

Following This Woman's Example

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[0:00] please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel Matthew's Gospel chapter 26 Matthew chapter 26 if you need a Bible visiting with us today there's a black Bible in the chair in front of you go to the back of that black Bible they renumber the New Testament so find page 22 in that black Bible where you will find Matthew chapter 26 Matthew chapter 26 we're going to study the first 16 verses this morning Matthew chapter 26 I believe we'll be done with Matthew's Gospel the end of August believe it or not so we're trucking through Matthew chapter 26

I'll start reading in verse 1 and it came when Jesus had finished all these words he said to his disciples know that after two days Passover comes and the Son of Man is delivered unto crucifixion then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathering together in the court of the high priest named Caiaphas they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him but they were saying not during the festival lest a riot occur among the people now Jesus being in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper a woman came to him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume and she poured it upon his head as he reclined verse 8 but the disciples were angry when they saw it and said why this waste for this might have been sold for a high price and given to the poor but knowing this

Jesus said to them why do you trouble the woman for she's done a good deed to me for always you have the poor but you do not always have me for when she poured this perfume upon my body she did it to prepare me for burial truly I say to you wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world what this woman has done shall be spoken in remembrance of her then one of the twelve named Judas Iscariot going to the chief priest he said what do you want to give me to deliver him to you and they weighed out to him thirty pieces of silver and from then on he looked for a good opportunity to deliver him James Armistead Lafayette was his name an unlikely hero of the Revolutionary War an African American born into slavery about 1760 they're not sure when he was born he enlisted in the Marquis de Lafayette speaking a little French there I forget little Phoebe Marquis de Lafayette French allied units here the army dispatched Armistead as a spy playing the role of a runaway slave to gain access to General Cornwallis' headquarters because Armistead was a native Virginian with extensive knowledge of the terrain the British received him without suspicion as a result Armistead accomplished what few spies could direct access to the center of the British War Department he was involved in different things but his main role was being involved in the most critical moment of the war which was the

Battle of Yorktown he informed Lafayette and Washington about approaching British reinforcements which allowed the generals to devise a blockade impeding enemy advancements this success resulted in the final major victory for the colonists when Lord Cornwallis surrendered on October 17th 1781 Armistead was a part of that he tried to petition for him to be released to the slave and Congress denied it he finally received his manumission though in 1787 due to Lafayette the general French general he actually wrote a letter to Congress because Lafayette's influence they released Armistead and he became a free man living off his annual pension annual pension fee

[5:29] Armistead moved to his own 40 acre home farm in Virginia where he married raised a family and lived out the rest of his life as a freeman Armistead added Lafayette to his name as a token of gratitude and a testament to the bond a former slave and French general shared the most unlikely hero of his time now we read that we're like oh yeah in that time period blacks were looked down upon African Americans were nothing an unlikely hero of his time today you see the same thing an unlikely hero of her time in the first century and what did I do with this oh the driving force of

Matthew's gospel bowed down and worshiped Jesus the Messiah the Son of God the King of Israel judge of the world following this woman's example bow down worship Jesus follow this woman's

example that's exactly what she did follow her example an unlikely response from an unlikely person follow the example of this woman who had loving devotion to Christ and his work an unlikely response from an unlikely person and this is not the first time Matthew's given us something like this in his gospel chapter 2 of Matthew's gospel we see that with the magi you would think Herod would have had a better response the religious leaders at that time would have had a different response no it was the magi the wise men even

Joseph chapter 15 the Syrophenician woman chapter 19 children unlikely responses from unlikely people and chapter 20 the two blind men it's the theme one of the sub themes in Matthew's gospel and you see it here again actually you even see it with Matthew himself one of the most despised persons in Jewish society at that time in the first century he was a tax collector some things never change right even with him because Jesus looks to those who humble themselves before him this woman she was willing to sacrifice so much because of her devotion to

Jesus Judas was willing to betray and reject Jesus to gain money what are you willing to sacrifice on behalf of your love for Christ may there be a question that you have for yourself today ask yourself that thinking about the gospel what Christ has done for us and now our devotion our love for him what am I willing to sacrifice on behalf of my love for Christ such a contrast not just with Judas even in this passage it contrasts with the responses from others in the passage today the religious leaders there's such hatred disciples they're obtuse and then of course Judas rejected him it's shocking notice verse 1 which is a trademark of Matthew's gospel familiar phrase kind of the ending of a section and it came when

