

The Fragrant Oil of Worship

By Todd Bentley

Today I'm going to talk about intimacy with Jesus and how to release the fragrant oil of worship, or the perfume of worship. I want to also speak about 'the kiss' and about washing Jesus' feet. I believe that this message will stir us up so that we become love sick, falling in love with Jesus all over again.

Also before we begin, I want to say that I hope we'll cherish the message that's captured in The Fragrant Oil of Worship. With this in mind I want to invite each one reading this teaching today to pause right now and invite the Holy Spirit to come and hover over you. Let's pray together.... Heavenly Father, I ask today that we would completely surrender ourselves to you as we discover together how to abide in your presence in the place of devotion and intimacy. We want to find that glorious place at your feet." ... To beautify the place of My sanctuary, and I will make the place of My feet glorious" (Is. 60:13b).

Passion, Worship, Intimacy

THE ANOINTING OF BETHANY

Passion, worship and intimacy—three words filled with purpose and meaning that must influence the core of our being if we are going to touch the very heart of Jesus Christ. Listen! When we have a church of passionate people filled with fresh first love who pursue the presence of the Lord, then we'll experience God's presence among us. And when the presence of the Lord falls upon us, everything else happens—deliverance, healing, restoration, forgiveness and cleansing. But believers so often wrestle with God, feeling stuck, trying to get Him to take care of their needs rather than just getting a hold of Him and experiencing His presence. Holding onto the hem of Jesus' garment and esteeming Him above all else releases God's purposes to fall into place in our lives. Today I'm going to challenge the way that we love and relate to our Master, Jesus Christ, and challenge the lover-friendship relationship that we have with Him. I'm going to ask how much of a lover of Jesus are we? But just before we delve into answering these questions I want us to read two passages of scripture about the 'anointing of Bethany' that will lay a foundation beforehand. **And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor."** But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her" (Matthew 26: 6-13). Now I want you to flip over to another perspective concerning the same event in Luke 7:36-48. Although the account in Luke does not mention that Jesus was anointed with fragrant oil to prepare Him for His burial, some Bible scholars believe that the account in Matthew and Luke are one and the same scene. As well, at first glance it appears that Simon the leper and Simon the Pharisee isn't the same person, some Bible scholars feel he was a Pharisee who was healed of leprosy by Jesus. I also believe this and we will examine this week's teaching based on these opinions. **Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."** And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven" (Luke. 7:36-48). I remember as I read about 'the anointing of Bethany' also in the books of Mark and John that each time I always thought, 'There has to be a whole lot more to this story!' So I've been chewing and meditating on this whole biblical account for months. The passages in Matthew and Luke describe an unnamed woman who humbly came to Jesus with her alabaster box of perfume and how she anointed His head and His feet. Now, what struck me the most when I read these two passages was when the Holy Spirit revealed that the 'anointing of Bethany' is not just about the anointing of Jesus for His burial and resurrection. Rather, if our hearts are open, this true story can teach us how to be abandoned lovers of Jesus. The first thing I want us to notice is where it says, **And behold, a woman" (Luke. 7:37)**. Although the woman is unnamed, some Bible scholars believe she is Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazareth. I also believe this. She was filled with so much passion for Jesus that she could confront and challenge all the familiar cultural protocol. She pushed beyond her dignity and any fears concerning what everybody else might think of her. Mary's passion so burned inside of her for Jesus that nothing was going to keep her from the feet of her Master. Mary's heart was undivided. The bible tells us that when her sister Martha welcomed Jesus into their home that Mary gave Him all of her attention and devotion. On the other hand, her sister Martha was completely distracted about many little things; she pressured Mary to get up and help her with household chores (Luke 10:38-42). But Mary didn't care about all the things that perhaps needed to be done and she resisted the temptation to get busy because she was satisfied with one thing to do for God and that was being close to Him, looking into His face and hearing His voice.

