

What She Said, Part 6  
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Tuesday

A Woman's Obituary  
Barbara Thompson, Guest Writer  
Today's Treasure

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

*Matthew 26:13*

How do you want to be remembered? If you scan obituaries there are some common themes for women mentioning roles as wife, mother, grandmother, profession. There may be mention of service to church and community. Sometimes the person is referred to as the most fanatical sports enthusiast of a certain team or a hobby.

Several years ago, David Brooks writing in the NY Times referenced "eulogy virtues versus resume virtues". How I want to be remembered is a frequent thought in this season of life. It was especially poignant as I wrote my parents' eulogies. I regret we never had a conversation about how they wanted to be remembered.

Let's consider the story of "a woman" with these thoughts in mind.

In Matthew 26 and Mark 14 we read that two days before Passover, Jesus was at the home of Simon the leper for a meal. A woman came up to Him and breaking a flask of very expensive ointment (nard), she poured it on the head of Jesus. The disciples grumbled and accused her of waste since the ointment represented about a year's wages. They justified their criticism by saying the nard could have been sold and the money given to the poor. But Jesus challenged them saying the woman has done "a beautiful thing to Me" and prepared Him for burial. He reminded them they could take care of the poor at any time. And then He told them the remarkable truth of how this unnamed woman would be remembered:

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Once again, we read very specific details of her story. Jesus was in Bethany where His friend Lazarus had been raised from the dead. He was at the home of Simon the Leper and we are reminded of the radical nature of His relationship with the outcast. Most significant it is two days before Passover and His crucifixion. The woman is unnamed but remembered for her extravagance in the presence of an accusation of wastefulness. And Jesus memorializes an unnamed woman for what she has done.

This woman's story is that she anointed the Passover Lamb. For centuries, the Israelites had certified the Passover lamb by identifying it, bringing it home, and anointing it several times. The woman in this story has anointed the Lamb of God, unblemished and prepared, for His once for all sacrifice on a cross.

We remember a sister in Christ. The Lord used her extravagance to prepare the perfect Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. The Lord reclined at dinner with Simon the Leper, Judas, and the self-righteous disciples. Her extravagance pointed to the extravagant death Jesus would die in just two days.

I would like to know more about her. Did she know that Jesus was to die and be buried? What was the rest of her story that brought her to this risky place? Where did she go after anointing Jesus' head? What did people think of her? How is she remembered millennia later?

And that is the end of the story. She is remembered as we proclaim the old, old story of the truth that the perfect Lamb of God lived sinlessly, was crucified, dead, and buried. And that He lives. Every time we tell the story it's in memory of her and you and me and all those who are called to the table where Jesus reclines.

### LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

Jesus memorializes the Last Supper saying "Do this in remembrance of me." He memorializes a woman's extravagance saying how she will be remembered whenever the Gospel is told.

### PRAYER

Lord, thank You for Your extravagant grace in living, dying, and living again for sinners. And thank You for the story of this woman who shows us Your perfection and sacrifice. We praise You, Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

Your story: Often one story can dominate how we are remembered. Is the story you have been writing one of those stories? If so, is this how you want to be remembered? If not, rewrite your story with how you want to be remembered in mind.