



*For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always*

*<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup>There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. <sup>3</sup>Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. <sup>4</sup>Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, <sup>5</sup>Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? <sup>6</sup>This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. <sup>7</sup>Then said Jesus, **Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.** <sup>8</sup>**For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.** <sup>9</sup>Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup>But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; <sup>11</sup>Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. (John 12:1-11)*

Not many days before the Passover (the one and only Lord's Passover fulfilled), Jesus had raised a man named Lazarus from the dead. He was brother to Mary and Martha of Bethany, a family of particular fondness to our Lord. The Jewish religious leaders knew full well that no mere man could raise one from the dead who had lain in the tomb for four days; and they knew likewise that none but God could work such miracles. So what was their response? "*Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.*" John 11:47 (KJV) These men were of such stone-cold hearts that they were blinded by their passion and greed. They were blind to the glory and brightness of God's Son whom they sought to destroy - knowing full well who He truly was. "*Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.*" John 11:53 (KJV) The minions of Satan still reward righteousness with premeditated murder and persecution. Imagine: because Christ restored sight to the blind, restored the leper to health, bade the lame to walk, and raised the dead, these culprits care more for their silken robes and plush Temple than for life and love, and seek to kill Him.

Just yesterday, six of those minions of Satan (Al-Qaida affiliates) went onto the beach of the Ivory Coast in Africa and murdered twenty-two unarmed men, women

and children - these 'brave soldiers of Allah' seem to have greater courage in waging war on the unarmed innocent than against soldierly men of the line. They killed a mere boy who kneeled before them praying for his life. As they murdered, they shouted "Allahu Ahkbar!" - the rallying call of their little false god of death. Allah is Great - really? Great at rape, murder, and mayhem? As the wise Solomon proclaims, *there is no new thing under the sun.* (Eccl 1:9)

We see in our narrative, that our Lord comes to Bethany six days before the culmination of that Passover of the Lord in Egypt which foreshadowed across those many centuries this last Passover at which our Lord will be the Lamb of God offered up as a sacrifice in redemption of our sins.

*There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.* Many blame Martha for not continually sitting at the knee of Jesus, but someone must also serve. Here, as usual, we see the faithful Martha serving her Lord and His company. The difference in Martha and Mary is this - Mary always served our Lord with greater tenderness and in a close and personal manner. This irritated Martha because she was the one that the unseen labor fell upon. But the service of both was blessed in the eyes of our Lord. Significantly, Lazarus, whom Christ had raised from the dead just days earlier sat with the Lord's company at the table. There were no lingering symptoms of the cast of death about Lazarus. He was healthy and hungry! After our dead bodies have lain in a borrowed tomb for longer than the four days of Lazarus' sojourn there, we, too, will have ample appetite to partake of the Great Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

There were other differences in the personalities of Martha and Mary. Martha had a personality of DOING constantly. She was equally beloved of the Lord; but the spirituality of Martha was manifested in outward form of active service. Mary was more inclined to harbor her love of Christ and His Gospel deep in the warm and inviting chambers of her heart. She loved to sit at the feet of Jesus and hang upon His every word. It was a food that was so rich and strengthening to Mary. She is the Mary who is most associated with the feet of Jesus and typifies the character of the true Church. Like Ruth, Mary found that her most pleasant venue was at the feet of her Lord. Remember the counsel of Naomi to her dearly beloved daughter-in-law? *And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.* (Ruth 3:4)

Now, without speaking a single word, Mary comes (quietly, like Ruth) to anoint the feet of her Lord for his burial. *Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.* Mary loved our Lord with an agape love, and she was more than grateful for her brother Lazarus being raised from the dead. In fact, it is only of Mary that we read of weeping at her brother's death. *The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,* (John 11:31-33) Even in deep distress, Mary falls at the feet of Jesus. Why do you suppose our Lord groaned in the spirit? I believe it was because he saw the weeping remorse of Mary and her little faith in knowing that Jesus could yet raise Lazarus from the grave.

A quite revealing comment comes next that should expel any thought that Judas was somehow forced into committing his fatal act of treachery against our Lord *Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? **This he said, not that he***

*cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.* As further evidence that Judas was totally depraved and beyond the benefits of salvation, read the words of our Lord: *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.* Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, *Thou hast said.* (Matt 26:24-25)

Then said Jesus, *Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. sFor the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.*" Mary brought very expensive ointment and she not only anointed the feet of Jesus, but His head as well according to Mark. When Judas protested, our Lord said, *Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.* (Mark 14:6-9) Mary gave of her best, and her final act of filial love was greater than any other labor she could have previously performed. And, as our Lord has proclaimed, Mary is remembered throughout the whole world today.

Now Martha, Mary and Lazarus LIVED in that place with Christ in their hearts, but many GUESTS came out of a mere curiosity over the miracle of Lazarus' being raised. *Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.* A lesson herein is the principle of faith that Jesus ABIDES in our hearts and does not come as a sometime guest. The True worshipper is not a guest, but a member of God's household.

There were others who came for less honorable purposes - even out of wicked and spiteful hearts! *But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.* What a strong lesson is presented in these last two verses! The casual believer (such as those who came merely to see an oddity) are far less dangerous than the formal religionists who seek power, money, and prestige from their office. Such were the very men of whom we would expect much better - the chief priests! They populate the greater number of pulpits in America today.

Rather than coming to celebrate the restoration to life of Lazarus, these scoundrels came with the view of putting Lazarus back in the grave! As we see today in the Levant of Syria and Iraq (ISIS), religion gone awry (as are all such false religions) is far worse than no religion at all. The same is happening in churches across America every worship day. They sweep the Word (our Lord) under the carpet and teach the fables and imaginations of men. Murder of innocent babies in their mother's womb becomes blessed by these false professors along with a direct refutation of the Holy Estate of Matrimony as set forth at Eden's Creation. Giving respectability to homosexual marriage is the same as denying the Church is the Bride of Christ. If you find yourself in such a church, you have no other option but to flee to the sanctuary of Christ and His Bible.