

True Worship on Display

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] Let's begin with prayer.

Father, our gracious Father, we do not pray out of habit.

We do not pray because it is something that is planned and a formal part of worship.

We pray because our hearts are inclined towards you by your grace. We pray because we are needy. We pray because you are sufficient.

We pray because we are frail, inclined to all the wrong things. And this morning we would ask that your spirit would quicken our hearts, that the sweet words of Psalm 119 would be true, that we would have hearts that are opened to hear wonderful things out of your law.

[1 : 31] We pray that we have soil that is suited, that the word of Christ may fall upon prepared hearts and bear fruit that brings glory to your name.

We pray because there are some here that don't know Christ. And that in the light of eternity, this moment is critical.

We pray that you would bring conviction where there is that need for revival. We pray that you would enable me and my frailty and my very earthy vessel would reflect your glory.

And that your people would delight in you. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I want to leave you with a couple thoughts.

I'm not leaving yet, but I just want to be sure these stick. Whoa. Early departure. No. Here we go. I want you to kind of frame this in your life and think about it.

[2 : 45] We cannot worship apart from truth. I want you to hold on to that. We cannot worship apart from truth. We cannot grow apart from truth.

Now, I've got two pieces out here, so what I want you to do is, and this is a little bit of foretaste of what we're going to do tonight, right? All of you are going to be here, right? All God's people said, well, maybe.

Okay. I know. Some of you have very pressing details. Okay. We've got two pieces on. Here's what I want you to do. I want you to think if you can attach a Bible text to the two statements I've made so far.

Is that fair? Isaiah chapter 8 says this, According to the law and to the testimonies, if they speak not according to this, it's because there's no truth in them.

And we know what the Bereans did. You know, they were more noble than those in Thessalonica because what they did was, as they listened to Paul preach, and they didn't have their phones in front of them, they were swiping to kind of check and see, but they were cross-referencing everything Paul said against the Scriptures.

[4 : 00] So I made the statement, you can't worship apart from truth. Yeah? Where's that? I made the statement, you can't grow apart from truth.

Yeah? Where's that? There's the third one. We cannot love him apart from truth. And so one of the things that I trust is happening in this slow and methodic journey that we're taking through the book of John, and we are in John chapter 12, verse 1.

As we are taking this slow and methodic journey through the book of John, one of the things that I sincerely trust is happening is that you are growing in your affection for the Lord Jesus Christ.

We live in a wicked and perverse world. And not only do we live in a wicked and perverse world, but every one of us who are here, at least that are sensible to spiritual realities, know that we also carry in us this very frail heart that is inclined towards things of less than noble propositions, right?

I like the words of the songwriter. It said, prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love. Take my heart, oh, take and seal it.

[5 : 25] Right? Do something with this heart I have. In relationship to this passage, I'm going to close with a statement.

That's at least the plan. I'm going to tell you ahead of time so that you know how it's going to end up. And you may even write it on your notes because it's something I want you to frame and hold on to.

Two choices on the shelf. Worship Christ or worship self. Not original with me. I want you to know that for certain. But really, at the heart of the lesson that we're going to take from this passage in John chapter 12 is this fundamental truth of the reality that we are all worshipers.

As I listened to you sing this morning, I couldn't help but take pleasure in it. I like the way you sing. And you know why I like that?

Because I just cannot, I cannot understand people who go to church and say they're there to worship and then kind of sit there with kind of a glum spirit on their face.

[6 : 39] You know, it's like, yeah, I know the words, but I'm not in it today. Hey, you know what? He is happy to help you with that attitude.

How many of you know that? You know, one of the things I love about salvation is you don't have to stay the way you are. And people that love Jesus have every reason to sing.

By the way, Pastor, I wrote this on my hand. The last part of every sermon or every service is that your pastor is going to read a passage of Scripture. Pastor Shear, I'm going to be in that place, so I'm going to ask you to read Psalm 96, 7 through 9.

It's... Got it. I make little notes to myself. That's the way I get around. John chapter 12.

Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him.

[7 : 47] There Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at the table. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair.

The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he who was about to betray him, said, Why was not this ointment not sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?

He said this not because he cared about the poor, because he was a thief. And having charged the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put in it. Jesus said, Leave her alone.

