

## New Wineskins For Fresh Wine: Poured In To Pour Out

September 17, 2023

Pastor Ben Sosa

Big Idea – As we're poured into by Jesus, we're called to pour out. Genuine worship and Discipleship involve a willingness to sacrificially give from ourselves as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

Good morning, Life Center. The Last two weeks Pastor Glenn has been guiding us through New Wine and New Wineskins. There are necessary changes, there are necessary movements. There are no coincidences in God's kingdom, He positions people, vision, events, circumstances in such a way, in such a time so that His purposes become alive, the only question being, do we say Yes and be a part of what He is doing. A little over 100 years ago God did an amazing work that birthed the Assemblies of God, we are everywhere around the globe. A few years ago, when was at Refinery Church in Fresno I was helping to clear out an attic space in the main office to make space, get rid of some old stuff. Refinery is about the same age as Life Center, once known as West McKinley Assembly of God, just like Life Center was once First Assembly of God... In the process of emptying this attic space I found some old tithing envelopes. These records went back to the late 60s and early 70s. In the tithe records I found one slip that stood out to me, not because of a name or because of a quantity but because of what it was designated to.

I had found a tithing envelope that reflected a tithe toward the building project for the Bible Institute in San Salvador, El Salvador. Back in the 1960s there was a man by the name of David Stewart, he was from our district here in southern California. He helped to herald the move to build more facilities in El Salvador so that people could go to bible college. My Uncle went to that Bible college when it opened, he received scholarships from Southern California churches like Refinery, I am sure if we dig back to Life Center's archive, we may even find that Life Center gave to the building of this bible college and others like it.

My dad's family in El Salvador came to Christ through the work of Assemblies of God missionaries. Missionaries that we're funded by faith promises from local churches in this very California district.

A few years before that interaction, I had made friend with a worship musician his name is Joel Stewart, he's a local guy that led a worship set at the house of prayer where I interned, he's a former missionary kid, who's in the Philippines right now. We figured out that we both were of an assembly of God background and got to talking one day and I told him about my family, how my dad's family came from El Salvador. He tells me, his grandfather or great-grandfather was a missionary to El Salvador that had built a bible college. His grandpa was David Stewart.

Men and women, throughout the history of the church have given sacrificially, whether it be financially, whether it be with their time, their labor, their expertise, and it always turns out unto the Glory of God. We don't always see the fruit, we don't always get a recompense the way the world would want it, or the way we would want it in the moment, God's economy works in a very different way than ours. God provided for those missionaries to God, God made a way where there wasn't a way, established a church where there was none, and you could call it serendipity, but it's just the way God shows his fingerprint in the midst of it all. Moments and realizations like that aren't the reason I do what I do, that's not the basis of my faith, but it's nice to look at history, see how God worked in recent past and how He continues to do so today after all it's new wine, new wineskins.

As we turn into scripture today, I want to remind you to

- 1. Lay it all out down to Jesus.**

### **John 12:1-8 ESV**

Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at the table. 3 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. 4 But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, 5 Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor? 6 He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and

having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 Jesus said, "leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. 8 For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

- Many believe that the perfume had been given to Mary by her parents as a part of an alabaster box this was something reserved by each girl when approaching the age of marriage, this would be a perfume to anoint a marital bed. Depending on the family's wealth it could have been worth at least a year's wages.
- Just days before this meal, Jesus had raised Lazarus, her brother from the dead. Mary empowered by the move of God, filled with faith, filled with awe and wonder, she went and anointed Jesus with this perfume.

We praise Mary's radical faith and her act of worship. But doesn't a part of your question it? Doesn't Judas' comment kind of make financial sense. Would Dave Ramsey approve of Mary's use of that perfume? She could have put that proceeds from that sale to a 401k.

The thing is, we praise Mary, we hear testimonies of amazing sacrifices that many have done in Jesus' name, read and hear stories of missionaries in faraway lands, but at home it's easy to be complacent.

I remember going on a Skype call with a missionary in Northern Iraq during the height of ISIS's stronghold and him saying, "We are aware that ISIS is one town away, everyone else has left, no other organization is here", and soon after that he told us about how he'd spent a whole day looking to procure a wheelchair for an elder of a family that he was building relationship with. My biggest issue that day had been that the line at Starbucks was too long.

I'm not here to say we have it easy, everyone has their share of troubles, but we have a privileged faith in America, and it's very easy to get comfortable checking off our weekly checklist and saying I went to church, I gave my tithe, I am good with God. My friends, we're saved, we're here at church or online, but I must tell you, there's more to life with God than just filling a seat and saying laying it all down doesn't necessarily

mean you're going to join my friend in the middle east, but it does mean you have to pour out your expensive perfume at the feet of Jesus.

It may seem outlandish, extravagant, unnecessary, wasteful! This expensive perfume, what could it be, a potential career? An unfulfilling job? Turning your vacation fund to a missions' trip fund? A gift given to a person in lieu of your own needs.

