

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

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*May my prayer be like special perfume before You.*

*Psalm 141:2 (NLV)*

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THROUGH THE YEARS, MY UNDERSTANDING of prayer has deepened beyond my childish cries for Jesus to help me pass a test in school or convince my parents to let me date. Rather than using prayer only as a way to receive—though God’s Word tells us to ask (Matthew 7:7)—I began seeing it as a gift I can give to others, but especially to Jesus.

One woman demonstrated that gift beautifully in Luke 7:38. Eager to express her love to Him, the sinful woman approached Jesus, who was eating at a table. She stooped before Him. Her prayerful tears mixed with an expensive jar of perfume that she used to wash Jesus’s feet. Then she dried them with her long hair and added kisses of gratitude. Jesus immediately read the judgmental thoughts of Simon the Pharisee, his host. He rebuked Simon, but applauded the woman for her great love.

I grew excited one day when I read in Revelation 5:8 about bowls of incense holding the prayers of God’s people. The sinful woman’s tears mingled with her bottled perfume, a pleasing “incense” or sacrifice to Jesus. Does Jesus actually “bottle” our prayers like perfume?

Both joy and tears have accompanied my prayers: sometimes weeping over others, sometimes crying in grateful praise for Jesus’s faithfulness. I’ve been imagining that when I enter heaven, Jesus will hand me a bottle labeled “Rebecca’s perfume.” If He does, I can hardly wait to kneel and pour that sweet fragrance over His feet in loving gratitude.

--REBECCA BARLOW JORDAN

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FAITH STEP: *Imagine your prayers are like perfume to Jesus. Give Him a gift of that “perfume” as you spend time in prayer with Him today.*