TRUE PASSION RELEASES TRUE WORSHIP

Do you know why Mary was such a woman of passion? It was because Mary knew she was rescued out of a pit of ungodly spiritual darkness. She knew the mercy and love of God that forgave her great sin; she was forever indebted to the Lord Jesus Christ. She remembered what it was like to live without God in her life. I believe she came to the Pharisee's house to see Jesus because of her great love and devotion to Him. It was like she said to herself, 'I have such a passion for Him because I know the love and forgiveness that I've found in Him that I want to go and just give Him thanks.' I don't believe she realized the prophetic significance concerning anointing Jesus for His burial. Rather her whole motive flowed from a burning heart. For her King; gratitude and adoration for Jesus drew her to His side. God wants us to have this same intense passion in our hearts for Him. Now how can we stir up our passion? One of the ways is by NEVER forgetting the pit of darkness that Jesus pulled us out of because of His great mercy and the love for us. You know something about Simon? He wasn't a passionate man. In fact, when Jesus gave the parable about the two debtors (Lk. 7:40-42), the reason He spoke this parable to Simon is because He was comparing Simon's passion to Mary's passion. Here's what He meant: Simon, because you don't know anything about passion, you weren't the one that anointed my head with oil. You weren't the one that anointed my feet. You weren't the one that wiped my feet with your hair. You weren't the one that wept at my feet or the one that kissed me. Yet this woman has not ceased kissing me because she remembers the pit she was rescued from. But because you are a Pharisee and you believe you're so religious and that all the outward things in your life are tidied up, you think that you don't really need my mercy. This just proves that you don't have a revelation of your need for my mercy and love. That's why you don't have the passion. You don't have the revelation that you need to be forgiven." Simon didn't think that he needed to be forgiven for anything because He was a Pharisee; he was religious. Mary knew her need; he didn't. She knew her debt; he didn't. It's unfortunate that so many in the body of Christ today have forgotten their indebtedness to Jesus. They've forgotten the pit that God brought them out of. That's why they don't have the passion or the fire of Jesus burning in their hearts like they had when they first got saved and He was their first love. And that's what's happening in this passage. Here is an example of a man that doesn't have an understanding of passion, adoration, devotion and gratitude because he's trusting in his religion. He thought he'd been saved for such a long time and he had it all together; the outside of the cup looked really good! With his spiritual pride intact, he asked Jesus, 'Do you not know what kind of woman this is?' It's like Simon was saying, 'Come on, you're with me now. Don't you know what manner of woman this is?' And Jesus turned around and basically said to him, **Simon, don't you know what manner of a man you are? Don't you know the debt of love, the love-slave debt that you owe unto your Master forever because of the forgiveness found in Me?** Simon didn't have this revelation. Now let's look at verse 37. It says that she brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil. Now the first thing about the fragrant oil (called spikenard), is that it's very expensive and only used for special occasions. In fact it was so costly that it was worth 300 denarii's, which today would be at least one year's full wages. But to Mary, no expense would be spared; her great love for Jesus could only be expressed by pouring out upon Him that which was her most precious and costly possession. Also Mary's act of devotion required breaking her alabaster box open so that the fragrant oil could pour out; an act that symbolized her brokenness before the Lord. As Mary wiped Jesus' feet with her hair, we can sense her emotions; passionate sobs, her tears streaming and mingling with the precious spikenard. How intimate... the smell of fragrant oil lingering in the air, its aroma offending the minds of the men who were present. (I'll speak more about this later.) After she poured out her offering onto the Lord Jesus, the first thing that Simon, Judas and the rest of the people did was to criticize her sharply. Their low regard for Jesus was exposed when they said, **What is the point of this waste? You could've taken what you have given to Him and we could have sold it and given it to the poor" (Matt. 26:8)**. But Mary had an opposite spirit and her high regard for the Lord would have been expressed by a retort something like this: No! Because if I am going to worship Jesus, worship that does not cost me everything, or worship that does not involve brokenness and sacrifice is not worship at all. Jesus is worth all that I have and all that I am and that's why I gave Him everything." If we are going to truly touch the heart of God with our worship, we need to worship like Mary did; we need to treasure this kind of worship. What I want us to notice is that Mary's worship so etched an everlasting mark on God's heart that He said, **Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be told as a memorial to her" (Matthew 26:13)**. To paraphrase Jesus' words: This woman's worship, expressed by her brokenness and sacrifice, devotion and passion, has forever touched my heart. Not only am I going to remember her devotion forever, but wherever this gospel is preached what this woman has done to me in her passion, will be told as a memorial to her." Now, what I want to ask us is this? Does our worship and devotion for Jesus so touch God's heart that even our worship of two years ago continues to bless the angels and God? Are they are still talking about that moment when we touched Him? Does God even remember the way that we worship? I believe that there is a place of such intimacy and abandonment in worship to God that we can touch Him to the point that it's like we can scar Him. It's like when our true worship touches Him; a seal comes upon His heart which causes Him to forever remember our worship. **[Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is as strong as death, jealousy as cruel as the grave; its flames are flames of fire, a most vehement flame" (Song of Sons 8:6)]** You know, this gospel has been preached for 2000 years and every person who's heard the gospel of Jesus remembers the intimacy of Mary. But our worship won't be remembered by God at all if it doesn't involve sacrifice and brokenness. And if our worship doesn't release all that we are and if it doesn't cost us everything, then it's not true worship at all.

