

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 28TH, 2023 // GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE ANOINTING (JOHN 12:1-11) INDIVIDUALISTIC SERVING

We see in other texts (Matthew 26:6; Mark 14:3) that this dinner took place in the home of Simon the Leper. True to their personalities, Martha serves, and Mary is at the feet of Jesus.

- Though they all served the Lord in different ways, all three siblings were pleasing to God in their interactions with Jesus. **Martha served, Mary worshipped, and Lazarus testified.**

MARY GIVES A SACRIFICIAL GIFT TO JESUS

Martha is serving, Lazarus is at the table with Jesus, and Mary takes out a pound of fragrant oil and anoints Jesus' head (Matthew 26:7; Mark 14:3) and feet.

- Mary **lets her hair down**, something a Jewish woman would not have done in public, **then proceeds to use her hair to wipe the oil on Jesus' feet.**

THE DISCIPLES CRITICIZE MARY

This would have been an expensive gift. John writes that Judas valued it at 300 denarii, which is the equivalent of a year's wages.

- Judas led the charge of indignation toward what was perceived as wastefulness on Mary's part. **Judas states the money from the spikenard could have been given to the poor.**

MARY COMMENDED, AND JUDAS OFFENDED

Jesus corrects the disciples for their criticism of Mary. **Jesus commended Mary for showing her devotion to Him before it was too late to do so in this manner.**

- Matthew 26:14 gives the impression that **Judas' decision to betray Jesus and hand Him over to the priests was made after this rebuke from Jesus.**

THEY WANTED TO KILL LAZARUS AS WELL

The chief priest, comprised of the Sadducees, set out to not only kill Jesus but to kill Lazarus as well.

- The Sadducees did not believe in a resurrection of the dead, and Lazarus was a living example of life after death. **Lazarus was drawing people to Jesus and away from their flawed theological systems.**

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY (JOHN 12:12-19)

JESUS RETURNS TO JERUSALEM

Jesus leaves the quiet, intimate dinner to make His only public demonstration during His earthly ministry.

- As He enters, this large, enthusiastic crowd welcomes Him with the Messianic words of Psalm 118:25-26. The cry of "**Hosanna**" meant "**save now,**" but **they had in mind political salvation from Rome.**

"YOUR KING IS COMING"

We see Jesus' purpose of bringing peace by Him riding in on a donkey while also fulfilling prophecy in Zechariah 9:9.

- While the crowds welcomed Him, we see in Luke 19:37-44 that **Jesus wept as He approached the city. He wept because He knew what awaited this city**—war, suffering, destruction, and scattered people.

UNDERSTANDING LEADS TO COMMITMENT

John points out that the people of Jerusalem did not recognize God's visitation with them through Jesus because they were ignorant of their own scriptures.

- However, he (John) confesses that even **the disciples did not fully understand what Jesus set out to accomplish until after His crucifixion and ascension.**

THEIR DISILLUSIONMENT WITH JESUS

In a frustrated yet exaggerated claim, the Pharisees said to one another, "**The world has gone after [Jesus]!**"

- The reality is that a great number of people did go after Jesus, but only temporarily. **Once Jesus did not meet their expectations, they would quickly turn on Him and crucify Him.**

THE PREDICTION (JOHN 12:20-36)

THE GREEKS JOIN IN ON THE FESTIVITIES

The news of Jesus has spread, and we see the Greeks attending the festival, seeking to see Jesus.

- Up until this point, Jesus has repeatedly stated that His time had not yet come. However, now He reveals to His disciples that "**The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.**"

THE GLORIFICATION OF JESUS

Was Jesus not glorified at His entry into Jerusalem? His purpose was not to be glorified in the praises of humanity but to be glorified on the cross.

- The world viewed His sacrifice as humiliating, disgraceful, and foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18), but **to Him, it was His purpose. It was how He would be glorified.**

"A GRAIN OF WHEAT"

Jesus uses this natural illustration of a seed to convey the spiritual truth that **without suffering, there can be no glory; without death, there can be no fruit; and without surrender, there can be no victory.**

- **A seed is just a seed until it is buried**, but once it is buried, it will spring up into something new and produce life-giving fruit.

CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON

Jesus' soul was troubled because He knew the agonies He was about to face. Despite the excruciating pain of the cross and the full wrath of God, **He considered it folly to seek to escape it.**

- **If we are conformed to the image of the Son, then our prayer in the midst of suffering will not be "God, save me!" but it will be "God, be glorified!"**

JESUS TELLS THEM ABOUT HIS DEATH

For the third time, we hear a divine voice showing that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus states that this voice was heard for their benefit so that they would listen to what He says about being "lifted up" and the "judgment" that has come.

- **He would be "lifted up" on a cross, and death would secure a victory over "the ruler of this world."**

THEY COULD NOT SEE

The crowd was blind to the truth of who Jesus is because they did not understand how their political savior was to save them from Rome if He died. They clung to scripture about the victory of the Messiah while ignoring the truth about His suffering.

- **Blindness exists from walking in darkness and when an incomplete truth about the light is taught.**

THE FULFILLMENT (JOHN 12:37-50)

HARDENED HEARTS

John is giving insight into the question, "With all that Jesus said and did, why did so many not believe?" Isaiah prophesied that many would harden their hearts to the point of inability to see.

- **It comes to a point with God where He gives us over to what it is we truly want. If we choose to reject Jesus on Earth, we will receive an eternity without Him.**

HALF-HEARTED HEARTS

There were those who believed but were scared to proclaim their faith publicly because they would lose their position in society.

- The love of the praise of men is damning because it keeps us from committing fully to God, "**Whoever denies me before others, I will also deny him before my Father in heaven**" (Matthew 10:33).

REITERATION OF HIS TEACHINGS

V. 44-50 contains the last words in John's Gospel from Jesus to the public, reiterating all He has been teaching.

- Jesus reiterated that He was in unison with God, the Father. He reiterates His truthfulness and the need for humanity to follow Him. He lovingly receives all who would come to Him but to reject Him meant to reject God, who sent Him.

LOVE JESUS LIKE MARY

- Mary's future was contained in that alabaster jar, which she broke and poured on the feet of Jesus. **Give your best and give it all; cast your future on Jesus.**
- **When we love Jesus like Mary, it will fill a house like a sweet fragrance.**
- **Mary's act of devotion to Jesus still permeates the House of God today** (Matthew 26:13; Mark 14:9).

"THE ONE WHO LOVES HIS LIFE..."

- **We cannot love our lives to the point of excluding loving God.**
- **Choosing to see the light gives us faith that gives way to obedience—a willingness to do anything God asks.**
- **We must minimize the importance of life in this world, deny ourselves, and take up our cross** (Matthew 8:34-38).