

Wasteful things

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[0:00] I want to talk about wasteful things.

Wasteful things. Matthew 26 from verse 6 it says, Now when Jesus was in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment and poured it on his head as he sat at me.

But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for so much and given to the poor.

When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? For she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always.

For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

[1:24] Wasteful things. Here's a woman who comes in, the Lord Jesus is here with his disciples, it's getting closer to Calvary, it's getting closer to the cross, it's the time of Passover, and here is this woman, she intrudes in this time, and she does something radical, she does something extravagant, she gets a jar of ointment, and she pours it upon the Saviour's head.

Here is a woman's act of adoration, of love, of worship. Some consider it a waste.

A waste. We see that in verse 8. His disciples, his own followers, those that loved him, those that he's ministered to for three years or so, they say, To what purpose is this waste?

What a waste! The woman's act of love, of worship, of adoration. What a waste! The fragrance filled the house.

It was extravagant. It was extravagant. It was very costly, very valuable. Verse 6. Some counted up the dollar cost, you know, they got their calculators, they worked out what they could have bought with that money.

[2:44] That money could have been used for something, perhaps more tangible, perhaps something more that people could have taken notice of, something more noteworthy, perhaps, than just pouring it on somebody's head.

Some people would consider worship a waste of time, a waste of time to worship. What a waste! What a waste! The word they used was a very strong word.

It's a dead loss. That's the kind of sense of it. What a dead loss. What a waste of that precious ointment. What can we learn about wasted things?

Wasted things. You know, I got some information lately from our local council, and I read about the total cost of vandalism in our local council.

The total cost of vandalism in one financial year, for this last financial year, \$257,000. What a waste!

[3:44] That's a waste, isn't it? And it listed off windows broken, doors smashed, graffiti, toilet systems broken, smashed up, hand basins in the public toilet areas, lights smashed.

The list goes on. That's a waste, isn't it? That's a waste, and we're all paying for it in some fashion. Wasted things. Wasted things. I've seen a lot of waste.

People who don't care about other people's property. You know, sometimes you encounter tenants trashing houses. They think it's someone else's property. Oh, they've got money enough to own a house. You know, they don't know what mortgages they've got.

But they think they can just smash it up and leave it smashed up. They can afford it. Wasted things. Consider some wasted things.

What about the waste of wasted lungs? The wasted lungs of smokers. That's a waste. That's a very sad thing. Filled up with toxic sludge.

[4:45] That's a waste. That's a shame. Wasted time. Aussies watch about three hours of TV every day. What a waste.

Could be sometimes used more usefully, couldn't it? Let's face it. And I know we all can consider our use of time.

Is it wasted time? Every time surfing the net. Maybe just without any real purpose to it. It's okay to have some, how would you put it, free time.

But really, our time should be used wisely, shouldn't it? Not wasted. And we all can consider, how can I use my time more valuably, more usefully? What about the waste of souls?

Souls are very important, aren't they? I know every soul is precious. Every soul is of value. Our Lord says in weighing it up, as against the whole world, if you lose your soul, it's a big loss.

[5:52] And evangelism is important. I know Rich is doing an intensive evangelism this week ahead. So if you're interested in doing some evangelism, if you've got some time, we're going to be giving out some tracks right through this week ahead.

That's the plan. So let me know if you're interested in joining in on that outreach effort. Evangelism is important. Souls are important. The never-dying souls are men.

It's a waste when people go to hell. It's a waste to see people lost and burning up for eternity. The Bible speaks of that. Don't waste your soul. Sometimes I think we fail to truly appreciate the real value of people.

People are very valuable to God. Every soul. Every one. And I trust as a church, we want to extend care to every single one that we can have contact with. I know there's times where people don't want to be contacted, and I understand that.

In fact, I've got another letter this week saying they don't want to be contacted by our church. They said, it's harassment. You're bothering us too much. We're not meaning to be annoying.

[6:59] But it's because we care. It's because we think souls are valuable. And we want to show that we care. Every soul. What about wasted youth? Wasted youth.

