

# Mt 26:1-13

## The Woman Who Anointed Our Lord's Head

Ryle, “Here we see how the Seed of the woman bruised the serpent’s head; here we see the great sacrifice to which all the sacrifices of the Old Testament had long pointed; here we see how the blood was shed ‘to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,’ and the Lamb slain who ‘takes away the sin of the world’ (1Jn 1.9; Jn 1.29). We see in the death of Christ, the great mystery revealed, how God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly (Rom 3.26).”

### 1. How careful our Lord is to call the attention of his disciples to his own death.

- a. Ryle, “He reminds them that he must die as a sin-offering before he reigned as a King; he must make atonement on the cross, before he took the crown.”
- b. Ryle, “We can never attach too much importance to the atoning death of Christ: it is the leading fact in the Word of God, on which the eyes of our soul ought to be ever fixed. Without the shedding of his blood, there is no remission of sin. It is the cardinal truth on which the whole system of Christianity hinges. Without it the gospel is an arch without a keystone, a fair building without a foundation, a solar system without a sun.”
- c. 1Cor 2.2. Ryle, “This, after all, is the master-truth of Scripture – that ‘Christ died for our sins’ (1Cor 15.3). To this let us daily return: on this let us daily feed our souls. Paul says, ‘Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ’” (Gal 6.14).
- d. Please understand: Ryle isn’t denigrating the importance of the rest of the truth about Christ. But think about it – proclaiming any other doctrine, even all other doctrines, without proclaiming Christ’s atoning death in the place of sinners, will leave someone with an incomplete gospel that does not save. Let us remember this in our evangelism. And let us remember it every day for ourselves! Here is the essence of our salvation and the wellspring of our sanctification. He who was both Son of God and Son of Man died for sin and lived to God, so that we could die to sin and live with God.

### 2. What honor Christ loves to put on those who honor him

- a. We see how perfectly our Lord knows the future and how easy it is for him to honor His people. His prophecy is continually being fulfilled. Ryle, “The deeds and titles of many a king, and emperor, and general, are as completely forgotten as if written in the sand; but the grateful act of one humble Christian woman is recorded in one hundred and fifty different languages [now 1500!], and is known all over the globe. The praise of man is but for a few days: the praise of Christ endures forever. The pathway to lasting honor is to honor Christ.”
- b. We also see a precious foretaste of things to come on the day of judgment. All the great and grand deeds of history – sweeping military victories, moving parliamentary speeches, stirring epic sagas, breathtaking works of art, and all else – will not be mentioned on that day. Ryle, “But the least work that the weakest Christian woman has done for Christ, or his members, shall be found written in a book of everlasting remembrance. Not a single kind word or deed, not a cup of cold water, or a box of ointment, shall be omitted from the record.” Mt 25.31-40.
- c. Ryle, “We may be laughed at and ridiculed by the world: our motives may be misunderstood; our conduct may be misrepresented; our sacrifices for Christ’s sake may be called ‘waste’ – waste of time, waste of money, waste of strength. Let none of these things move us. The eye of him who sat in Simon’s house at Bethany is upon us: he notes all we do, and is well pleased. Let us be ‘steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord our labor is not in vain’” (1Cor 15.58).

# Matthew 26:14-25

## The False Apostle and His Besetting Sin

- 1. A man may enjoy great privileges, and make a great religious profession, and yet his heart all that time may not be right before God.**
  - a. Ryle, "Judas Iscariot had the highest possible religious privileges. He was a chosen apostle, and companion of Christ; he was an eye-witness of our Lord's miracles, and a hearer of his sermons; he saw what Abraham and Moses never saw, and heard what David and Isaiah never heard; he lived in the society of the eleven apostles; he was a fellow-laborer with Peter, James, and John: but for all this his heart was never changed. He clung to one darling sin." 1Cor 10.6-14.
  - b. Ps 139.23-24; 2Pet 1.10.
- 2. The love of money is one of the greatest snares to a man's soul.**
  - a. Can you think of any clearer or weightier evidence of this, than the story of Judas? Ryle, "That wretched question, 'What will you give me?' reveals the secret sin which was his ruin. He had given up much for Christ's sake, but he had not given up his covetousness."
  - b. 1Tim 6.9-10. Joseph, Samson; Gehazi, Ananias and Saphira; Christ. Mt 13.22.
  - c. Ryle, "We may love money without having it, just as we may have money without loving it; it is an evil that works very deceitfully: it carries us captives before we are aware of our chains. Once let it get the mastery, and it will harden, palsy, sear, freeze, blight, and wither our souls. It overthrew an apostle of Christ: let us take heed that it does not overthrow us. One leak may sink a ship: one unmortified sin may ruin a soul."
  - d. Mt 16.24-26; 1Tim 6.7; Prov 30.7-9.
- 3. The hopeless condition of all who die unconverted**
  - a. Jesus says of Judas: "It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." Ryle, "This saying admits of only one interpretation. It teaches plainly, that it is better never to live at all, than to live without faith, and to die without grace. To die in this state is to be ruined for evermore: it is a fall from which there is no rising; it is a loss which is utterly irretrievable. There is no change in hell: the gulf between hell and heaven is one that no man can pass."
  - b. Ryle takes the opportunity here to destroy the false teaching of universal salvation. If hell was only a kind of purgatory that eventually ended, so that everyone who was born ended up in heaven no matter what, then Christ would not and could not have said that it would have been good for a man not to have been born. But He did, so we know this is false.
  - c. Mk 9.48. "Unless one is born again," he will wish one day that he had never been born at all. Ryle quotes another author, "Better have no being, than not have a being in Christ."
  - d. If we admit any doubt on this matter, Ryle says, "We admit the thin edge of the wedge of skepticism, and may at last deny any doctrine of the gospel. We may rest assured that there is no firm standing ground between a belief in the eternity of hell, and downright infidelity."
  - e. Let "the hopeless condition of all who die unconverted" drive us to desperate prayer for our loved ones who are in danger of dying in such a hopeless condition! Prov 11.7; Job 8.12-13.
  - f. So then let it also drive us to evangelize them! We may be the means that God uses to reach their hearts with the truth of the gospel! Let us also pray for wisdom and opportunity and gracious speech for this purpose.
  - g. Finally, let us thank God for the hope that we who are saved have in Christ. Christ suffered each of our eternal judgments on the cross, once and for all, and we are accepted in Him forever and ever. We have no eternity separate from God to fear, if we are safe in Christ. It would be your wisdom to make sure of it today.