Paul Metzger a theologian wrote about Mary pouring out her perfume saying it was, "Just like God's grace which is poured out lavishly on unworthy sinners, like Mary, you and me" (The Gospel of John, When Love Comes to Town, Paul L Metzger).

## 2. It's Not A Performance

### John 12:3 ESV

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.

- I must point something out about Mary here... She used her hair to wash Jesus' feet. I can't help but think she had Rapunzel level hair to do this that's just the mental image I've had since I heard this passage as a kid. A rational mind would think, didn't they have a towel? They had to have had towels around.
- The thing is that Mary didn't have to use her hair.
  - o The thing is that Mary was undone.
  - o She was willing to give it all away.
- It was not a matter of performance, a manner of pity, a lack of self-worth or not being self-aware.
- Mary was fully in her senses when she did this, she had a complete understanding a realization of the greatness of God, of what Jesus had done, of what Jesus was about to do on the cross, as he was to pour out his life as a living sacrifice.
  - o What else would make sense to do?

### John 12:4-5 ESV

But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, 5 Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?

- Other passages like in the book of Matthew that describe this same interaction mentions that the other disciples agreed with Judas.
- Once Judas had made it about money, which he wanted for himself, the disciples just followed suit.

### **John 12:6-7 ESV**

He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. 7 Jesus said, “leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.

Jesus made sure to quash this sentiment immediately.

- He knew Judas’ heart was not in the right place.
- He knew that the disciples had not grasped what Mary had grasped.
- Jesus had been pouring out his life from the moment he began his ministry.
  - o Every miracle, eyes opened, wounds healed, dead come to life.
  - o Every pharisee and Sadducee led to see the truth, even Samaritans and pagans.
- The disciples had a hard time grasping the reality of their assignment.
- But Mary caught it, and in response poured out her most valuable offering.
- Jesus brings up the reality that the rest of that perfume was going to be set aside for his death.

### **3. But if I’m anxious to Pour it out?**

### **Philippians 2:4-8 ESV**

Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

I want to encourage you today to listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in your life, because we're all unique, we all have different talents, different giftings, the task is the same, but the execution isn't always.

Mary of Bethany was criticized by some of the disciples for her act of worship and devotion to Jesus, you may encounter times where even other believers may discourage you from what God is doing.

Paul shared in this verse saying, don't just look out for yourself, look also to the interests of others.

Any investment of your time, effort, resources into God's purposes is worth it. Investing in the life of another believer, of a new believer, of a person who needs Christ, that's always worth it.

Just as Mary's John 12:3 says that the smell of the perfume filled the room,

### **2 Corinthians 2:15 ESV**

For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

Jesus gave us all his great commission, this isn't a matter of bring your friend to church Pastor Glenn and his team will do the rest, this is an all-in type of deal. This is for all of us. Disciples make disciples.

### **Matthew 28:18-20 ESV**

And Jesus came and said to them, All Authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

We're all in, family right here. How are you doing? If you were filling out the intake form in the clinic for a spiritual check-up, are there areas of your life right now where

you need some help that only God can give? Are you feeling lonely, in need of fellowship, maybe you're in need of community, well trust me our life group leaders are some nice people they're just starting a round of sign-ups right now. Maybe you're hungry, longing for an encounter with God, in need of accountability, or just need someone to pray with you.

Have you ever seen badgers build a dam? Do you feel there's a dam in the way of receiving all that Christ has already given to you freely.

We're not a liturgical church, but I like praying the scripture, will you read Psalm 23 with me, read it like a prayer? The worship team will close in song but read this together with me:

**Psalm 23:1-6 ESV**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness.

For his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

For you are with me.

Your rod and your staff,

They comfort me.

You prepare a table before me.

In the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil.

My cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me.

All the days of my life,

And I shall dwell in the house of the LORD.

Forever.

## Scriptures

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### **Questions**

**Q:** What's the most treasured thing your parent(s) ever gave you?

**Q:** Mary poured expensive perfume on Jesus, have you ever seen someone do something special for God? What did it make you think or feel?

**Q:** Judas thought Mary's gift was a waste of money. His sentiment was insincere as he wanted to pocket money for himself. Have you ever struggled in giving when God put it in your heart to give for a specific mission or cause? What did you do?

**Q:** Mary's act was about love was sincere, not from a place of performance. In what ways can we express genuine worship to God?

**Q:** In the message Pastor Ben shared that it's easy to become complacent in our faith when we enjoy relative comfort and security. How do we guard against complacency and pour out our lives in the context that God has led us to?

**Q:** If you were to evaluate your spiritual health right now, what areas do you feel like you need to improve or grow? Is there anything specific from this Sunday that prompted you to change or work on your walk with God?

**Q:** Will you revisit Psalm 23; how does this Psalm resonate with your current spiritual journey or challenges?