Young people. Some young people like to say, as they say, get wasted. It's a saying that they have. Let's get wasted this weekend.

It is a waste. Drugs. Drugs are a waste. Let's get sloshed. Let's get drunk. It's a waste. It's a waste. Don't be a waster. Don't waste yourself.

Really and truly don't waste yourself. Rather, as it says in Ecclesiastes 12, 1, remember now. Thy creator in the days of thy youth. While you're still young.

While you've still got youth. Use it wisely. You've got likely more years to live than me. So that's something that's very valuable. Your time's valuable. Your lives are valuable. How can you dedicate that finite time that you have?

[7:58] It's finite for all of us. You know? Tick, tick, tick, tick. It's ticking away. We've got less of it than when we started this service. Our finite resources.

Our time. It's ticking away. Can we invest it in a cause that matters? As it says in Jeremiah 22, verse 21. It talks of this man.

He says, Your manner from your youth has been that you've obeyed my voice. God says you've obeyed my voice from that young time. And yet youth can be a time of waste, can't it?

Let's face it. I think back when I was a youth and I think of how I could have used my time a little more wisely. And sometimes it's wasted in vanity, in lewdness, in waste.

Wasted things. What about wasted money? Wasted money. Now this is not to condemn anyone here today because I know someone mentioned they've been to the show. On a work basis or with some friends.

[8:55] But I overheard some people saying lately, and they said this, that sort of blew me away really, that a family could easily blow \$1,000 at the royal show. I thought, wow.

Just poof. Gone up in smoke, isn't it? What a waste. In a way, isn't it? Let's face it. I mean, honestly. It's easy to spend, isn't it? Money. You can spend it carelessly and unwisely.

The Bible talks about having a bag with holes in it. That's what it's like, isn't it? We might feel like that to you sometimes too. You know? The money, it's like a bag with holes in it.

Some people are good. Good at wasting money. Wasting money. You know? You see them bleary-eyed, whatever they do, pressing the buttons and ching, ching, ching, the pokies. You can waste it.

You can feed the pokies with your money. You can go buy the scratchy bingo tickets down at the shop. What a waste. By and large, it's a waste, isn't it?

[9:56] Honestly. You can booze it away. Wasted money. We read of time wasted, of lives wasted.

In the parable of the talents, there's a story where the Lord Jesus, he gives some talents. They're items of money. There are coins, effectively, that he gives to some people.

And we read the story in Matthew 25, verse 18. One of these people who got some share of money, these talents, it says in verse 18 of Matthew 25, that the one who received this one town, he digged in the earth and he hid his Lord's money.

And then the Lord came, the Master came, to reckon with his servants, how they used that money that he'd given them to invest, to use, to spend, to ideally grow.

And this man, he just buried it in a hole in the ground. And the Master was angry with him. He said, at least you could have put it in the bank, so you could have earned some interest with it. The point of that story is that we've all been given something.

[11:07] You've been given a life. You've been given breath to breathe. You've been given a heart to pump. You've been given skin and bones and feet to walk. You've been given a life to live.

Are you going to live it wisely? We've all been given something to be a steward of. Will you make your life count? Your life. Will you make it count?

Or will you waste it? Can we find some area of service unto our Lord? What am I doing for the Lord today? Dear brother and sister, ask yourself this.

Am I using what God has made me to be for his glory? Am I allowing him to work in my life, doing his will, serving him in some way?

Or am I wasting the talent? Am I just digging a hole and burying my talent? Some of you here today, we're using the word talent in terms of the coin of the Bible.

[12:05] But you can think of your talents as in your gifts and abilities, your callings, that capacity you've got to do something. And we've all got different abilities, different ways we can use our lives effectively.

Don't hold back from using whatever gift God has given you. You know, there's some people here today exercising that gift of musical ability. That's something precious, isn't it?

You know, I didn't learn to play. I'm still learning how to play a guitar. I can just play four or five little things and make it look like I know what I'm doing. And I'm still really very much an amateur.

