

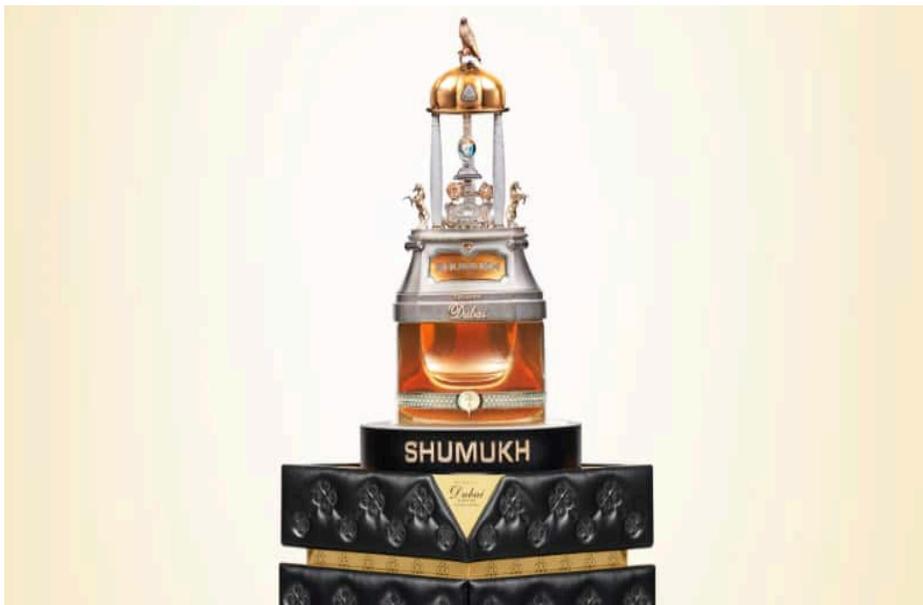
**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on April 3, 2022:**

**"Extravagant Worship
(John 12:1-8)"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman, at church in the Y, shows us in John how Mary displays that Jesus is very much worth our time of worship with extravagance.]

Introduction:

- 40 years ago, Pastor Craig and Nan began dating.
- One time, while they were dating, they spent some time together at Macy's Department Store.
- Nan stopped at the perfume counter and was checking them out and really liked one of the Chanel fragrances.
- Even though they had only dating for a week, Pastor Craig decided to buy her a bottle of it.
- Mm
- Now, here's a picture of the most expensive bottle of perfume in the world. It's called Shumukh.



- Part of the reason that it's so expensive is that the packaging includes several diamonds on the bottle.
- The most expensive Perfume \$1.2 million per ounce.
- It's known for being featured in Guinness World Record for having the most diamonds set on perfume in history.
- The creator behind this perfume is Asghar Adam Ali, who is the chairman of Nabeel Perfumes.
- It was launched at the Armani Ballroom of the Burj Khalifa.

- This perfume's fragrance lasts for more than 12 hours once you apply it to your skin.
- If you use it on the fabric, it can last up to 20 days, which is unbelievable.
- The fun fact is that there is only one bottle out there, making it one of the rarest and exceptional perfumes, which will add more to its value in the next upcoming years.
- Now, let's be a little more realistic and look at a bottle of Chanel.



- Chanel #5 is only \$4,200 per ounce.
- Now 16 ounces of Chanel #5 would be worth one year's wage (\$67,200) for the average person.
- This means something as we look at our passage today.
- Today is the 5th day of the Lent season, as we prepare for Easter.
- And next week is Palm Sunday.
- Now, usually, the Gospels are moving at a fairly quick pace where one paragraph might cover one year of events.
- But now the Gospels slow down, as we get closer to Easter, and see things happening on a daily basis.

John 12 (NASB), 1) Therefore, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

- First of all, Bethany was known as either "a house of figs" or even "the house of misery."
- Bethany was a very small community where Lazarus and his two sisters Martha and Mary lived.
- Lazarus being raised from the dead was a big event for Bethany.

2) So they made Him a dinner there, and Martha was serving; and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

- They were honoring Jesus, for raising Lazarus from the dead, by inviting Him to dinner.
- We could say that Martha was one who served and Mary was one who worshipped.
- And what Mary is about to do is an act of worship, which we'll call an extravagant act of worship.

- Now, reclining at a table eating was a common practice in that culture, because the table was close to the ground.
- And people would propped up on the table with their left arm, eat with their right hand and their legs and feet were extended behind them.
- And now Mary comes up behind Jesus.

3) Mary then took a pound of very expensive perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair;

- Now, when you anointed someone in that culture, you anointed their head.
- But, when you anointed some one's feet, they were being prepared for burial.
- John is signaling to us that this is a prophetic act to say that Jesus is on His way to die, when Mary anointed Jesus' feet 5 days before the Passover.
- Mary took a very expensive perfume and anointed Jesus' feet with it.
- And then she wiped Jesus' feet with her hair, which she took down from being knotted up.
- Women, at that time did wear their hair down, but had it knotted up.
- When Mary did this, it was an act of humility and by doing so, she was deeply worshipping Jesus.
- Mary was worshipping Jesus with all of her heart, mind and soul.

