



LIFE GROUP SERMON NOTES

Keys To The Blessed Life: Am I Generous?

Ps. Robin Morris– 10/9/2016

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. 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.

But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

John 12:1-8

WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. *No right or wrong answers.*

- What's the most costly gift you have ever received? Who gave it to you and for which occasion?
- What's the most expensive gift you have given to somebody? What motivated you to buy such a generous gift?
- Who is the most generous person you know?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

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A very important question we all need to ask ourselves is "Am I generous?" Selfishness is the enemy of generosity and tries to take the place of God. A generous heart stems from a grateful heart. We can be generous toward God once we realize that He is more than generous in His love toward us.

John 12 tells us the story of Jesus being anointed before his crucifixion. In this story, there are two hearts revealed, that of Mary and that of Judas. There are some truths that we can learn from exposure of these two "followers" of Jesus.

1. The enemy of generosity is selfishness

There is an age-old battle of God being generous and Satan being selfish. Selfishness promotes, protects, and provides for self. Selfishness tries to take God's place in our lives. We are born selfish; one of the first words a child learns to say is "mine". We are born-again generous.

When we look at Judas, he only thought about himself; therefore, he criticized a generous giver. As followers of Christ, we are called to abandon everything and give all we have to the advancement of God's Kingdom. Yet many times as Judas, we try to judge what others are doing or not doing. We do that because as long as we find someone else to point to, we don't have to deal with our own selfishness.

2. The Extravagance of Generosity

Mary gave a generous gift to the Lord by anointing Jesus and pouring one year's wages on His feet. Mary passed the test of the heart; however, Judas did not. The most extravagant gift we can give God is ourselves. Don't tell me that God has your heart if he doesn't have your money. The extravagance of the gift is not in the amount but in the attitude.

There are three levels of giving: tithes, offerings, and extravagant offerings. If you get to the first level, you will be able to go to the second and third levels because the curse is removed, and the windows of heaven are opened. A generous heart stems from a grateful heart.

3. The Reward of Generosity:

Generosity gives not to be rewarded, but God always rewards generosity when we give with the right heart. Mary didn't anoint Jesus to be rewarded; yet she was rewarded with the fact that her act of generosity would be told everywhere the Gospel is preached!

God rewards extravagantly, and He wants to reward us when we fight through selfishness. Mary anointed Jesus because she was grateful He had raised her brother from the dead. If we understand what it means that we were dead in our sins and trespasses but Jesus raised us from the dead, we would be extravagant givers as well.

PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)

Choose an item below to discuss, or introduce another related topic for discussion.

- If you look at your giving, what does it say about your heart?
- In which level of generosity are you are right now? What can you do to grow to the next level of generosity?
- What has God spoken to you through this lesson about giving?

PRAYER (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Pray that God increases your appreciation of the riches of his generosity toward you, so you may become more grateful.
- Ask the Lord for forgiveness if you haven't been a generous giver.
- Pray that you will have a generous heart,