

*Welcome To Our
First Annual
Women Of Grace
ALJCC
Conference Edition*

*Blessed
is She
"who"
Beleived
Luke 1:45*



Women
OF GRACE

For such a time as this

The Alabaster Box

The alabaster box (or referred to as jar) is mentioned in three places in the Bible. The reference is to the woman Mary of Bethany. She boldly approached Jesus and poured out her expensive perfume to anoint Him. Her action was looked down upon by fellow onlookers; however, it was greatly appreciated by Christ Himself.

The boxes were made from a stone found near Alabastron in Egypt...the woman 'broke' the vessel; she broke off, as was usually done, the long and narrow neck so as to reach the contents. This stone resembles marble, but is softer in its texture, and hence very easily wrought into boxes." The dictionary goes on to share that the breaking of the box and perfume would have been very costly to Mary.

The alabaster box (or jar) only appears three times in the Bible.

MATTHEW 26:7 - There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.

MARK 14:3 - And being* in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

LUKE 7:37 - And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, Mary at Bethany did not just decide to randomly go anoint Jesus and give Him her everything. We see a clear relationship between Mary and Jesus. She sat at His feet many times regularly as she listened and learned from Him as her teacher and her friend (luke 10) She experienced great loss and Jesus came to comfort during the death of her brother Lazarus whom Jesus eventually rose from the dead (John 11) The deeper her relationship, the more this moment meant. It was not impulsive; it was from a rooted trust and an action of surrender to Jesus her Savior.

The Spiritual meaning of an alabaster box can be applied in different ways. In one view, the box can represent our own lives. We ourselves can come broken like the box before a holy God and surrender to Him for our sins. We can have true freedom in that unhindered release of control.

The alabaster box can also symbolize giving God our best and our all. This was Mary's "first fruits" in a way. She did not bring the least, she brought her absolute best and most expensive item to pour over a more than worthy Savior. She believed Jesus, she anointed Him even before His death and burial. Mary teaches us to give the Lord our whole hearts and our whole lives. We are called to pick up our crosses and to follow Jesus. (Matthew 16:24)says, "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'" Mary denied herself of her most valuable possession and gave Jesus her everything. All that this world has to offer us is nothing compared to Christ. Mary couldn't put that perfume back in the bottle. She had broken it! Maybe it was her inheritance or hope chest. She didn't hold back any for herself.

The Alabaster Box Continued...

What can we learn from the story of the alabaster box...

- 1. We like Mary can give Jesus our all, even if others do not understand**
- 2. We Need to Count the Cost of Following Christ**

Luke 14:27-28 shares about the cost of discipleship. "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?" Mary knew what she was doing. She had planned out and brought her alabaster box of great worth to Jesus where He was, she sought after Him to give her gift. When we are seeking to follow Christ, we need to consider what we are leaving behind and be aware of the weight of that decision. The joy of having Christ far outweighs the cost.

- 3. We Should Not Judge the Gift Others Bring to Christ**

Mark 14:4 There were some who said to themselves indignantly, 'Why was the ointment wasted like that?' After this, Jesus responded in verse 6 " And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye* her? she hath wrought a good work on me". What Mary was doing was not sinful, it did not need correction or refining, she was a mature woman of faith who understood the value of giving her everything to Jesus. We can pray that we may we never be stumbling blocks in the way of others who are blessing the heart of God. Whatever your alabaster box may look like, I pray that you can pour out your offering to the Lord from your heart like Mary. We each have opportunities to give glory to our Savior, let's start today.

Information found on internet



O worship
the Lord
in the beauty
of holiness:
fear before him,
all the earth.

Psalm 96:9

Just a little note to say Thank You to each one that takes the time to read these magazines. Your loved & appreciated so much! Have a blessed Autumn and remember to give God all the praise and worship He is so very worthy of!

*Much Love and Prayers,
Sis Michelle McManus*