



Extravagant Love and Costly Devotion: Lessons from the Gospels



Explore Jesus' encounter with the woman with the
alabaster jar to understand lavish love and true
devotion in the Gospels.

Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship</u>	5
<u>Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume</u>	11
<u>Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism</u>	17
<u>Day 4: 📺 Worship as Preparation for His Death</u>	23
<u>Day 5: ✨ The Impact of Extravagant Devotion</u>	29
<u>Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today</u>	35
<u>Day 7: 🌟 Living a Life of Costly Devotion</u>	41



Introduction

Welcome to this 7-day study exploring the profound message found in the story of Jesus and the woman with the alabaster jar, as recorded in *Mark 14:3–9*. This powerful encounter reveals themes of extravagance in love and the costliness of devotion to Christ that transcend culture and time. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus invites us into a relationship that calls for wholehearted surrender and worship — not measured by appearances or social approval but by sincere love poured out.

This study will immerse you in Scripture narratives where Jesus interacts with those who express their love with boldness and sacrifice. You will meet the woman who broke the norms to honor Jesus with her precious ointment, highlighting the heart behind worship. From her story, we learn about the nature of true devotion—one that risks reputation, resources, and comfort for the sake of honoring Jesus.

Across seven days, we will explore the deep significance of this story in the light of other Gospel accounts, helping us see how extravagant love is a response to Christ's saving grace. We will reflect on the difference between costless admiration and costly devotion and examine how Jesus' grace transforms our lives to worship Him with abandon.

Whether you are new to faith or seeking renewed passion in your walk with Christ, this study invites you to meditate on what it means to pour out your love generously and authentically. May these reflections inspire you to an



extravagant love and inspire costly devotion to the Savior who gave everything for you. 🙏





Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship



Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship

Your Verse

Mark 14:3 - "While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Luke 7:37 - "A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume."*
- *John 12:3 - "Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair."*



Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship

Devotional: Breaking the Jar: Worship That Costs Everything

The woman's act of breaking the alabaster jar was both shocking and significant. In the ancient world, perfume of such value represented a considerable investment, something preserved and guarded. Yet, this woman shattered the jar, symbolizing her complete surrender and outrageous love poured out for Jesus. Her devotion was not measured by caution but by the extravagant love she expressed, regardless of cost or social judgment.

Throughout Scripture, worship is portrayed as a gift of our hearts, often requiring boldness and sacrifice. The woman's action challenges us to consider what we hold back in our own worship and how fear or social expectations might restrain our expression of love toward God.

Jesus honored her act, affirming that such devotion prepares Him for His coming death. Her extravagant love was not wasted but treasured, revealing the kind of devotion that reflects a deep understanding of who Jesus is.

As you begin this study, ask yourself: How willing am I to break open my own alabaster jar? What does extravagant love in worship look like in my daily life?



Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship

Reflect and Apply

1. What might it look like for you to 'break your alabaster jar' in worship today?

2. Do you find it easier to love God from a distance or to express love through sacrifice? Why?

3. How does understanding Jesus' response to this woman change your view of costly devotion?



Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time you gave something valuable to God. What motivated you?

2. List areas where fear or pride might be holding back your wholehearted worship.

3. Reflect on the difference between public praise and private, costly devotion.



Day 1: 💧 The Woman's Bold Act in Worship

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, I thank You for the example of the woman who worshipped You with such extravagant love. Please help me to give You my best without holding back, even when it costs me. Teach me to love You boldly and live with a heart fully devoted. May my life become a fragrant offering, pleasing in Your sight. Empower me to worship You not only in words but through sacrifice and sincere acts of love. *Thank You for loving me first and inviting me into this beautiful relationship.*





Day 2: The Meaning Behind the Perfume



Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume

Your Verse

Mark 14:4 - "Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, 'Why this waste of perfume?'"

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 12:5 - "'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor?' they asked, 'because it was worth a year's wages.'"*
- *Matthew 26:10 - "When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial."*



Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume

Devotional: Not Wasteful, But Worshipful: Gifts That Honor Jesus

The perfume was costly—an extravagant gift that shocked the onlookers. Their indignation reveals how human perspectives often measure love and devotion by practicality or social norms. Yet, Jesus challenges that viewpoint, affirming the deeper meaning behind the woman's actions.

The perfume symbolized preparation for Jesus' impending death—a prophetic act of honoring Him as the Messiah who would give His life as a sacrifice. This act was not wasteful but deeply purposeful.

This story invites us to consider how our gifts, time, and resources can be dedicated fully to God's purposes. Are we willing to offer what others may see as "too much" or "wasteful" if it honors Jesus? The perfume's fragrance lingered, just like the lasting impact of genuine devotion on Jesus' heart.

Today, reflect on how you view generosity. Is your love and giving measured by worldly standards or by the heart of worship expressed toward Jesus?



Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume

Reflect and Apply

1. What do you consider 'wasteful' in worship, and how might God see it differently?

2. How can acts of generosity prepare your heart and others' for Jesus' work in your life?

3. In what ways does anticipating Jesus' sacrifice deepen your appreciation for costly devotion?



Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume

Journaling Prompts

1. Describe what extravagant generosity means to you in your current season.

2. Think about a time when others criticized your giving or ministry. How did you respond?

3. Write a prayer of dedication, offering your time, talents, and treasures to Jesus.



Day 2: 🌿 The Meaning Behind the Perfume

Prayer for Today

Dear Jesus, open my eyes to see the true value of worship and generosity beyond human judgment. Teach me to give freely and joyfully, knowing You cherish heart-level devotion more than anything else. Help me prepare my heart continually to honor Your sacrifice and love. Mold me into a vessel of worship that reflects Your grace and goodness. *Thank You for loving me even when I struggle to give fully.*





Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism



Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism

Your Verse

Mark 14:5 - "Why this waste of perfume?" asked some of those present. 'It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor.' And they rebuked her harshly."

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 11:33 - "When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled."*
- *Luke 7:39 - "When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.'"*



Devotional: Standing Firm in Devotion Amid Criticism

The woman's costly devotion was met with criticism and harsh judgment: people questioned her motives and even rebuked her, reflecting the tension between cultural expectations and heartfelt worship.

Jesus often faced criticism for associating with those deemed outcasts or sinners, yet His compassion and recognition of genuine love never wavered. This story reminds us that choosing to love extravagantly may invite misunderstandings or condemnation from others.

Are we prepared to face opposition when our actions reflect true devotion? Does the fear of criticism hold us back from expressing love boldly? Jesus' defense of the woman shows us that He values the intent and heart more than others' opinions. Our worship should be centered on His acceptance, not human approval.

Consider how Jesus intercedes for those loving Him authentically, and let that encourage you to pursue devotion without fear.



Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism

Reflect and Apply

1. How do you typically respond to criticism about your faith expressions?

2. What can you learn from Jesus' protective stance toward the woman's devotion?

3. In what areas might you be called to be bold despite potential judgment?



Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism

Journaling Prompts

1. Recall a time you felt misunderstood or judged for your faith. How did you cope?

2. Write about a personal devotion you've been hesitant to express openly.

3. List verses or truths that encourage you to remain steadfast in your worship.



Day 3: 🌹 Devotion Amidst Criticism

Prayer for Today

Lord, grant me courage to worship You boldly, even when faced with criticism or rejection. Help me focus on Your approval above all else. Comfort me when I feel misunderstood and remind me that You see and treasure my heart's true devotion. Strengthen me to stand firm in love and worship, reflecting Your grace in every circumstance. *Thank You for always defending and valuing me.*





Day 4: 🎁 Worship as Preparation for His Death



Day 4: 📖 Worship as Preparation for His Death

Your Verse

Mark 14:8 - "She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial."

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 19:39 - "Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus at night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds."*
- *Isaiah 53:12 - "He poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors."*



Day 4: 📖 Worship as Preparation for His Death

Devotional: Worship That Joins Christ's Sacrifice

Jesus acknowledged the woman's act as preparation for His burial, pointing to the sorrowful purpose of His imminent crucifixion. Her extravagant love was not only an expression of worship but a prophetic participation in Jesus' sacrifice.

This truth deepens our understanding of devotion: it is not detached from the realities of suffering and self-giving. Worship often intersects with surrender to God's redemptive plan, which includes embracing both joy and sacrifice.

How might worship prepare us for the trials ahead? How does recognizing Jesus' sacrifice encourage us to offer our best to Him? The woman's perfume becomes a symbol of costly love that anticipates Jesus' death and honors His mission.

As we walk in worship, may we be reminded that our devotion can participate in the greater story of redemption through Christ's death and resurrection.



Day 4: 📖 Worship as Preparation for His Death

Reflect and Apply

1. In what ways does worship prepare your heart for challenges or trials?

2. How does Jesus' death shape your understanding of devotion and love?

3. Are you willing to worship Jesus "in advance" of suffering, trusting His plan?



Day 4: 📖 Worship as Preparation for His Death

Journaling Prompts

1. Reflect on how Jesus' sacrifice has changed your life personally.

2. Write about a time when worship helped you through a difficult situation.

3. Consider what it looks like for you to offer 'costly' worship daily.



Day 4: 📖 Worship as Preparation for His Death

Prayer for Today

Father God, thank You for the sacrifice of Jesus and the example of worship that honors His mission. Help me understand that true devotion sometimes requires surrendering comfort and embracing Your will. Prepare my heart to worship with both joy and solemnity, trusting Your purposes in every season. *May my life reflect the fragrance of Christ's love wherever I go.*





Day 5: ✨ The Impact of Extravagant Devotion

Your Verse

Mark 14:9 - "I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 5:16 - "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*
- *Hebrews 12:1 - "Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."*



Devotional: Legacy of Love: Impact of Devoted Worship

Jesus declared that the woman's extravagant act of love would be remembered wherever the Gospel is preached. This promise highlights how holy acts of devotion have lasting impact beyond their immediate moment.