Jesus had finished and notice it says finished all these words all his teaching in this gospel had come to an end and now the passion narrative begins the passion narrative which is the accounts of Jesus death begins and it's striking it's almost shocking how Matthew brings into this as well those two other gospels bringing to this the response from this woman and of all those who would get it it's a female and I know I don't want to sound sexist today don't want to do that but you got to understand in the first century a Jewish woman was worth very little in that society and so think about the dregs and the outcasts of our society she got it she understood she had loving devotion to our

[11:07] Savior well first notice Jesus and his work is predicted in verse two he said to his disciples know that after two days the Passover comes and the Son of Man is delivered unto crucifixion keep in mind that word here in verse two delivered you'll see that two more times so it begins with Jesus own prediction just to make sure we all remember that Jesus is completely and totally in charge of his death and his resurrection he's in charge he's sovereign he will fulfill God's purpose as prophesied in Old Testament scripture he says he'll be handed over or delivered unto the result would be crucifixion and he said this on Tuesday

Passover took place on Thursday or Friday I take the view there was two separate Passover times but here the Passover the Hebrew word means to Passover the angel did not kill the firstborn Hebrews back in Exodus chapters 12 13 the lamb or the kid a baby goat not a human kid took the place to the firstborn God protected them and it was that substitutionary sacrifice that led to their freedom from their slavery in Egypt you remember that you're familiar and during this feast time they would clear their house of leaven and on the 14th day of Abib they would slay the lamb or the kid as a sacrifice they would take home the carcass they would roast it and in Egypt you remember when we went through the book of Exodus they ate it in haste here in the first century they were reclining and they did that as a way for them to remind ourselves of God's rest for his people so here this time

Jesus gives his last prediction of his death he did it one two three other times in Matthew's gospel and here you see Jesus connected his death to the Passover feast and in all this Jesus was sovereign we'll see in just a moment the religious leaders they're going to plan and yet they would be the instruments used by God according to the predetermined plan of God to kill his son for sinners that he would be our substitute and our sacrifice Jesus is sovereign Jesus was in control of his own death a great reminder for us as a side note given the mayhem of our world if Jesus is in charge of his own death and resurrection don't you think he's in charge of everything that's happening in this country oh yes he is he knows exactly what's going on and he's in control nobody can do anything outside of his control but notice if you would the different responses excuse me the different ways that people responded to Jesus and his work begins here his prediction is going to be related to

Passover and notice the different responses first hatred is the first response in verse 3 through 5 the chief priests and elders of the people religious leaders they were the most influential members of the Sanhedrin of this council gathering together in the court of the high priest named Caiaphas notice they plotted together to seize Jesus by stealth and kill him unofficially coming together to seize him and kill him and they're going to do it in stealth mode undercover incognito and notice they say in verse 3 but they were saying not during the festival lest a riot occur among the people they didn't want to do it during the Passover feast they didn't want a riot to take place Jesus was very popular among the pilgrims that had flooded into Jerusalem at that time lots of them probably from Galilee so they are very familiar with Jesus and his ministry so arresting Jesus on the open was out of the question it had the potential of provoking a riot among the people but notice they hated

Jesus they wanted to get rid of Jesus friends some people respond to Jesus with hatred they want nothing to do with him they don't want to hear the gospel or the truth of Jesus they will silence Christians they want to silence the truth they don't want to have a discussion about that that's a response that some people have toward Jesus despise hatred but notice the flip side of this loving devotion verse 6 to 7 and you have something in the middle 8 and 9 and then we're going to go back to verse 10 through 13 loving devotion this response notice how things change he's in Bethany there in verse 6 and then Simon the leper most likely he had healed him at that time Bethany was the village on the

