

*Fight for the Glory?*  
Stewarding the Presence Series, Part 12

My family and I have really gotten to know all of the thrift stores in our area. As you are all aware, Nikki has an awesome little resale business out of our home. She has created a well-oiled machine in her rotations of thrift stores, mainly the 4 Christian thrift stores from here to Midlothian. I go with her and sit in the car working on my computer while she shops and when she is done, I go in and load up the several garbage bags full of clothes into the car. When Nikki shops, she has a goal, a target, and she knows how to work the systems and discounts to get the most for her money and the most profit. She can spot a designer brand with the tag still on it, or something that all the cool kids are wanting, and she knows it will sell fast. Now when I go into a thrift store, I'm not looking for clothes. I'm looking for cool little things, or something I may really need. You may know that sometimes you can find something in a thrift store that is actually worth a lot of money. I heard a story from a pastor this past week about a lady who owned an antique store and walked into a thrift store looking for interesting items. She saw this statue, more like a bust that looked really old. She bought it for \$35. After she had it looked at, it was found to be a Roman bust from the *first century* and was actually priceless. You just never know. But what really amazed the pastor was the thought of how many people walked into that thrift store, saw that bust, and thought nothing else about it. They just walked by something priceless.

I bring this story up for a reason. It illustrates that you and I can walk right past something amazing. God's presence is everywhere but every day you and I have the opportunity to encounter His glory. The glory of God is really His manifest presence. In Hebrew, the word for glory can be translated to weightiness or heavy. Encountering God's glory and worshipping Him because He is glorious is the whole reason you and I are alive. We are called to give *our all* to Jesus and to live our lives solely unto Him. We get small moments in life that demonstrate what it feels like to give your all. When you married your spouse you thought, "In sickness and health, till death do us part." You vowed to give your *all*. When you had your first child, you looked at this little human that could fit in your hands...this little baby you just met, and you had so much more love for that child than anyone on the planet. You would die for this little child whom you just met. You would give *everything* to your first born. We get these moments in life that give us a taste of what it is like to give our all.

Today, we are just past the halfway point in our 21-week series through the Gospel of John. Today we are in chapter 12, and I want to show you from this chapter, three different responses to the glory of God. Today we are going to see what to do and what not to do in His glory. **2** **Corinthians 3:18** says, *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.* It is important for us to learn how to navigate in the glory of God because everything in this world wants us to live for our own glory. You all know I served as a youth pastor for several years. In the last two years as a youth pastor, I had some of the best students on the planet. I still keep in touch with many of them and follow a good majority on Facebook and Instagram. I had kids that would send me a thank you note after they got married to celebrate that they stayed pure until they got married. We had some of the most intense times in worship and in God's presence. We walked through tragedies together. So, it hurts my heart when I see many of my former

students online who have left the faith, gotten into homosexual relationships, living vile lives, and so forth. It breaks my heart because I knew the love they had for the Lord, and they are walking in such confusion now. How can you go from serving in the church to living as if there is not God? I'll tell you...it may be that you never truly lived in His glory. You read the word, you went to church, you may have even tithed...but never truly *knew* the Lord on that level. His presence wasn't the absolute priority of your life.

So, let's dive into the Word. If you have your Bibles go with me to the book of John chapter 12 beginning at verse 1:

***Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. 3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.***

Some scholars believe that all these people were gathered for a celebration. What were they celebrating exactly? Maybe a person who was dead for four days and was now more alive than ever. I have been to a thousand backyard BBQ's and celebrations. Mexicans love to celebrate everything. We party for a one-year old birthday, a quinceanera, Chuy just got out of jail...party. But I have never been to a backyard party celebrating someone being resurrected.

Then in the middle of this celebration before Jesus spoke of His time to be glorified, Mary comes to Jesus and anoints Him with very expensive perfume. What Mary did was really, really remarkable. First off, the washing of feet was reserved for the most lowly of servants. Mary was humble enough to get on the ground and wash the dusty and dirty feet of the Messiah. What is even more amazing is that she didn't learn this humble service from Jesus. Jesus doesn't wash His disciples' feet until the next chapter, chapter 13. She did this from her heart and with nothing pushing her on other than a desire to give Jesus everything.

Speaking of giving Jesus everything, let's talk about what she gave Jesus. Judas will say in the next verses, that she could have sold this pound of spikenard for 300 denarii. That was basically a year's salary. Let's put that into today's currency. The average salary in the DFW area today is \$71,100. Can you imagine giving the Lord a gift that cost you \$71,000? Mary didn't think twice. She *gave it all*.

Here me clearly...Mary's gift did not go without opposition and offense. If you purpose your life to give your everything to Jesus, you better get ready for opposition and offense. Mary was not concerned about the opinions of others. One visual is that Mary used her hair to wipe the feet of Jesus. This means that this Jewish woman would have to loosen her hair in public. This was considered shameful. In that culture, loose hair of a woman was associated with loose morals.

In the Gospels we see three things Mary did that serve as lessons for us today. In **Luke 10:39** she sat at the feet of Jesus. This was a posture of *learning*. In **John 11:32** Mary fell at the feet of Jesus. This was a posture of *surrender*. In **John 12:3** she anointed the feet of Jesus. This was a posture of *honoring*. Mary learned from Jesus, surrendered to Jesus, and honored Jesus.

## Mary Was:

### **#1 – Studious.**

The Scriptures say in **Proverbs 1:7** that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. If you and I are to understand and live in the glory of God we need to *learn* more about the Lord. We obviously do this with the study of Scripture but also with the teaching of the word of God and revelation. Logically if you are dating someone, you fall more in love with them when you learn more about them. Spiritually, you grow more in love with the Father the more you know of Him.