Her story became an example inspiring generations to worship with whole hearts, reminding us all of the power of sincere sacrifice. It challenges us to consider the legacy of our faith and how our worship shapes those who come after us.

What kinds of memories or stories are we creating through our love and devotion to Christ? Does our witness shine brightly to draw others closer to Him?

Our devotion, when heartfelt and sacrificial, is part of a greater narrative of hope and transformation. Let us run this race with purpose and radiate God's glory through every act of worship.



Reflect and Apply

1. What legacy do you want your worship and faith to leave behind?

2. In what ways does your devotion encourage or influence others?

3. How can you consistently 'shine your light' to glorify God in daily life?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a person whose faith inspired your worship.

2. List ways your worship has influenced your family, friends, or community.

3. Pray and journal a commitment to worship with intentionality and lasting impact.



Day 5: ✨ The Impact of Extravagant Devotion

Prayer for Today

Gracious God, thank You for reminding me that devotion to You leaves a lasting legacy. Help me worship with sincerity and boldness so that my life points others to Your glory. May my love for You inspire those around me and echo throughout generations. *Use me to advance Your kingdom through worship that honors and glorifies Your name.*





Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today

Your Verse

Luke 7:44 - "Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, 'Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.'"

Supporting Scriptures

- *John 13:14-15 - "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet."*
- *Romans 12:1 - "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship."*



Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today

Devotional: Living Sacrifice: Expressing Love Through Service

The woman's response to Jesus was intimate, humble, and extravagant. Using her tears and hair to wash His feet expressed deep repentance, love, and submission—actions that spoke far louder than words.

Jesus contrasts her devotion with Simon's cold hospitality, encouraging us to embrace heartfelt worship over formality. Such love is expressed through tangible acts that reflect the mercy we've received.

How are you expressing your love for Jesus today? Are your actions reflecting the mercy and grace He has shown you? Extravagant love is not limited to grand gestures but is found in sincere humility and sacrificial service in everyday life.

Let Christ's example inspire you to respond with worship that touches hearts and embodies His love in practical ways.



Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today

Reflect and Apply

1. What barriers keep you from serving others with extravagant love?

2. How can your daily actions become acts of worship and devotion?

3. In what ways does receiving Jesus' mercy motivate your response?



Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today

Journaling Prompts

1. Recall a moment when serving someone became an act of worship for you.

2. Write about practical ways to show extravagant love in your current environment.

3. Consider how humility enhances your relationship with Jesus.



Day 6: 🔥 Responding with Extravagant Love Today

Prayer for Today

Jesus, teach me to love You with the same extravagance as the woman at Your feet. Help me demonstrate my devotion through humble service and sincere acts of kindness. May my life be a living sacrifice, pleasing and holy, reflecting Your mercy and grace. Empower me daily to worship You wholeheartedly in all I do. *You deserve all my love and devotion.*





Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion



Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion

Your Verse

Romans 8:37 – "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Philippians 3:8 – "I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."*
- *2 Corinthians 5:14 – "For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died."*



Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion

Devotional: A Lifestyle of Devotion: More Than Conquerors

The story of the woman with the alabaster jar culminates in a call to live a life marked by costly devotion and transformative love. True devotion goes beyond momentary acts; it shapes our whole identity and daily living.

Paul reminds us that knowing Christ is worth more than anything else—worth sacrifices, challenges, and even losses. As we experience Christ's love, it compels us to a deeper commitment, empowering us as conquerors over life's difficulties.

Are you living your faith as a continual outpouring of extravagant love? Is your devotion transforming how you see yourself and others? Today calls for commitment to a lifestyle that honors Christ at all costs.

May your heart burn brightly with passion, reflecting the Savior's love with courage and humility always.



Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion

Reflect and Apply

1. What does it mean for you to be 'more than a conqueror' through Christ's love?

2. How can your daily choices reflect costly devotion to Jesus?

3. In what ways can surrendering all to Christ transform your identity and purpose?



Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about what 'costly devotion' looks like in your life this year.

2. Reflect on obstacles to wholehearted commitment and how to overcome them.

3. Pray and journal a vow to live a life that glorifies Jesus fully.



Day 7: ✨ Living a Life of Costly Devotion

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, I choose to live a life of costly devotion to You. Strengthen me to remain faithful, surrendering everything to follow You passionately. Help me embody Your love in all circumstances and be a conqueror through Your grace. Transform my heart to reflect Your glory and make me a vessel of Your extravagant love in the world. *Thank You for the victory and hope found only in You.*





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