But you can use whatever basic things you can do. You can learn to play the guitar. It's not that hard. If I can learn, it's not that hard, honestly. For example. Or, you know, we've got talk of having a choir.

I know there's some folk keen to have a choir. Use your voice to sing. It could be in practical ways. I know there's some people just yesterday working out in this back area.

[13:11] We're helping to line the carport there so we can make an effective room for the children. Whether it be a cry room for mums who've got children crying or whether as an extension of the Sunday school capacity.

So we've got a useful space that we can use that room. And you might have practical things. You might be able to hold a hammer and bang a nail in. You know, there's things that you can do.

Whatever it be.

We've got people driving the bus. That's an ability. So you've got to have a thick skin and a kind heart to pick up some of these children in the bus.

That can be hard work. Could be helping in the Sunday school. Helping in the youth outreaches of various kinds. God can use you if you'd be willing to be used of Him.

Put your hand up and say, I'm a volunteer. I'm willing. The Lord says, who will I send? Who will go for us? Here am I, Lord. Send me. Let that be your response.

[14:13] Will you let the Lord use you? You. And there might be some people you might think, I know there's some from other countries who are still learning English. Don't let that stop you.

Don't be stopped from serving Him. Don't let anything stop you. Be willing to say, yes, I'm willing to serve, to be used of God. How much is the Lord Jesus really worth to you?

Are you prepared to be sold out for God? You know, for some in the Bible, when they stepped over the line, they ended up in all kinds of trouble. It's like I heard a message where a preacher said, talking on this thing, that God dares to put His greatest ambassadors in chains.

You know, Paul was one of God's greatest ambassadors. And yet God locked him up in the jail. You know, you wonder, what a waste, in a way.

But what might seem a waste is really a worship. What might seem a waste is really a worship. So we want to spend our lives in what really counts. And the question that the disciples asked of this scenario, back to the story of the woman pouring the ointment on his head.

[15:24] What purpose? What's the point? What's the purpose of this? Some would consider ministry and worship a waste. You know, let's face it, you could be doing something else today rather than sitting here listening to this message.

That money that you put in the bank, you could have spent it on yourselves. You could have bought something nice for yourself with that money. You could be spending this precious time doing something else today.

Some people would say, what a waste. What do you waste your Sunday morning coming to church for? That's a waste. When you seek to minister. When you seek to worship.

Some people will say, that's a waste. Even when you're trying to show love and care. You might get a letter like I got saying, oh leave us alone.

We don't want to hear from you anymore. You wonder whether it's worth it. But it is. It is. Because it's the purpose that makes the difference.

[16:30] Is it worth the waste? The Lord Jesus thought it was worth it. The Lord Jesus thought it was worth the waste. The Lord Jesus commended the woman for what she did. Some would question, why bother?

Why show that you care? Why give to others in Jesus' name? Why give to him? Why not rather give to some worldly cause? Why not use your money and time for some enjoyment or worldly pleasure instead?

Or will you be like the woman? Will you be like the woman with that jar of ointment or very precious ointment? Will you pour it out?

Will you be poured out? For his sake. She did not hold back. That precious ointment. She could have gone and sold it and got stacks of money.

She could have gone and lived the high life with that money that she could have received for selling that ointment. But rather she chose to pour it out.

[17:31] To pour it out. She did not hold back. Her love for the Saviour. It was extravagant. And the question is asked. The disciples asked. To what purpose is this waste?

And the answer from our Lord is. She did it for me. She did it for me. She has prepared my body for the burial. For the tomb.

And the fragrance of her love was with him still on the cross. The fragrance of her love. While the flies were there. While the blood was oozing out of his skin.

Of the wounds. While his beard was torn. The fragrance of her love was there. While the cruel mockers scorned him. While the hardened soldiers nailed him.

While the rough wood gouged him. The fragrance of her love was there. While the thorny spikes pierced him. While our sins were carried by him. While the brutal torture wracked him with pain.

[18:31] The fragrance of her love was there. She had anointed him before the burial. For the burial. Some ladies came.

After the cross. When they'd taken him down. And wrapped him up. And laid him in the tomb. They came days later. But they were too late. To anoint to his body.