So that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me. Let me remind you that essentially what we're looking at in this passage, kind of press it together, is we're looking at two stark differences in what worship looks like.

Remember what I said the end of the sermon is? But two choices on the shelf, worship Christ or worship self. You can see here, Mary is one illustration of worship and Judas is another illustration of worship.

[9 : 07] We tend to think that worship is something that we only do towards God, and that's not true at all. We are worshiping all the time. I was struck by the fact that yesterday there were 30 of our men, I don't know how many ladies, were ladies involved in the move as well?

Absolutely. Children as well? We had 30 people show up to conduct worship services at Drew and Melissa Clausen's home.

Okay, now you're wondering what's that all about? Hey, when you sacrifice your Saturday morning to go and move a brother and a sister in Christ, that's worship.

Isn't it? And worship is something that we're always doing. And I think it's important to realize that. And so as you look at this passage and you step into it, there are a couple things I think are important to lay out for us that we have in mind.

First of all, let's grasp the setting. It is worth remembering that John's gospel is substantially different from Matthew, Mark, and Luke, which we refer to as the synoptics.

[10 : 20] And John really only gives us seven miracles. He gives us very, very little detail about Christ's life. On the other hand, John's gospel is the most focused on the last week before the crucifixion.

In fact, John actually spends about half of his gospel in the week preceding and in the crucifixion. Mark only uses about 20% to cover the crucifixion.

Matthew uses about one-third. Luke, only a fourth. And as we step into the passage in this particular study, I want you to recognize that we're actually stepping into the last week of Christ's

ministry and what takes place actually happens less than a week from his death.

Now, did Jesus know he was going to die? Did he know that? Did he know how many days were going to pass before that happened?

Absolutely. There was not a thing hidden from him and he had spoken over and over again to his disciples about what was coming. And so as our passage records this week before the cross, I want you to kind of fix in your mind that this week before the cross is really the most momentous week of all of history.

[11:47] Now, again, when a pastor makes a statement like that, God's people should be doing what? Yeah? Yeah? I'm not sure about that.

There's some other pretty important weeks, am I right? What would be an important week?

Creation, right? And yet, as someone threw resurrection out there, we'll kind of tag that in with the week, I suppose.

But, yeah, without the resurrection, the cross is worthless, correct? But, it tells us in 1 Peter that angels, when they look at the issue of grace and what Christ has done in saving us, that they're just kind of overwhelmed and awed.

And we do know that during the creation week, what were they doing? They were hooping it up because they were pretty impressed with God's creative power. They enjoyed what they saw, they were impressed by it.

But during the part of time that passed in Christ's redemptive work, they kind of put their hand over their mouth and they're just in awe.

[12:59] So, here we are in John chapter 12, verse 1 and 2. And what we find is that John, in a good journalistic approach, he gives us the who.

He tells us when and he tells us where. And we're not going to delve into all of that, just mark the fact that we have a picture here of Jesus coming to a dinner and he is coming with at least 17 other people.

There's Lazarus, there's Martha, there's Mary, and himself, and then his 12. And I want you to just imagine, if you would, that here is Jesus walking towards this dinner party, knowing what is going to happen.

knowing the things that are going to be said. Knowing the import and the significance of what lay in front of him.

And he steps into this setting and we find that the dinner is in the process of being played out. We know that because it tells us there that Martha served.

[14:05] It was happening. It is interesting, and I think it's worth noting that previously, in the last dinner that we have when Martha and Mary were together, remember, Martha was busy doing her thing and what was Mary doing?

She wasn't participating in dishes and dinner. She was just sitting there listening to Jesus. And in that case, Martha takes it upon herself to go and talk to Jesus about the fact that her sister was falling down on the job.

I'm impressed by the fact Martha evidently learned something and she didn't make the same mistake twice. She listened. She observed.

She went about her business. And we find that Mary was not attached with that serving part. What does Mary do? I want you to look at the passage there in verse 3 and mark, if you will, just the absolute brevity with which Scripture describes what Mary did.

Let me read it to you. Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

[15:20] I'm struck by such a significant act being given merely one text, a verse. It's interesting to actually find that this ministry that Mary engaged in is also referenced in at least two of the other Gospels.

And let me just read the passage for you so you can frame it from what we find elsewhere. There in Matthew 26, verse 7, it says this, A woman came up to Him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment and she poured it on His head as He was reclined at the table.

