

“ It Might Have Been Sold.”

Mark 14. 5.

YES, “it might have been sold.” And human wisdom would still approve of such an arrangement. Devotion to Christ, in its utter fulness, is incomprehensible to the human heart. That which pleases Him in the use of time and strength and money is often “this waste” before men (verse 4). The fact is that men have no idea of the glory of Christ. The greatness of His condescension to save sinners is unrealized, even as the richness of His salvation. Judas, indeed, had an eye to personal gain, but some who joined his outcry did not apparently share his motive. Thus are we lovingly warned lest we unwittingly join with the enemy, even as the two hundred men who went with Absalom in their simplicity (2 Sam. 15. 11). It is needful to be on our guard. Unless the Lord Jesus is supremely dear to us we shall advocate methods of Christian work and philanthropy which will pain our hearts afterwards.

“ It might have been sold.” But what if it had been sold? What if the proceeds had been given to the poor? Would there have been a memorial to hand down wherever the goodness is made known,—a memorial of overflowing devotion to Christ? It is this that He has emphasized, and it is to be told

wherever the gospel is preached, to show the attitude that befits those who are saved by His precious blood.

The Lord of glory never neglected the poor (see also Gal. 2. 10 with 1 Cor. 11. 1). He became poor for His people's sake. He rejoiced that to the poor the gospel was preached. And there is a Messianic hint in the verse "Blessed is *he that considereth* the poor." The disciples knew Christ's love when they misinterpreted His words in John 13. 29. We behold His compassion on the multitude, and His care for the widow. There is no doubt as to His attitude.

But He Himself must be Central. If we put the poor in the place of Christ, we err grievously. If "charity" takes our minds off devotedness to His Person we are in danger. Philanthropy can never be allowed to make Him second. If we care for the soul we should not forget the body, but the things that concern His glory are ever paramount, and everything must be included therein. There is no room for a rival: Christ is the First and the Last in this connexion, and *all* Christian service and all gifts should be wrapped up in a devotion to Himself. May the Holy Spirit's application of these striking words of Scripture affect the writer and reader alike, and may we be ashamed together that we have loved Him so little.