3b) and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

- Expensive perfume has a strong fragrance.

4) But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, the one who intended to betray Him, said, 5) "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the proceeds given to poor people?"

- Judas is raising this objection, which is not honorable, because John then tells us why.

6) Now he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he kept the money box, he used to steal from what was put into it.

- Judas, apparently, was living off the money that he took from the disciple's money box.

7) Therefore Jesus said, "Leave her alone,

- Jesus was essentially telling Judas to back off with his comments.
- That's because Judas was saying that Jesus wasn't worth having one year's wages of perfume poured over Him.
- Now, when we relate this to worship, what does this say or tell us today, in terms of our worship?
- When we come to church services to worship, we're saying that Jesus is worth it, Jesus is worth our time, Jesus is worth our worship.
- In the Greek, the word worship comes from two words – the first one "wor" means "worth" and the last word "ship" means the "quality of."

- So, when we worship Jesus, we're saying that Jesus is worth worshipping.
- But Judas said that Jesus wasn't worth worshipping.

7) Therefore Jesus said, "Leave 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."

- So, now Jesus is making it real clear what's going to happen to Him – He's going to die.
- In verse 8, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy that says we will always have the poor with us.
- Now, this doesn't mean that we should neglect the poor, but rather it means we should continue to give acts of service and to provide for the poor.

Concluding comments:

- So, what can we learn from this?
- We know that Mary was focusing on Jesus and Martha was focusing on service.
- In a congregational setting, both are of value – serving and worship.
- If, we didn't have those who serve, we wouldn't have worship at church.
- And those leading in worship are serving as well.
- Now, we've probably heard the phrase "upward, inward and outward."
- Upward reflecting worship, inward reflecting fellowship and discipleship and outward reflecting love to others.
- Now, if we didn't have the upward, which is worship, we would only have a social club.
- Without the reaching outward part, then we just have a group of people that have social programming.
- If we were just the Red Cross, we would do social programming, which is a good thing.
- But, worship tells us that's how we get centered.
- Worship becomes our central piece of why we gather together, why we spend time together.
- Jesus is not only the center of our worship, but he is certainly worth that worship.
- So, we're not just gathered here together to be a social club, but rather we gather here together to honor Jesus, to honor God and to show the Father, Son and Spirit that they are worth our worship.
- So, it's important for us to gather together to reflect that attitude of worship and that we reflect Mary's attitude to worship Jesus in an extravagant way.
- We can never place too high of a price on what we can do to worship God.
- Now, we'll continue in our worship with communion.

Communion by Laura Urista:

- Welcome to a Royal Banquet!
- Did you know you were invited to participate in a royal banquet today?
- The table is set and the meal is prepared.
- Maybe this table is not set quite like the one pictured here, from Buckingham Palace.
- But yes indeed, we are all invited to a table set by our King. Let's pray over the elements.

Father, Holy Spirit and our great and loving King, we thank You for the opportunity to worship You with extravagance. And we thank You for this opportunity to share this meal, this communion with You and with each other. We ask you to bless these elements and that it will fill us so that we can learn more about You and draw closer to You and to each other. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

- When we think of the Lord's Table, it reminds Laura of what David said in **Psalm 23:5-6**.

Psalm 23:5 (KJV), Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

- Now let's read it in the **Message Version**:

Psalm 23:5-6, You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies. You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing. Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life. I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life.

- At the Lord's Table, we celebrate what Jesus has done for us and His living presence within us.
- It's important to remember what the rich symbolism that Jesus transformed from the Passover meal in what we now know as the Lord's Supper.
- Jesus gathered with his disciples then and now He gathers with us today.
- Instead of the manna God provided to sustain the Israelites in the wilderness, Jesus offers his body, symbolized by the bread.
- The Bread of Life, sustaining us with his eternal life as He now lives in us.
- And instead of the blood of animals sacrificed for our sins, Jesus himself died for all our sins for every person throughout eternity before him and beyond us.
- And his blood is symbolized by the wine or the grape juice, which is the "Fruit of the Vine."
- As Jesus said in **John 15:1 "I AM the TRUE VINE."**
- So, Jesus took that focus from the physical temporary existence of our physical lives and has transformed it to the eternal spiritual life in Christ.
- So, now, let us eat this Bread of life together as we think of Jesus' body, which represents the eternal bread of life.
- And now, we'll take the cup as Jesus said in **Matthew 26:28: "For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."**
- Let's drink it together.
- So, let's give thanks for the Good News of Jesus' victory over sin and death.
- And, as we will be celebrating next week Palm Sunday and then go into Holy Week, our focus should be in Jesus' risen life, which he lives in us.
- So let's pray.

Father in heaven, Jesus and Holy Spirit, our triune agapa God, we thank you for this wonderful ceremony, this wonderful royal banquet that you invite us to. Every time that we take communion, we can focus on Your life in us and we can focus on that eternal hope of glory that You give us. So, we thank You, we praise You and we ask Your blessing on the rest of the service now and through the week. In Jesus' name. Amen.