Mark 14, verse 3, A woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard very costly and anointed the feet of Jesus and she broke the flask and poured it on His head.

So I want you to stop just for a moment and we're going to step back and recognize something about Martha before we move on. You'll remember earlier in John chapter 11 that when Jesus came to Bethany where He had come to raise Lazarus from the dead, it was Mary who was grieving in the home and didn't come out to greet Jesus.

When Martha came and she had that discourse with Jesus, one of the things that I am impressed by is that Martha had worshipped Christ with her confession of faith.

[16:47] Do you remember what she said? John 11, verse 27, You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world. A very significant declaration of her absolute confidence that Jesus standing in front of her was indeed the Christ, the Son of God, the one that had been prophesied as a fulfillment of God's promise going all the way back to Genesis chapter 3.

She believed in Christ and her worship was a confessional one, something she said. We find a different picture here of Mary and Mary's worship was one of her costly act of giving.

The alabaster jar of pure nard must have been hers personally and we're not told the details of it but I can imagine that, just imagine that you have something that is so expensive.

It represented one year's wages. Now, let's just do a little bit of exercise here. How many of you remember what was on your taxes when you filed them?

Does anybody remember? Just in broad terms, I see some of you smiling. You don't need to shout out numbers but I just want you to imagine that proportionally that's what this represents. Now, if we're going to spend a year's wages, right, what kind of things would we like to get out of that?

[18:19] I see you're going to buy yourself a house. I mean, you know, well, not a year's wages but you want something that's going to last. Would you like something that would last? How many of you would willingly pour out, how many of you would burn a year's wages, just light it up and let it go?

Now, perfume has a little longer last to it than burning dollar bills. But I do want you to know that within a short period of time, what happens to perfume?

It evaporates. It disappears. The aroma, the odor from that perfume is dissipated. It's gone. And so, here is Mary.

She brings that which belongs to herself. And I'm struck also by the fact that just earlier, her brother had died. Right? It was not unusual for the Jews in preparing the body of a loved one to use spices, anointments, and perfumes.

They did not embalm individuals back in the good old days, right? And nobody walked past the casket and said, my, don't they look good. You know, they used heavy perfumes and things like that.

[19:45] Guess why? In place of refrigeration and embalming, they were hoping in some kind of, and you remember when they prepared Jesus' body for burial, how many pounds of spices did they use?

Who knows? 75 pounds of spices, okay? I just finished reading that passage this morning, so it's kind of fresh in my mind. 75 pounds of spices.

That's a lot. Martha and Mary had lost their brother. Mary had chosen not to use this for her brother's burial.

And yet, here she comes and she pours it out. She breaks the neck of the alabaster flask and she pours it on his head, Jesus' head, and down onto his feet.

And I've got to tell you that it goes without saying that Mary did something exceptional and stunning. Let me spell it out for you. For one thing, Mary's expenditure was great.

[20:57] This had to represent a very significant part of her life. I want you to imagine the thought processes that went through her mind in actually coming to the place of deciding that it was a reasonable thing to buy that perfume.

One of the things I did last week was I actually did a little bit of internet search of what kind of perfumes were really expensive. Just raise your hand from the elbow up.

How many of you know of perfumes that cost over a dollar? You're good. Okay. How many of you know perfumes that cost over a hundred dollars? Just up from the elbow.

That's all I'm looking for. How many of you know perfumes that cost more than a thousand dollars? Ah, yeah, I got it. How many of you can imagine spending let's say fifty thousand dollars for a little little flask of perfume?

How many of you know what buyer's remorse and anxiety is? How many of you should I have done that? You know, and here is Mary who bought that.

[22 : 17] There's hers. And here is Jesus. And she willingly, consciously, deliberately broke that flask and poured it on his head and poured it on his feet.

great. There's something else that I want you to appreciate. Mary's humility was great. I think it's safe to say that there is not a single woman in this room that has ever abased herself at anyone's feet and ever wiped someone else's feet with her hair.

Huh? Anybody? No? My bride is homesick today and I'll tell this, you know, she doesn't mind rubbing my shoulders but when I say, would you rub my feet?

She says, I don't touch feet. Now, I know some of you are just wonderful, godly exceptions to the rule but for the most part, it's not something that most of you like doing, right?

here was Mary willing to let her hair down. Did you know that in Jewish culture you didn't let your hair down in public? You never did.

