



Christ Our Standard Ministries

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One time, a woman who was considered a filthy sinner desired to spend some quality time with Jesus to show her appreciation for what He had done in her life. She heard of an event where she could find Jesus and decided to gate-crash.

This event took place in the home of a highly respected religious Jewish teacher, who invited all distinguished men of Israel along with Jesus and His disciples.

Following Jesus as He walked the countryside, this woman had heard Him talk of something His disciples seemed totally unaware of...

Didn't He say, "I will go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things"?

Surely, if His men had paid attention to His words, they would have taken time to comfort Him!

Having known that the only man who truly loved and cared for her was going to die, Mary purchased a bottle of special fragrant oil to anoint her dear friend. It cost her all her savings, equivalent to a labourer's annual wage (yet affordable to the noblemen of her time). She kept it safe and waited for the nearest opportunity to anoint Him.

When she first learned that Christ would be visiting Simon-the-distinguished-fellow, she thought, "Of course, people like me are a disgrace to the community and never get invited to up-market social gatherings, where only holy men are welcome." She decided to gatecrash the event regardless.

I don't know what went through her mind, but there she was, sitting at the Saviour's feet, weeping her heart out. Her tears fell on the dusty feet of Jesus, totally neglected by Simon, who had "forgotten" to wash them upon the arrival of Jesus. Imagine how weary and sore Jesus' feet must have been... Was Simon really concerned about celebrating his special Guest's presence? Or did he throw the party for his own self-interest? How could he overlook the obvious hospitality custom of the day?

It appears that Mary knew Simon's heart pretty well. This religious man is the one who personally introduced her to the vice of prostitution that had ruined her life. We are not given the full inspired account, but what is certain, is that Simon the "holy" man was her uncle who took advantage of a young girl whom he was supposed to take care of but instead decided to satisfy his sinful drive, as many religious men still do today.

In short, she didn't feel she deserved the hatred of these religious men who very likely shared Simon's habits in their private lives. She couldn't justify being treated as a disgrace by her uncle since he was the one to abuse her in the first place while she was in his care. In fact, he deported her to the distant city of Magdalene, well-removed from his sight. It was there that she got her famous title "Mary Magdalene" — the harlot of the city of Magdalene.

It was hard for her to understand why “the men of the church board” hated *her*... They knew full well the position of their fellow-elder yet they had “played safe” and kept their silence.

But this man, Jesus — she knew He was truly holy. She couldn't comprehend what good He saw in her that He should care about her. She repeatedly joined the Psalmist in asking, *“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalms 8:4).*

She couldn't see herself as deserving the care and attention of this man Jesus, yet she didn't doubt His love for her. This kind of love she'd never experienced before — love that requires no payment nor asks for anything in return.

So this fragile, broken woman was sitting at the feet of Jesus, crying. What made her so sad? Is it because she was aware that her best friend, the only human who never judged her, was going to die? Or maybe she realised she would never be loved like this ever again? It is obvious she didn't plan for events to unfold this way; she didn't bring a towel with her, either. Though her maiden hair was precious, and though it was a disgrace in Israel for a woman to wear her hair out in public, Mary didn't seem to care. She wiped Jesus' dusty feet with her lovely long hair.

It makes me wonder why she never paused to ask Simon for a bowl of water and a towel...

But Mary loved this man and she didn't mind.

Jesus was the only man whose feet were washed with woman's tears and wiped with her hair. Mary was the only person who truly cared and sympathized with Jesus as He was headed for the cross. The only person who cared to comfort Christ was this “dirty,” outcast woman.

It seems like the focal point of this party was something other than Jesus. Maybe Simon invited Jesus to sanitize his own guilty conscience? For how can a woman sit at the feet of Jesus unnoticed until she opens that bottle of sweet perfume to anoint His feet? Mary might have thought, “If I wait to anoint Him after he's died, He certainly wouldn't know it. I will do it while He is still alive!” which brings me to the main point.

Simon became disgruntled with Jesus when he finally noticed what was going on. How dare He allow this filthy woman to touch Him? He was so ASHAMED of Jesus...

He must have felt embarrassed about his guest. Was He really the supposed Messiah? If so, how come he didn't recognise this woman as a sinner? Simon's attitude suggested he wanted a Saviour who was lofty and distinct from the sinners. He had a view of God as too holy to associate with the filthy — the very ones from whom He hides his face!

“For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause HE IS NOT ASHAMED to call them BRETHREN” (Hebrews 2:11).

Christ is never ashamed of any sinner, and He demonstrated this in action when He took up human nature. Although He never sinned, He fully identified with man and sympathised with man's woes.

Imagine everyone in the whole house turning to Jesus and Mary! Was Mary ashamed? Why didn't she vanish through the back door?

Notice that look on Simon's face: “You have destroyed my party!”

What about the disciples — the professed ambassadors of the coming Kingdom?

– “You have wasted so much money!”

Why was Mary not bothered by their remarks?

It seems nobody understood her. Mary was at the feet of a man she was comfortable with. A man who “said unto her, NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE: go, and sin no more” (John 8:11).

Just as Jesus and Mary were the centre of attention in this awkward moment in the house of Simon the Pharisee, their story is the centre of the gospel.

Jesus and Mary, and their respective behaviours and actions, are both the mission of Jesus and the end result of His mission.

“For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (Heb 2:10).

It was intentional for Jesus to be made human and through suffering and death as a man (Heb 2:9) draw people to God through His love and make them comfortable with the Majestic and Holy God. Come to Him for healing.

“Be like Jesus, ‘tis my song!”