### **#2 – Surrendered.**

Mary demonstrated something that many Christians have yet to understand. She didn't just learn about Jesus and keep it only head knowledge...she allowed that knowledge to transform her and lead her to surrender. The Pharisees, even the demons, believed Jesus was the Son of God, but they were offended by that knowledge. It didn't lead them to surrender. Walking in the glory of God is not about greater effort, it is about greater surrender. Why? Because when you live surrendered you are not only growing in your knowledge of God, but you are positioning yourself to learn *from* Him not just *about* Him. You yield yourself to His will and His ways.

### **#3 – Sacrificial.**

In the Old Testament there were a lot of sacrifices and they all had different purposes, but the main sacrifices were really about sin. You would sacrifice an animal to temporarily cover your sin and satisfy the wrath of God. Something had to die in order to cover sin because the wages of sin is death according to **Romans 6:23**. This was just a foreshadowing of what Jesus would ultimately do once and for all. Now, sacrifice in the New Testament is different. **Romans 12:1** tells us to present our bodies as a holy and living sacrifice. A sacrifice in the New Testament is both a gift to give back to God and a test of where our treasure is. God is so good and so loving we want to bless Him and minister to Him. So, we sacrifice our time, our talents, and anything He has called us to. The result of Mary being studious, surrendered, and sacrificial was that it displayed her fear of this:

### **Result: Fear of God.**

*For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.  
– Galatians 1:10 NASB1995.*

Let's continue in John 12 at verse 4:

*4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, 5 “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?” 6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the*

*money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it. 7 Therefore Jesus said, “Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. 8 For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me.”*

Now we get to Judas the betrayer. He sees this pure and humble gift of worship and sacrifice and I believe he was immediately threatened. He was already stealing from the money box and probably filled with guilt and shame. He sees what Mary does and like any person who is guilty wanted to bring her act of devotion down to make himself feel better. Remember, Mary’s give to Jesus was worth about \$70,000. Judas would later betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, or in today’s currency, \$300-400!

### **Judas Was:**

#### **#1 – Greedy.**

Jesus said in **Luke 12:15** to be on guard against every form of greed. The word for “greed” there in Greek is used about 12 times and in these verses, it gives a glimpse of why we become greedy. **Ephesians 4:19** speaks of hearts that have become callous that lead to greediness. **Ephesians 5:3** speaks of sexual sin leading to greediness. Walking in the glory of God means learning from Him. Becoming callous to the glory of the Lord means listening and learning from the lies of the enemy. This is why we cannot tolerate a single word the enemy speaks to us.

#### **#2 – Guilty.**

When there is guilt on our hearts it should lead us to repentance. It should cause us to run to the Father because He is merciful and full of grace. But sometimes in guilt, rather than run to the Father we run to sin. Why? Because sin gives a rush and causes us to temporarily forget about our wrongdoing. It is the same as any addiction. The rush or the high causes us to forget our pain...but only for a moment. Judas had guilt. He was already stealing money from Jesus. Rather than confess and repent, Judas continued to sin even greater because his sin led to greed.

#### **#3 – Grave.**

God said in **Genesis 18:20** that the outcry of Sodom’s sin was grave. Sin causes death on so many levels. It can lead to physical death, it can lead to death of relationships, it can lead to death of futures. For Judas, he was so lost in sin that he ultimately took part in the death of Jesus. How sad that his heart was so ruined in sin that his desire was to physically kill the Man who brought conviction to his heart. The result of being greedy, guilty, and grave was this:

#### **Result: Fear of The devil.**

*You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.  
– John 8:44 NASB1995.*

Let's finish our main Scripture this morning. Let's go to verse 9 of John 12:

***9 The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. 10 But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; 11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus. – John 12:1-11; NASB1995***

**Religious Leaders Were:**

**#1 – Fearful.**

**#2 – Foolish.**

**#3 – Faithless.**

Let me shed light on a severe matter here with a lighthearted story. I read of this mother and daughter who were in church. The mom wanting to teach her daughter a powerful lesson gave the little girl a quarter and a dollar bill. She told her daughter, "When the offering plate comes around you can give either the quarter or the dollar and keep the other for yourself." At the end of the service the mother asked what the little girl gave. The little girl said, "Well, momma, I was just about to put in the dollar and keep the quarter for myself but then the preacher said that God wants a cheerful giver, and I knew I would be more cheerful if I had the dollar not the quarter."

As simple as that illustration is it shows the depth of the human heart. The Pharisees were unwilling to give their all to Jesus. They could not deny that Jesus was speaking with authority from heaven. They could not deny that Jesus was performing supernatural miracles. They could not deny that He even had power of the grave. Yet, in all of this, they still wanted Jesus dead, why? Because they valued their approval of men more than God. Their desire for human attention far outweighed their desire to be approved by God. So the fear, foolishness, and faithlessness of the Pharisees has this result:

**Result: Fear of Man.**

***"The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted."  
– Proverbs29:25 NASB1995***

You and I may not want Jesus dead like Judas and the Pharisees, but you and I will always battle the fear of man. We care too much about what others think. We don't want to offend people, so we don't talk about sin in the pulpit. If we want to live in the glory of God we cannot walk in the fear of man.

One more verse that is so convicting and challenging. Verse 42 of John 12 says, ***nevertheless many even the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear they would be put out of the synagogue...***

Same word used in **Romans 10:9**, if you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord you will be saved.