



KNOW:TRUTH

The Gospel of John

A New Covenant Study

WEEK FIVE | DAY ONE

JOHN 12:1-12

Know: Read John Chapter 12:1-12

Note: Mark keywords, including pronouns and phrases. (Passover, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, anoint)

Ask questions: (Use tools such as interlinear bibles to search the original meaning of words- [free tool here](#)) For example:

- Who anointed Jesus?
- What is the event being remembered?
- When did this happen?
- Where is Jesus sitting?
- Why did Mary do what she did?
- How did she honor Jesus?

Observation: Luke 7:36-38, Luke 10:38-42

What: What does today's study reveal to you about the nature of God? What truth do I need to apply to my life today?

The story of Mary anointing the feet of Jesus with expensive perfume mirrors an unnamed woman who does the same with an Alabaster Box, as told in Luke 7:36-38. Some scholars say that they are not the same women - they are two different anointings. But just as many scholars say they are the same- that John reveals who the unnamed woman of Luke is. Whether they are the same or not, both stories serve the same purpose.

John identifies the same Mary and Martha in this story as the same sisters of Luke 10:38-42. In this earlier story, Jesus had come to visit his dear friends, and this is when we are introduced to the siblings whose home became a place of rest and respite for Jesus. As we are introduced to the two sisters, we notice that both are very different. Mary is anxiously busy while Mary is leaning at the feet of Jesus. Mary gets snappy with Mary, and Jesus replies: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better and will not be taken away from her."

Both women knew Jesus- but one felt abused and overworked, stressed and bitter; the other was in perfect peace and felt connected to Jesus.

What was it Mary chose, which Jesus referred to as "better" than Martha's choice?

Mary chose to behold Jesus, while Martha chose to work for him. "To behold" means: "to look upon, to consider, to look at from every angle." What you behold is what you become.

“But we all, with uncovered face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” 2 Cor 3:18

In the garden, when Eve ate from the Tree of Good and Evil, she took that bite because she tried, by her own effort, to be like God. She thought she was doing the right thing. She was deceived. She wasn't pursuing sin. She pursued a form of godliness. We become deceived when we are trying to do the right thing, but we do it based on the system of the Law or Code of Ethics. We live by the system of Karma- do good, get good. Do bad, get bad. It is a bottomless pit of trying, failing, guilt, and exhaustion. The system of the Law is based on self-righteousness- the flesh's ability to please God.

The Tree of Life, which Adam and Eve should have eaten from, would have allowed them to live eternally- to live eternally is to know God intimately. This is what Jesus came to establish in His life, death, and resurrection. He is the Tree of Life.

The New Covenant is based on faith. Anything that is not of faith is a sin. Trying to work for forgiveness is a sin because it is based on self-effort. Trying to serve God to be blessed is a sin because it is not of faith but works. Trying to muster faith is a sin because we cannot produce faith. The only way to love from the Spirit is to live by the Spirit.

How do we know what that is? It's simple. Behold Jesus.

Jesus did not just die to forgive you of your sins; He died to put Himself in you. Galatians 5:4 “You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.” To fall from grace is to turn back to self-effort. The more you behold Jesus, the more you will love. The more you will live out of that love.

In Luke Chapter 2, there is a story of two prophets who confirmed Jesus as Messiah when Joseph and Mary brought him to the temple as a baby to be dedicated -Simeon and Anna. Simeon comes from the word “shama,” which means to “hear” The intro to the Law of Moses reads like this: “Hear, o Isreal, love the Lord your God, with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength.” Simeon lived for this day. After blessing Jesus, he asked to be departed in peace.

Immediately after, Anna stepped in. Her name means “grace.” Anna KNEW Jesus had stepped into the room, and she proclaimed Him to all who looked for redemption.

The analogy is remarkable. Simeon represented the Old Covenant - the system of the Law. When Jesus entered the room, the Law departed, and grace stepped to the forefront.

The Old Covenant declared, “You must love the Lord with all YOUR heart, soul, mind, and strength.” But God declared through His Son, “I have loved YOU with all MY heart, soul, mind, and strength.” That is the Law of love, which is the Law of liberty (freedom from performance). “The Lord is Spirit. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” 2 Cor 3:17

Let's look at the first few commandments of the original Old Covenant- the Ten Commandments:

1st commandment- “You should have no other Gods before me.” The Law of Love (new) now says: “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us.” 1 John 4:10

2nd: You shall not have any graven image before me- the New says, “Store up treasures for yourself in heaven.”

3rd: “Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.” the New says: “We have been given the name of Jesus, whose name makes the demons tremble. All authority is given to Jesus. He now shares it with us.

4th: “Remember the Sabbath rest and keep it holy,” the New says: “It was finished. Let us, therefore, strive to enter that rest.” Heb 4:11

Skipping to John 12, we still find Martha serving, but Mary is doing better. She lavished her love on Jesus. She had sat at His feet, learned from him, and let Him love her first. In response, she lavished her love on him. This was what Jesus declared as “better.”

In a similar story found in Luke, the Pharisees objected to the “waste.” Jesus asked them, “Which would love a creditor more — a debtor who had been forgiven a debt of five hundred denarii or one who had been forgiven a debt of fifty denarii? Simon gave the obvious answer: the one who owed more. Jesus responded to him that he had answered correctly and then spoke of the effect of His forgiveness on this woman:

“...her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little loves little.” Then He said to her, “Your sins have been forgiven.” (Luke 7:47-48)

When we realize how much we have been forgiven, it doesn't make us want to sin more. When we know we are forgiven much, we will know that we are loved much, and we will sin less! Martha focused on “working for” Jesus and found herself bitter and exhausted. Mary beheld Jesus and found her resting place.