[23 : 38] You never did. This was something that simply was not done and Mary let her hair down ahead of going in and anointing Christ's feet and then as she was stooped at his feet, she took her hair and she rubbed her hair over his feet.

I'll never forget the wedding that I went to in which Jimmy, I think she married Kadar, this is Christy Brown's sister. It was an Indian wedding and after the wedding service was performed, the ceremony, you know how it is, you have the wedding and out go the bride and the groom and everybody's cheering and Jimmy stopped and at the first pew she knelt and kissed her mother-in-law's feet.

I've never forgotten that. And here is Mary who with a heart that is so unbelievably thankful, she willingly pours out not only a costly gift but a profoundly humbling gift.

You know, it's interesting when you stop and think about it that all worship really shows worth. Can you say that with me? All worship shows worth. All worship shows worth.

Let me illustrate that for you just for a second. I want you to look in your Bible, turn back to 2 Samuel chapter 24. Just look at this. This is at the very end of 2 Samuel and you remember that David was tempted and decided that he would number the people and God comes to him and says, you messed up and here are the consequences.

[25 : 37] In verse 18 it says, David runs off there because the people are suffering and the nation of Israel is suffering because of David's sin.

And when Arunah sees David coming he says, what's up? And David says in verse 21, I don't know if you have the next verse underlined.

All this, O king, Arunah gives to the king. And Arunah said to the king, may the Lord your God accept you. Now mark this. And the king said to Arunah, no, but I will buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God. That costs me nothing. Do you understand that? Here was David expressing the worth of his God.

And here is Mary expressing the worth of our Savior. Now what Mary did was a display of her view of Christ.

[27 : 16] She declared his worth. And when we speak of worshiping Christ and really at the end of the day, remember what I said, but two choices on the shelf, worship Christ or worship self.

The truth of the matter is we are always engaged in the activity of worship. The question is who is on the throne and who are we focused on?

Allow me a couple practical notes before we move on here. For one, I'm struck by the fact that we find no rebuke from Christ or from Lazarus or from Martha. Jesus accepted this worship and I'm struck by the fact in other passages you'll remember when John fell at the feet of an angel.

The angel says don't be doing that. Worship God. Here's Jesus accepting this worship and not rebuking Martha or not rebuking Mary for this exceptionally expensive and costly gift.

Furthermore, we know that Mary's act of worship while condemned by wickedness lifted up her sacrifice to eternal significance. What do I mean by that?

[28 : 33] Turn back. You're in John. You were in another passage, 2 Samuel, but I want you to look at John. I'm sorry. Turn to Mark 14. Mark 14, verse 9.

Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.

That's something, isn't it? Mary's act of worship was one that ended up as a benchmark and a reminder to all of us of what real genuine worship looks like.

So let me stop just for a minute and ask yourself this question. What have you given him? When have you ever consciously chosen to give to him something that you were reserving for yourself out of nothing other than a mere expression of your worth for him?

So a practical question to follow that would be this. How often has your worship been as significant and as sweet as Mary's?

[30 : 01] How often has your worship been as significant and sweet as Mary's? I got to tell you, we live in an age where the vocabulary of our culture is a dead giveaway.

How many of you have ever heard somebody say, I'm worth it? Two weeks ago I was having a conversation with an individual and we were dealing with the issue of sin. And the person was trying to understand why I was concerned about what had been going on in the individual's life morally. And in the flow of conversation the individual said this, I should think more of myself and not keep doing this. I thought, what? You're not the problem.

It's your view of God. Do you follow that? I'm worth it. Here is Mary saying, Christ, you're worth it. And I find my pleasure and my satisfaction in giving to you that which is my best and most prized. Well, there's another person in the picture and I don't think we should miss him.

[31 : 17] Look at Judas at his altar. Verse 4, but Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he who was about to betray him, said, you can hear his attitude, right?

Kind of snarky. Hey, stop just for a minute. How many of you specialize in being critical of other people? Raise your hands if you want to wave at me and say, I'm good at that. Why was this ointment not sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?

Here is Mary's beautiful act of worship that Christ accepts. Have you ever been amazed at how stupid you can be and put your foot in when you really should think more carefully?

