read Mark 14:8 and Matthew 26:10-12.** In these two passages, how does Jesus explain Mary's act of worship?

6. **Read Mark 14:9.** How is Mary blessed for her unselfish display of love for the Lord?

In John 12:3, we discover that “the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.” Everywhere that Jesus went in the days following the anointing, the fragrance of the oil would have lingered and touched the senses of those around Him. In the Old Testament, incense, a type of fragranced ointment, was burned in the tabernacle as part of the worship of God. The sweet-smelling perfume would fill the tabernacle with its fragrance. As the Magi came to worship Jesus, they offered Him gifts of Frankincense and myrrh. The small home that Jesus shared with His family, as a child, was filled with the fragrance of the costly perfumes.

7. What happens to us after being in a room filled with a fragrance, or in church, when we hug another lady who happens to be wearing a strong fragrance? We carry that fragrance with us throughout the day. It’s a reminder of the woman we embraced. As we spend time in worship of Jesus, we will carry His fragrance with us throughout the day as a reminder of the sweet encounter with Him.

8. **Read 2 Corinthians 2:15.** How can our worship be as a sweet-smelling savor to God that will fill the rooms we enter and the people we touch?

Mary of Bethany was not intimidated by her circumstances when it came to the worship of her Savior. She was ready and willing to submit herself to the Lord in all aspects of her life. She returned to the feet of Jesus in an attitude of worship as He taught her, comforted her, and prepared to die for her. Mary’s sacrifice of praise and worship will be remembered forever. The fragrance of the broken box has spilled out through the centuries and will continue to drift up to heaven through the humble, heartfelt worship of believers until the return of our Savior.

A look inside: What type of worship do you offer the Lord each day? Is it a sweet-smelling savor of genuine praise and adoration unto Him; or is it a musty odor of hurried prayers muttered during the week and reluctant hymns sung on Sunday morning? How can you make your worship and praise sweeter and more pleasing to God?