[16:57] Mount of Olives about two miles east of Jerusalem so amid the hatred of the village leaders who should have seen Jesus for who he really was they should have been the ones believing in him you'll find out the clueless obtuse disciples only cared about business as usual and Judas who became disillusioned and rejected Jesus you have this woman notice verse 7 a woman came to him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume and she poured it upon his head as he reclined we see this woman who knew exactly what was going on and acted accordingly the one who was looked down in Jewish society was the one who understood what Jesus would face isn't this amazing this obscure no name woman perceived better than the disciples than the religious leaders so take heart misfit take heart drag of society be encouraged those treated as scum and as losers humble yourself to look humble yourself and look to Jesus and he will exalt you look to the savior who came to die for sinners turn from her sin and trust

Christ God loves those who tremble at his word God loves those who humble themselves and you see that with a person that you would think would not even do something like this she she found Jesus she took this expensive perfume poured it on his head as he reclined at Simon's house it was an ointment a sweet oil perfume extremely valuable notice she sacrificed an enormous amount of money because of her loving devotion to Jesus not to mention her public reputation think about that her public reputation there with the disciples and other people that are around I mean she's risking that are you willing to sacrifice your reputation standing in your love for

Christ to what extent are we willing to do that it's a challenge for us isn't it an encouragement but a challenge as well so here you see the hatred from the religious leaders in which we saw that coming in Matthew's gospel even though still you would think that they would be the ones who would believe in Jesus because they knew the Old Testament no you see this woman with loving devotion and then you see the disciples and I call it obtuse dull I looked up synonyms for that another synonym is stupid but I didn't want to use that word it's kind of strong for those of you like five and under obtuse notice verse 8 but the disciples were angry they got angry how stupid oh I'm saying the word stupid sorry all you five six seven eight year olds how stupid notice they say they saw why this waste verse 9 for this might have been sold for a high price and given to the poor serious bling bling could have happened with this vial of great costly perfume dumb woman typical what a moron that's how they viewed this they saw it in serious ways as far as they were concerned they're not used to such extravagance so naturally it shocked them yet their fake piety masked their true spiritual obtuseness they were totally oblivious to what

Jesus just told them about his coming death I mean really are are you that dull may we not be dull to the gospel today may we not be dull to the truth I encourage you pray this for yourself Lord keep me soft keep my heart pliable to your word don't let me get offended by what you say from your word keep me soft to that clueless clueless obtuse you know it's quite striking they're thinking this woman's a moron who are really the morons he just told them he's going to die he just told them notice it goes back to loving devotion in verse 10 through 13 this is wonderful this is so wonderful

what Jesus says about this woman back to loving devotion notice verse 10

Jesus knowing this he said that the word you have there in numeric sentence why do you bother literally why do you trouble her in essence why are you being big jerks that's a Jim Masters translation of the Greek there Jesus found fault with them because she had done notice he says for she has done a good deed to me her action showed her loving devotion to Jesus plus it displayed she understood what would soon happen to him he brings that up in just a few moments notice what he says in verse 11 4 always you have the poor but you do not always have me now people read this like oh Jesus is blowing off the poor no

[24:23] Jesus isn't blowing off the poor he's blowing off his disciples that's who he's blowing off how obtuse your obtuse myopic piety disciples the time to honor him was short because of his coming death and resurrection don't you guys remember when I just said that to you a few moments ago the opportunities for the poor they're always going to be there but Jesus time with them was short she understood that oh even greater look at what he says here in verse 12 for another for because when she poured this perfume upon my body she did it to prepare me for burial what what she knew what was going to happen to

Jesus and here's the disciples business as usual well let's see next week we're going to go over to this place and then back to Galilee a couple weeks from now Philip what do you think about that Matthew okay good business as usual for them she was with it the disciples unfortunately were clowns sometimes I see myself so much like the disciples here you have this beautiful action the depth of her devotion and commitment to Jesus isn't it beautiful may we have the same attitude as this woman with such great loving devotion and commitment to Christ you want to follow the example of someone follow this woman follow her because she followed

Jesus Jesus goes farther look at what he says in verse 13 truly I say to you wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world what this woman has done shall be spoken in remembrance of her whoa wherever this gospel is preached she's going to be remembered forever first notice how Jesus expected that gospels were written about him in the future and second remembrance of her would be forever embedded in the new testament I mean think about it God's word lasts forever Isaiah chapter 40 Peter quotes that in first Peter chapter 2 1 1 and goes oh yeah the end of chapter 1 he quotes from Isaiah chapter 40