TRUE WORSHIP MUST KILL US

If we're truly going to give God the worship that He deserves, it's going to involve brokenness. True worship must kill us and it must bring a sense of brokenness and humility into our body, soul and spirit. Remember, Mary had to break her alabaster box—symbolizing her brokenness and her 'death to self.' The 'breakings of God' release fragrant worship. If we're going to release the fragrant oil of worship, every time we come into the presence of God we must die. That's what happens when we come into the presence of Jesus—we die. We become humbled under His mighty hand, broken inside, our pride overthrown. It was only after her alabaster box was broken that the oil could be poured out, releasing its fragrance. Listen! Even after she walked out of the house there was still the lingering aroma; something had happened, someone touched God! Is there a lingering aroma over our lives and our churches? Is there a lingering aroma about our ministries that still fills the throne room of heaven? Is our worship like fragrant oil; even when we aren't worshipping any longer, the aroma of that sacrifice lingers? Our hearts are just like the alabaster box containing precious treasure soaked in an exquisite fragrance. But we must allow the Holy Spirit to break our hearts His way, by His Spirit. He never damages our hearts; He breaks our hearts with a purpose, so that we can release our true fragrant worship to God. Brokenness helps us die to ourselves and our inhibitions; we can forget about ourselves and worship God with great freedom and abandonment. We can even become like Moses! He didn't even realize His face shone with the brightness of the glory of God when he descended the mountain after 40 days of being in the glory of the Lord. In some Bibles it says that He lost sight of Himself (Ex. 34:29). But much of the church hasn't been broken and crushed by the Spirit of God. You know, if we surrender to the Lord, there is a breaking and humbling that comes upon us when we're in His presence. There is a death that only His presence can bring that will cause us forgotten about ourselves; our flesh doesn't rise up and rule us. Remember when the priests went into the Holy of Holies they burned the incense. The place was filled with the cloud of incense whenever they went in before the ark of the Lord. And one reason for the cloud of incense was because no flesh can glory in God's sight. The priests had to create a covering so that God could not see them going about their priestly duties in the Holy Place. I believe that brokenness and death to self not only releases true worship, it also releases the glory of God to cover us. Today, Christians are a part of the priesthood, too. We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pt. 2:9). As part of the royal priesthood, we must regard the Lord as holy. Next week in Part 2 we'll see an example of God's judgment against impure worship. We will also examine different ways to release honor and passionate love and devotion to the Lord before praying together.

Like 4 people like this. Sign Up to see what your friends like.

WRITINGS

All Writings

Articles

Missions Reports

Desk of Todd Bentley

Reports from the Road

Honoring our Partners

Testimonies

TWITTER @IAMTODDBENTLEY

It's great for the skin and tattoo! ☑️ <https://t.co/0ng2j3sw0>
Posted 1 day ago. From [Twitter for iPhone](#)

The Liquid Gold Series for woman! Yes ladies, this is for you! ☺️ <https://t.co/2BujOPWdyF> #LiquidGoldSeries <https://t.co/0xmZ2FVMKZ>
Posted 2 days ago. From [Twitter for iPhone](#)

Our new hair, skin and beard treatment Liquid Gold Series has arrived! <https://t.co/mHe0BRU35y>
Posted 2 days ago. From [Twitter for iPhone](#)

Last updated Jan 27 @ 4:36 pm est

CONTACT INFO

Fresh Fire USA
P.O. Box 820
Pineville, NC 28134

info@freshfireusa.com
803.802.0932

CONNECT & SHARE:

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#) [iTunes](#)