

True Sacrifice

Mark 12:41-44 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

Mark 14:3-9 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

- Our culture is much about convenience, ease of life, and all about self.
- The word sacrifice has become such a foreign word to so many people today.
- Webster's 1828 Dictionary (Sacrifice) - To destroy, surrender or suffer to be lost for the sake of obtaining something.
- As we approach offering Sunday we want to sacrifice for God because of all He has done for us.
- Here in these two stories there are some lessons we can learn about true sacrifice.

1. A true sacrifice cost us something

Widow- *cast in all that she had, even all her living* (she gave everything to God)

Mary- *three hundred pence* (a year's salary)

- David understood that a sacrifice should cost us something.

Background: David had sinned against God and numbered the people. God tells David exactly where to go and there he is to make a sacrifice to God. When David goes to the place to make the sacrifice David finds out the land is owned by a man named Araunah. Araunah tries to give the land and the animals to King David to sacrifice.

II Samuel 24:22-24 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what *seemeth* good unto him: behold, *here be* oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and *other* instruments of the oxen for wood. All these *things* did Araunah, *as* a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee. And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy *it* of thee at a price: **neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.** So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

- David understood that a sacrifice should cost something.
- Mary's sacrifice cost her a year's salary.
- The Widow's sacrifice cost her all she had.

2. A true sacrifice is often misunderstood by others

Widow- *he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them* (Jesus pointed it out because they missed it)

Mary- *Why was this waste of the ointment made?*(the disciple didn't understand)

- The same is true in our own lives; often even the closest people to us do not understand our true sacrifices for God.
- Rest assured that God sees and God understands.

ILL.-When Adoniram Judson graduated from college and seminary he received a call from a fashionable church in Boston to become its assistant pastor. Everyone congratulated him. His mother and sister rejoiced that he could live at home with them and do his life work, but Judson shook his head. "My work is not here," he said. "God is calling me beyond the seas. To stay here, even to serve God in His ministry, I feel would be only partial obedience, and I could not be happy in that." Although it cost him a great struggle he left mother and sister to follow the heavenly call.

Judson's churches in Burma have had fifty thousand converts, and the influence of his consecrated life is felt around the world.

- It didn't make a lot of sense for Judson to leave for the mission field and turn down such a great opportunity.
- Why?
- Because true sacrifices are often misunderstood.

3. A true sacrifice is giving God our best

Widow- *For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want...*

Mary- *ointment of spikenard very precious...*

- Both of these ladies gave God their very best.

Background: God rebukes His people for sacrificing to Him, but giving the left over.

Malachi 1:13-14 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness *is it!* and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought *that which was* torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD. But cursed *be* the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I *am* a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name *is* dreadful among the heathen.

ILL.-There were some missionaries in a foreign country who were trying to reach the heathen tribal people. The missionaries would watch as the tribal people would throw their children into the river to be eaten by crocodiles as a form of worship to the river gods. There was one lady who had two children. One of her children had a physical handicap and the other child was healthy. The missionary watched as the mother of the children threw the healthy child into the river. The missionary asked the mother why she didn't throw the handicapped child into the river. Her answer was, "We only offer the best to our gods". If this heathen tribal lady was willing to give her best to a false god, we who serve the True and Living God ought to offer our best to Him as well.