There is wisdom sometimes in just being quiet. Judas would have been well served to keep his comments to himself. No, he opens his mouth. Why did he do that?

I mean, you know, hey, he could have said, well, hey, it's her business, it's her stuff, let her throw it away if she wants to. No, he had to step into it and really show his heart. The truth is, whether it is in regards to moral purity or honesty or the value of human life, ultimately, truth is something that is offensive to the sinner.

[32 : 42] And the sinner is not going to let truth go unchecked. think with me just for a moment of a passage over in John chapter 3, verse 19 and 20.

Remember, Jesus, in essence, says this. He says, listen, I've brought light into the situation, and those who hate the light, right? They hate the light because their deeds are evil.

I want you to understand that true worship exposes false worship and will always stir hatred. You don't have to go out of your way, but you have to worship.

And you shouldn't be surprised if your worship ends up being something that is maligned, is hated, because of your joy and satisfaction ultimately in Christ rather than a fallen and broken world in the messiness of the place we live.

It's interesting to notice that Judas hid his wickedness behind false piety and a well-known discipline of generosity. It is clear from the passage that Jesus and his disciples collected money, and one of the things that they did was they shared it with others who were needy.

[34 : 00] And Judas knew that. Now, if you want something to kind of chew on when you go home, ask yourself this question. Why would Jesus, did Jesus know everything about Judas' heart?

What's the answer? Over in John chapter 2, it says, for he knew the hearts of men. Remember when his disciples were having arguments and Jesus would say, what's up? And they'd say, oh, and he'd say, bang, he'd tell them.

He knew what people were thinking. Why did Jesus let Judas be the treasurer for the disciples? Go home and chew on that one, right?

But here we find Judas having no problem whatever in voicing his criticism. By the way, I think this is the first place in the Gospels where we actually see Judas saying anything.

Not very nice thing to comment on, is it? A critical and dismissive spirit is often a sign of spiritual issues elsewhere in a person's life. Wouldn't you agree with that?

[35 : 11] How many of you recognize that? You don't have to work hard to be critical and sarcastic and belittling of other people when your own spirit is frail and struggling in your walk with Christ.

It's time to sing Your song again. Whatever may pass, and whatever lies before me, let me be seen in the evening comes.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship His holy name.

[44 : 11] Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship Your holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, worship His holy name. Sing like never before, O my soul, worship His holy name. You're rich in love, and you're slow to reign.

Your name is great, and Your heart is kind. For all Your goodness I will keep on singing.

Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find Bless the Lord Bless the Lord, O my soul O my soul

Worship His holy name Sing like never before O my soul I'll worship Your holy name And on that day when my strength is failing

The end draws near and my time has come Still my soul will sing Your praise High and deep Ten thousand years in there forevermore Bless the Lord, O my soul Oh my soul Worship His holy name Sing like never before Oh my soul Oh my soul I'll worship Your holy name Bless the Lord Bless the Lord, O my soul Oh my soul My soul Oh my soul

[47 : 08] Worship His holy name Lord, I'll worship Your holy name I'll worship Your holy name Lord, I'll worship Your holy name Amen. Please be seated.

I took my microphone off So I have to lean in here a little bit But just to let you know that for us Baptism is not something that saves a person Baptism is an outward sign of the inward work of grace And when a person comes forward to be baptized What they are doing is coming to give public testimony To the power of the cross And the sweetness of our Savior And it is always fitting for us to hear the testimony of an individual When they willingly come forward in humility to be baptized As a public testament of their salvation So I'm going to ask Jessica to share her testimony of faith in Christ I went to Awana I was listening to Miss Denise Harless teaching the lesson And we came home from Awana And I asked Dad questions I knew I was a sinner in need of a Savior I accepted Jesus into my heart after all of that night And I accepted Jesus into my heart after all of that Jessica, on the basis of your testimony of knowing Christ as your personal Savior and your desire to be baptized this morning, I now baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Thank you. Pastor Shearer, will you come and close with a word of Scripture?

Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples. Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name.

[50 : 25] Bring an offering and come to His courts. Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness. Tremble before Him all the earth.

Take a spirit of worship from this place to every place God will take you this week. You are conduits of worship to Him wherever you go.

Please Him this week through worship. Thanks for coming this morning. You're just amazing. Congratulations. Thank you.

Thank you.