

John 12:1–11 – “The Measure of a Devoted Heart ♥”

A heart devoted to Jesus is measured by spiritual devotion—When Jesus is our greatest treasure, nothing poured out for Him is ever wasted.

The Biblical World – Understanding the Context:

Six days before Passover, Jesus returned to Bethany—the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. The cross was near, yet Jesus spent His final days with those who loved Him most. This dinner at Simon the Leper’s house was a moment of both fellowship and foreshadowing—pointing to His upcoming burial. Martha served, Lazarus sat as living proof of Jesus’ resurrection power, and Mary poured out a year’s wages of perfume on His feet in worship. John places this story immediately after Lazarus’ resurrection to show that genuine worship always flows from gratitude for what Jesus has done and anticipation of what He will do. Mary’s act of love filled the house with fragrance, revealing that worship isn’t measured by cost, but by the devotion of the heart.

Passage Outline

- **I. A family devoted to Jesus. (vv. 1–3)**
 - **II. Devotion is often misunderstood. (vv. 4–8)**
 - **III. The Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Lazarus. (vv. 9–11)**
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Passage Notes

I. A family devoted to Jesus. (vv. 1–3)

In a home filled with gratitude, each family member expressed love differently—Martha served, Lazarus fellowshiped, and Mary worshipped. Her costly act was not wasteful—it was worship. She poured out what was most valuable to her because Jesus was worth more than anything she owned. True worship remembers what Christ has done and anticipates what He will do.

II. Devotion is often misunderstood. (vv. 4–8)

Judas criticized Mary’s devotion, hiding greed behind false concern for the poor. His voice even influenced others to mock her. But Jesus defended her act, calling it preparation for His burial. Her worship was timely and spiritual, while Judas’ religion was self-serving. What the world calls waste, heaven calls worship.

III. The Religious Leaders Plot to Kill Lazarus. (vv. 9–11)

Because of Lazarus' testimony, many believed in Jesus, but the religious leaders—blinded by pride and threatened by grace—sought to destroy both the evidence and the source of divine power. Religion always opposes grace because it cannot stand where God's glory is revealed through faith.

The Modern World – Relevance Today:

Today, devotion is often confused with busyness or sacrifice. But true devotion is born from gratitude, not guilt. Religion counts cost; love pours out freely. Like Mary, believers are called to worship Jesus with undivided hearts, no matter who misunderstands.

The World of the Congregation – Applying This Passage Today:

In a world chasing recognition and approval, our worship must remain pure—focused on Jesus, not on what others think. Every act of love, obedience, or generosity offered to Christ becomes a lasting testimony of His glory.

What This Means for Us

- **The heart that kneels in love before Jesus today will stand in honor with His glory for eternity.**
 - *What do we need to bring to Jesus?*
 - **→ He is worthy. Remember what Jesus has done for us, and what He is going to do for us in eternity.**
- **Our worship is never wasted when it comes from a heart that treasures Christ above everything else.**
 - *Have we let fear of others hinder our worship of Jesus?*
 - **→ Be bold and unashamed to worship the creator who has saved us.**
- **Stand firm in the truth of grace—because the same gospel that saves souls will always stir the anger of religion.**
 - *Have you compromised God's grace because of religion?*
 - **→ Share the grace of Jesus Christ, regardless of how others respond, stay faithful to the teachings of Jesus.**