

Givers and Takers

Mary learned to be a giver. Judas educated himself in taking. Which one are you?

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Based Upon John 12

As I meditate on the story of Mary who gave her most precious offering to Jesus, it occurs to me that this world is full of two kinds of people—givers and takers. That is not to say that each group exclusively does one or the other, but the givers of which I speak are more willing to give than receive. They are most satisfied, when God is most glorified. They choose not to withhold any part of their existence from God. He has done so much for them, and they know it. Mary learned to be a giver.

Takers, on the other hand, are those who would rather wait for a handout than work, receive praise from people than give praise to God, and live selfishly with clenched fists rather than with hands open to bless others. When they pray (if they pray), the focus is almost exclusively on asking and receiving, never mind giving thanks for what God has already done or praising Him for who He is. Judas educated himself in the selfish school of taking.

While Mary anointed the feet of her Lord with a most precious ointment and bathed them with her tears, some questioned Jesus' association with such a sinner. As the lovely aroma of her worship permeated the room, the stench of Judas' greed pervaded the atmosphere. That which he considered a waste under pretense of benevolent concern for the needy, God considered an investment in the legacy of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins.

So, are you a giver or taker? Are you most satisfied when God is glorified, or are you most satisfied when you are most, well, satisfied? Ask the Lord to give you the heart of a giver today, and brighten the lives of those around you.