

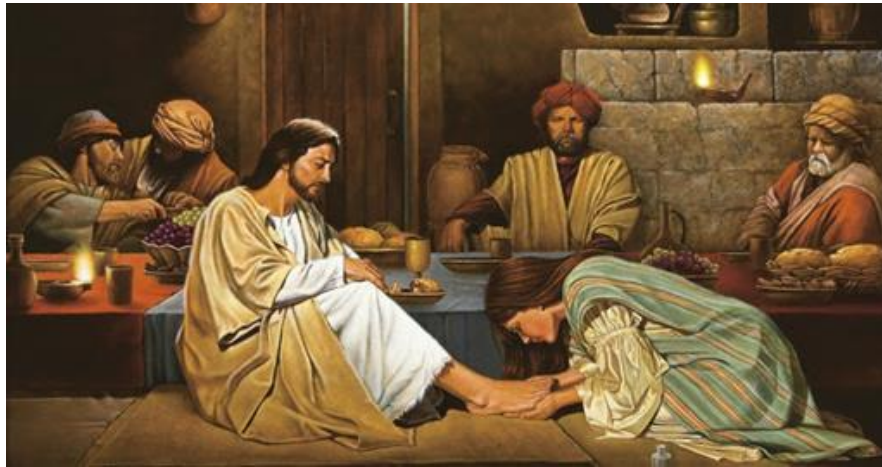
The Truth About Jesus Sex Trade



In Jesus' time there was a custom in which a purchaser of sex would present perfume to a woman, select her according to its value, and then have sexual relations. In the New Testament there are scenes where a woman pours perfume on Jesus; from this, it is inferred that Jesus engaged in prostitution. Few themes appear in all four Gospels, but the story of a woman anointing Jesus is one of them.

It appears in Matthew 26:6–12, Luke 7:37–38, Mark 14:3–5, and John 12:1–5. The difference is that Matthew and Luke do not mention a price, whereas Mark and John specify **three hundred denarii**. Since Matthew 20:2 sets a day laborer's wage at one denarius, this sum amounts to roughly a year's wages—an enormous amount.

Because the sum was so large, the disciples showed displeasure; Judas, who seems to have overseen the funds, had reason to be angry. Immediately following the above story, Matthew 26:14–16 relates Judas's handing Jesus over to the chief priests. Seeing the disciples' complaints about "wasting" so much money on the anointing, one might think Judas acted as the agent of the majority view and sold Jesus on their behalf.



As to why Judas betrayed Jesus, there are two accounts of his death. Matthew 27:5–8 says, “Judas threw the silver in the temple and withdrew, and he went and hanged himself ... Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day.” Acts 1:18–19, however, records: “This man [Judas] purchased a field with the wages of wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. This became known to all who lived in Jerusalem, so that in their own language that field was called Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.”

Yet three hundred denarii is far too large a sum for a one-time sexual purchase or for burial preparations. It is more like a dowry-level amount. Still, since only a minority claim that Jesus was betrothed or married, matters are not clear. What does seem clear is that the woman’s act of anointing Jesus was a sacred and meaningful rite, akin to a priestly ceremony for the enthronement of a king.

In Matthew, Mark, and John the anointing takes place at **Bethany**. As to timing: Matthew and Mark place it **two days before Passover**, while John places it **six days before Passover**. Bethany was near Jerusalem. The anointing is closely linked to the time of Jesus’ death, and the narrative proceeds directly to the crucifixion.

By contrast, Luke's location is **Galilee**, and he places the incident **a year before Jesus' death**.¹

There is another account of **Mary** anointing Jesus: "It was Mary who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill" (John 11:2). This scene occurs **earlier** than the events mentioned above and must be treated as a **separate** incident. Mary's anointing of Jesus took place multiple times.

The New Testament records that Jesus enjoyed drinking. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a wine-lover, a friend of tax collectors and sinners'" (Matt 11:19). "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton [a gourmand] and a drunkard [NIV: drunkard; KJV: winebibber], a friend of tax collectors and sinners'" (Luke 7:34) says the same.



Deuteronomy 21:18–21 reads, "If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son ... they shall say, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey us. He is a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death." "The

phrase 'a glutton and a drunkard' is plainly an epithet applied to an incorrigible son."²

Stories that Jesus, shortly before his death, may have entered into a betrothal, or that in life he joined the marginalized in heavy eating and drinking, suggest that he too lived a thoroughly human life. It is striking, however, that only Matthew and Luke portray Jesus as a "glutton and a drunkard"—terms which, in the Old Testament, mark a capital offender. This suggests an intent to disparage Jesus.

By omitting the price **three hundred denarii** in connection with the anointing, Matthew and Luke leave Jesus open to being treated as if he had purchased sex, while also concealing that the final sum he left—about a vineyard laborer's yearly wage—was very modest. In addition, these two Gospels alone defame Jesus as a glutton and drunkard (terms for a capital crime in the Old Testament).

That these authors would belittle Jesus and hide his frugal life shows they did not take a favorable stance toward him. It seems Matthew and Luke used such expressions to suggest that those who executed Jesus acted justly. They treat him as a profligate worthy of death, rationalizing the abuse and killing he suffered at the hands of those they defend.

In fact, the large sum Jesus entrusted to Mary was **not** for betrothal or burial. Knowing he was about to die, he handed over the funds he had saved to that point and asked her to **manage the movement**. That the amount was only roughly a year's wages indicates how frugally he had lived.

Sources

1. <https://www.gotquestions.org/alabaster-box.html>
2. Robert W. Funk, **Honest to Jesus**; Korean trans., Korea Institute for Christian Studies, 1999, pp. 294–295.