

A close-up photograph of a hand holding an open book. The book is held vertically, and bright, golden light rays emanate from the pages, creating a dramatic, ethereal effect. The background is dark, making the light from the book stand out. The text 'BOOK of JOHN' is overlaid on the image in a white, serif font, with 'of' in a smaller, cursive script.

BOOK *of* JOHN

WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

JOHN 12:1-11

Jesus knew that the Jewish leaders were out to arrest Him and kill Him (**John 11:53-57**), but He still returned to Bethany, only two miles from the very heart of enemy territory—the Temple Mount complex.

- Why? So that He might spend a quiet time with His dear friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

***Jesus delights to spend time with His friends . . .
including you and me!***

TRUE FRIENDS GET OUR BEST

Mary was showing her devotion to Jesus before it was “too late” and He was “gone forever” back to heaven.

- She was “giving the roses” while He was yet alive and not bringing them to the funeral!
- Her act of love and worship was public, spontaneous, sacrificial, lavish, personal, and unembarrassed.
- Like David (**2 Sam. 24:24**), Mary would not give Jesus that which cost her nothing; she was a true friend *willing to give all she had. Are you?*

BEWARE OF FAKE FRIENDS

It was Judas who started the criticism of the value of Mary's gift and, sad to say, the other disciples took it up.

- They did not know that Judas was a devil (**John 13:27**) and they even admired him for his concern for the poor. But that concern was a sham; he was a fake friend. ***When the going gets tough, they get going!***
- The faker—Judas—had already decided to abandon Jesus and he wanted to get what he could out of what he considered a bad situation.

THREE EXAMPLES OF JESUS' REAL FRIENDS

1. Martha represents *A Wonderful Worker*.
2. Mary represents *A Wholehearted Worshipper*.
3. Lazarus represents *A Walking Witness*.

Our Christian life ought to be a beautiful balance of *worship, work, and witness*.

This would be the final visit to Jerusalem; this would be Jesus' last chance to stay a little while with His friends in Bethany. The storm of the Cross was coming!

FOUR LESSONS FROM A LEPER

The home of the former leper might have been impoverished, but the man desired to express his appreciation to the Master—their friend Jesus. Why?

- 1.** He had been **FEARFUL**.
- 2.** He went from lost to **FOUND**.
- 3.** He was now fervent in **FAITH**.
- 4.** He desired fellowship and **FRIENDSHIP**.

THE DEVOTION OF MARY

This flask of costly perfume equaled the wages of a common workman for almost one year.

- That she seized the opportunity to give to Him the best she had suggests she was a woman of true spirituality.
- She had not sat at His feet in vain.

Mary took the time to give all she had to her Lord and Friend.

MARY'S LESSONS IN FRIENDSHIP

1. Mary **LISTENED** to the words of her friend Jesus.
2. Mary **LEARNED** faith from her friend Jesus.
3. Mary **LOVED** her friend Jesus.
4. Mary's friendship with Jesus produced **LASTING FRUIT**.

WHAT A FRIEND SHE—AND WE—HAVE IN JESUS.