

## YOUR BEST FOR CHRIST

John A. Hoffman

"There came a woman having an alabaster cruse of ointment of pure nard very costly; and she broke the cruse, and poured it over his head."—Mark 14:3.

This is the story of a poor woman who showed her love for Jesus at a great sacrifice to herself. The nard which she poured upon the head of her Lord was worth, according to present standards, between \$300 and \$400. The ointment was made from an aromatic herb that was imported from either Arabia or India.

The value of this ointment is indicated by the expression of surprise and disgust that came from the guests. They called it unnecessary waste. In fancy, I can hear Judas cry: "A spendthrift! Away with her! Throw her out!"

But I can hear another voice—the voice of Jesus. And he is saying: "Let her have her way. Love is never wasted. The perfume which fills this room will yet fill all the earth."

## A MEMORIAL—

Men build libraries and monuments to perpetuate their names. In Palestine—a hot dry country—they sink wells to refresh the famished traveler. Jacob's well is still in use. This woman built no monument to perpetuate her fame. Jesus built it for her, for she is known and loved wherever Christ is known.

The fame that men heap upon the great vanishes with the passing years. Monuments eventually crumble. The fame that Christ bestows lasts throughout the ages.

General Jackson, just before he left the White House, said to a friend: "I am bothered almost to death. People strive for this White House as though it were some grand thing to get here, but I tell you it is a perfect hell!"

The Pyramids of Egypt are among the seven wonders of the world. Who built them and when did they live? No one knows. The fulers who built these monuments have come and gone, and we do not even know their names. Some day, even these massive structures, built for all eternity, will crumble. But the loving deed of this woman will last as long as time shall last.

Florence Nightingale was a very humble woman. She possessed neither wealth nor power. But by her life of service she built a monument that will never crumble.

The missionary who labors in some dark corner of the earth is an inconspicuous person. His name does not make headlines in the newspapers. When he dies, the papers will not notice his death. But he is building a monument for Christ that time cannot crumble.

## YOUR BEST—

Your best for Christ is not too good if you love him with all your heart. The woman might have bought a vase much less costly than the alabaster box. But love does not count the cost. It counts only the privilege of service. This humble woman put her fortune into the vase. What love! What devotion!

The trouble with us today is that we bring to Christ too cheap a box. He deserves our best eyes, our best ears, our best voices. Too often we bring our faculties when they have been exhausted in the service of Satan. Oh,

the broken pitchers that are thrown at the Saviour's feet!

In the Caucasus mountains, the elder people used to worship on the outside of the temple. They sent the younger folks inside to worship. The old men tarried on the outside, not to worship, but to give themselves up to lust and vice. Is it not so among us today? Many a father brings his children to Sunday school, while he goes to town to spend the hour in the tavern.

## OUR BEST AFFECTION—

We owe to Christ our best affections and our best talents. If you have any talents, bring them to Jesus while they are fresh and useful. Even God cannot use a worn-out carcass.

George Whitefield was a very eloquent preacher because he gave the best that was in him. The love of Christ drove him to continually enlarging fields of usefulness. The people stood for hours at a time, often in uncomfortable weather, to hear this matchless preacher, who wore himself out preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ. He built no monument to perpetuate his memory. He does not need one. An uncounted host of redeemed souls are an everlasting monument to him. On the night of his death, he preached for two hours and retired exhausted. But the people would not depart. They must hear more from those eloquent lips. The great evangelist responded and spoke till he could speak no more. And he was not, for God took him. Blessed eloquence!

## YOUR OFFERING—

And now my friend, what is your offering for Christ? Perhaps you have been sick. In your hours of suffering, you said: "Lord Jesus, let me get well this time, and I will serve you with all my heart the rest of my days." Your health was restored. Have you kept your sacred promise? What are you doing for Christ? Are you giving him your best?

There was an old martyr whose body was shaped like the letter S, and he could hardly walk. They condemned him to death. On his way to the stake, the bonds of his body seemed to break, and he roused himself like an athlete, and walked to the fire singing the Song of Zion. It was the joy of dying for Jesus that straightened his body and stirred his soul. What a lesson for you and me!

## ('T WAS A SHEEP)

'Twas a sheep, not a lamb, that went astray.

In the parable Jesus told;

'Twas a grown-up sheep that wandered away  
From the ninety-and-nine in the fold.

And out on the hill-tops and out in the cold,

'Twas a sheep that the Good Shepherd  
sought,

And back to the flock the Good Shepherd  
brought.

Now, why should the sheep be so carefully fed  
and cared for still today?

Because there is danger if they go wrong,

They will lead the lambs astray,

For the lambs will follow the sheep, you know,

Wherever they wander, wherever they go.

If the sheep go wrong, it will not be long

Till the lambs are as wrong as they;

So, still with the sheep we must earnestly  
plead,

For the sake of the lambs today.

If the lambs are lost, what a terrible cost

Some sheep will have to pay. —Sel.

## MISSIONARY CORRESPONDENCE

Altona Mission,

South Africa, 26-4-40

Dear Highway Friends:

How time flies! I can hardly realize that it is a little over a year ago that we arrived here in Africa. In other ways it seems a long time as so many different things have happened, and we have had so many new experiences. Truly the Lord has been good to us in giving us good health, a good home, and a great work.

Our winter is just beginning. The weather is similar to that of September in Eastern Canada. Mid-winter is more like October weather minus the rain and snow. Our winters are usually rainless so this is the time to make brick, build, etc. Already I have had stone dug and carted to the mission lot and we are now beginning the construction of a school toilet and a house to house our quarterly meeting visitors. These buildings will be about 9 x 12 and 15 x 24 feet in dimensions. Local funds will build both. I expect that the Mbucu preacher will go there tomorrow to pull down the old church and begin its rebuilding and enlarging next week. We want to almost double its seating capacity. I am waiting for another preacher-builder so that we can build and rebuild churches at Little Mapondleni and Mozane respectively. Besides this building it may be necessary to erect two other buildings on government granted church sites. Missions are supposed to occupy these grants within six months. The Entungwini site has been finally located but the Tobolsk site is still in the process of being granted. I have been told that we have been recommended for the site but one cannot tell what the head-government office may do. We still need to pray that God's will may be done in this matter.

I am trying a bit of an experiment in the organization of our outposts on this side. It has usually been the custom for a native worker to have only one or two outposts as his direct responsibility. I am now giving Johanisi Nkosi, our most trusted and capable worker on this side, oversight of three areas (Altona, Klipvaal and Prudentie). This will give him 60 kraals (groups of huts or homes) in which we have members or adherents. Up until now he has had the full responsibility of Prudentie and some of the Altona work. His wife, Trifina, and Belina Myani will be his helpers at Klipvaal; Losaya Msibi, a new worker, will assist at Altona; later on we may find an assistant for Prudentie. Johanisi will be chiefly responsible for caring for the men and boy seekers and members, doing the preliminary investigating when difficulties arise, being present on Big Sundays, organizing special prayer services, and so on. So far he is the only paid worker on this particular field. If this scheme works well here, when the time is ripe, I want to try it elsewhere. Three other such fields can be organized, centred at Entungwini, Kipenyawo or Tobolsk and Mbucu. As far as finances are concerned, my plan is to have only one worker the pastor) paid the full man's allowance of \$90 a year, the rest (the assistants) if paid, would only receive \$30 a year whether men or women. To give you an idea of Johanisi's field: he goes about 7 miles west, 5 miles east, one or two miles north and two or three miles south.

The (Mozane, Kipenyawo and across the