They were met. By the announcement. He is risen. They were too late. Maybe you'll leave it too late. To show you love. Maybe you'll leave it too late. To show that you adore him.

To pour yourself out. To adore him. To love him. To worship him. To serve him. To honour him. He said, me you have not. Always. There's a limited window of opportunity.

To minister to him. In human form. What if she had neglected to worship. Truly. What a waste that would have been.

[19:28] What neglect. What regret she would have lived in. Had she not poured out that light upon him. We've talked today about wasted things. Wasted things.

Wasted youth. Young people. Serve him now. Now. Don't wait. Don't put it off. Until you're grey. And haggard like me. You know. Don't put it off.

Use the youth you have. Use the now that you have. Young people. Not so young people. You're not past it either. Amen. You've still got time on your ticker.

Use it wisely. Wasted money. Use it wisely. Invest it. Buy yourself a decent Bible. Get yourself some Bible study tools.

Grow. Serve. Wasted lives. Don't make that mistake. What purpose? What's the purpose of life itself? It's to love him.

[20:27] It's to find him. To serve him. To please him. To pour yourself out. Upon him. She hath wrought a good work upon me. Verse 10 it says.

And some would say. She has done a beautiful thing to me. It was beautiful. It was a good thing. It was the greatest thing. She could have done. You know. That precious ointment.

What better purpose could she have used it? She could have poured it on herself. Selfishly. Or whatever other people.

But she poured it on her saviour. On her lord. In love. To worship him. To serve him. To what purpose? It's about motive, isn't it?

It's about your motive. What purpose? To what purpose is your life? Your life that's being lived out. That's ticking away even now. To what purpose? Let it be expended in his way.

[21:25] Let it be expended to his glory and praise. Then it is worth it. It is worth it. Others might count it waste. They might count it waste that you worship.

They might count it waste that you're pleased to give, to love, to serve. To be a Christian. Some think that's a wasted life.

But really, it's the whole purpose of life. It's the whole purpose of life. And friends, think of it. What waste. Some of them will look at Calvary and say, what a waste.

This perfect man. This man who's only love personified. There's not a skerrick of sin, of self, of evil in this man. And we crucified him.

You crucified him. I crucified him. What a waste. It was for me, for you, for our sin. The precious blood poured out. What a waste.

[22:24] Some would think. The sinless one, slaughtered, butchered. That is a waste. Some would think. The lover of my soul, brutalised and rejected.

The one who loved you. Who loves you still. Friends, his blood was not wasted. He purposed to give it for the life of the world.

He purposed. He could have called down tens of thousands of angels to just wipe out humanity. He could have clicked his fingers and boom.

That would have been it. But he held back his wrath. He held back in love for you. So that you could trust him. So you could be saved. And so you could love and worship him.

I just want to close with a challenge. Do you love him? Will you be like that woman and come to Jesus?

[23:29] Come to Jesus. Pour yourself out at his feet. Give yourself to him. As much as you might think, who am I? I'm nothing, really.

He wants you. He loves you. He says, come. He extended his hands on the cross. He says, come unto me. Let us pray. Dear Lord Jesus, we thank you that in love you came.

In love you were nailed. In love you died. In love you rose again. And in love you beckon to us today to come. Help us, Lord, to come.

To come in humble heart. To come bowed down. Recognising our sin. Recognising our neglect.

Realising the waste of times that we've had in our lives. And yet, Lord, to bow. To give. To serve. To love. To be poured out. Lord, we want to give ourselves afresh to you.

[24:30] We want to give ourselves in worship. In praise. We love you, Lord. We adore you. Help us to live a life pleasing unto you. We pray, Lord, that you'll help us to love you.

And adore you. Like that woman did. That we speak of all around the world. As you said, would happen. That this gospel, wherever it's preached.

This woman's going to be talked about. We don't even know her name. And yet, Lord, it's a worshipper. Of you. And we want to be like her today, Lord. Help us to be like her, we pray. In Jesus' name. Music Music Music Music Music Music