

## The Only Thing that Matters

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### Palm Sunday - Preparation - John 12

Next Saturday we will be having a BYOF picnic at a park, where we will enjoy the afternoon together and share invites to our Easter Service. More on this during the week.

Let's make this Easter different than every other Easter before. As a church let us all dive in a little deeper into the account of Jesus' death and resurrection.

We will be posting this week little shorts for you to follow the progression of the Holy Week, in preparation for Easter Sunday next week. I encourage you to dive in, read the text, think about it, dwell on it, and allow the Holy Spirit to talk to you. Please avoid thoughts of "I know what it's about", and focus on "Holy Spirit, expand my understanding, do something new!"

*'Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus—the man he had raised from the dead. A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with him. Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she anointed Jesus' feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.'* ~ John 12:1-3

Don't forget some of the details of this story, the Jews are waiting for their Savior, their Redeemer, the Son of God that would save them, free them! This family believed that Jesus was the Messiah, this Savior. He had raised the brother, Lazarus from the dead, and they had seen many miracles at his hands. Jesus had also been telling them of his death, and they were his friends.

They were coming up on the Passover, and Jesus was headed into Jerusalem, but stopped in Bethany for a last night with his friends. It was a joyous occasion, Mary pops open a bottle of expensive perfume and pours it onto his feet and wipes it with her hair. Such brokenness, such lavishing love, gratitude... did she know this was the end?

She is criticized for it!

*'But Judas Iscariot, the disciple who would soon betray him, said, "That perfume was worth a year's wages. It should have been sold and the money given to the*

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*poor.” Not that he cared for the poor—he was a thief, and since he was in charge of the disciples’ money, he often stole some for himself.’ ~ John 12:4-6*

The obvious message here is that he was a scumbag and he was concerned about money. The less obvious is not only the foreshadowing that Judas was going to sellout Jesus for a bag of silver, but that sometimes we are not seeing what is truly valuable in our lives.

*'Jesus replied, "Leave her alone. She did this in preparation for my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.'"*

*~ John 12:7-8*

Mary knew Jesus wasn't going to be there forever, and he was all that mattered. Her focus was on him alone, and the perfume (worth a year's wage) poured on his feet, wiped with her hair, was a demonstration of her love, devotion, and affection to the only Messiah, savior, healer, and Lord of her life. How much she knew or not, Jesus says, "She did this in preparation for my burial."

This was not the only time that Mary was focused on Jesus alone. In Luke 10:38-41 we see that this family had opened their home to Jesus before and while Martha was running around serving everyone, Mary was at Jesus' feet. Mary understood that she needed to be at his feet. Martha complains to Jesus and he answers, "*But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."*" ~Luke 10:41-42

I believe that God wants us to be concerned about only one thing. That is Jesus. We live our lives so concerned about all the details, and like Martha we are missing out on Jesus. Mary shows us from the beginning that she wants Jesus, drops everything for Jesus. We place Jesus first, we don't have to worry! "*Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*" Matthew 6:33

Going back to the oil, in the book of Mark, ch14, v9, this same account, Jesus says, "wherever the Good News is preached throughout the world, this woman's deeds will be remembered and discussed."

Once again we see that our actions can affect our cities and have long lasting consequences that can reach for generations. The difference is how we respond to Jesus, how we pursue his presence, his feet, his word...

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*The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A large crowd of Passover visitors took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They shouted, "Praise God! Blessings on the one who comes in the name of the Lord ! Hail to the King of Israel!" ~ John 12:12-13*

*'Many in the crowd had seen Jesus call Lazarus from the tomb, raising him from the dead, and they were telling others about it. That was the reason so many went out to meet him—because they had heard about this miraculous sign. '*

*~ John 12:17-18*

The crowd was excited about receiving Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior. They had seen him raise Lazarus from the dead, they were telling everyone. Once again, that which we experience in God, we need to share. Faith comes from hearing, hearing the word of God.

As we move about this week, I encourage you to set your eyes on Jesus. Let's make this an intimate week, where we can lavish our love on him, spend time at his feet, be open, humble, broken, thankful, and worshipful. Every day we will share a short message about being ready for Easter, **let's focus on the only thing that matters.**