God's word lasts forever so forever this is etched in stone forever what she did that would be cool wow she's like embedded in scripture forever and I think it's John John's gospel gives her the name is Mary she wanted to do this but Matthew remains in no name this woman would be remembered for what she did to Jesus a couple days before his death and it's in Matthew's gospel it's in Mark's gospel and it's in John's gospel what devotion what an example what a keen wise sharp acute sense of Jesus and his work it's striking to me how right before Jesus goes into his passion his death his resurrection and all the details involved in this it's this story that's highlighted for us well unfortunately you see how things change drastically because you see the other response and the other response is betrayal rejection what a contrast isn't it what a contrast one of the twelve named Jesus Iscariot going to the chief priests he said what do you want to give me to deliver him to you remember I told you about deliver there what in verse 2 when Jesus says Passover comes the Son of Man is delivered unto crucifixion as the same word we saw an unnamed obscure woman who understood Jesus expressed her love and devotion to Jesus versus the one who we thought would be truly devoted to Jesus Jesus was now betraying him for money selling him out for money do you see the stark ironic contrast he went he took the initiative went to the religious leaders seeking money by the chief priest to deliver betray him and notice it says at the end of verse 15 they weighed out to him 30 pieces of silver which is a prophecy that's fulfilled

[30:45] Zechariah chapter 11 verses 12 to 13 as a fulfilled prophecy here and 30 piece of silver is about four months wages for a day laborer in that time period this money request along with the amount is found only in Matthew's gospel so notice how Judas received money to betray Jesus this woman sacrificed money on behalf of Jesus you see the contrast there she was willing to give up her money and her reputation for Jesus and the one that you would think okay yeah the religious leader sure but we saw that coming but even one of his own disciples Judas who was healing Judas who was preaching the gospel and he betrays

Jesus for money the contrast could not be any greater verse 16 and from then on he looked for a good opportunity to the word is betray it's the same word deliver him same word from verse 15 same word from verse 2 on purpose a good convenient time where he could deliver Jesus into their

hands notice you have the religious leaders they were the instruments used by God to bring about the death of Jesus now you see another instrument being used by God to bring the death of his son on behalf of his people but the shock and horror of Judas' act and then the shock and surprise of this woman's response to Jesus it leaves us as the readers aghast dumbfounded

I mean questions run through our minds how could he do this what was he thinking why would he do such a thing how could he betray Jesus to them we're never told why all we find out is Judas later says I betrayed innocent blood he throws the money back and commits suicide but we're never told what was he thinking we're never told what was going through his brain we're never told why he did something like this all we know is that he's the ultimate betrayer next to Jesus you tell somebody hey do you know the name Judas they know exactly what you're talking about right Judas was willing to betray and reject Jesus to gain money this woman she was willing to sacrifice so much because of her devotion to

Jesus what are you willing to sacrifice on behalf of your love for Jesus what would be a challenge to you a good challenge an encouraging challenge something we need in this time as Christians follow the example of this woman what are you willing to sacrifice on behalf of your love for Christ follow the example of this woman who had loving devotion to Christ and his work and unlikely response from an unlikely person follow this woman who followed Jesus or better yet follow Jesus would you pray with me Lord Jesus thank you that you have this in your word we know it was Mary who expressed her loving devotion to you she understood what was going to happen to you she believed you oh Lord help our unbelief in these times where mayhem and chaos is going on around us help us to stand firm in our devotion to you our love for you our commitment to you to your word to your truth that we as your people will rally around together around the cross the gospel because is that not the answer to the issues and the sin of this world and thank you that your grace pours out upon us there's times where we fail in following you so thank you that your grace is there that Jesus died for that too so help us we pray we lean upon you and we glory upon you we put all our hope in you

Lord Jesus we glory in you as our redeemer thank you in your name we pray together amen please stand we'll sing a couple more songs oh yeah Aaron thanks boss I will glory in my redeemer we hey okay so maybe I was going to