

Sermon Series: The Women at the Cross
Sermon Title: When A Sister Shows Up
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SCRIPTURE: MARK 14:3-9 (NLT)

Meanwhile, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon, a man who had previously had leprosy. While he was eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard. She broke open the jar and poured the perfume over his head.⁴ Some of those at the table were indignant. "Why waste such expensive perfume?" they asked.⁵ "It could have been sold for a year's wages^[b] and the money given to the poor!" So they scolded her harshly.⁶ But Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. Why criticize her for doing such a good thing to me? ⁷ You will always have the poor among you, and you can help them whenever you want to. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could and has anointed my body for burial ahead of time. ⁹ I tell you the truth, wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deed will be remembered and discussed."

Textual Summary:

The story of the woman of our text is mentioned in each of the synoptic gospels. Apostle Mark situates the story at the beginning of the passion as Jesus made his way through Jerusalem unto the cross. In the text, Jesus retreats from His journey to dine with Simon a former leper and other invited guests. Unfortunately, Simon failed to offer His guest Jesus the hospitalities customary to the culture of the region and times. But an uninvited **Sister Showed Up** bearing precious oil which she used to anoint Jesus from head to toe.

Simon and his guest were appalled by the actions of the woman insisting the expensive oil should have been sold with the proceeds going to the poor. But Jesus rebuffed their hypocritical claims asserting they could help the poor anytime, and the woman's actions were a necessary preparation for His death. Her story is indelibly linked to the gospel story.

Sermon Points:

1. She Showed-Up

There are times when we must show-up for ourselves by defying the formalities that limit, marginalize or hinder us. Woman have learned to navigate complex and confounding, circumstances

2. She valued Jesus while others valued the oil

The Nard oil was worth a year's salary during the days of the text. We don't know what work it took for her to get the oil but she determined Jesus was worthy of it.

3. She showed-up for Jesus and He showed-up for her

Jesus our true judge will defend our actions when we honor Him. When Jesus is present, we're able to combat adverse systems.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. How does the mention of Simon's previous leprosy (v.3) inform the story?**
- 2. When you visit someone's home what hospitality expectations do you have?**
- 3. Describe an experience in which you were assertive against customs and the status quo.**
- 4. Is giving to the poor the same as giving to God? Why or why not?**
- 5. Why is this woman's actions remarkable to the extent Jesus declares she should be mentioned everywhere the gospel is preached?**
- 6. What women in your life remind you of the woman in the text?**