

Extravagant Affection

John 12:1-11

Same event as Matthew 26 and Mark 14.

Not the same event as reordered in Luke 7.

vs. 1, Six days before the Passover

Jesus is back in Bethany with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus.

Bethany -> house of the poor or house of figs

vs. 2, Martha is serving. If Martha is Type A

Mary is...well not that, perhaps Type B.

Mary is exactly who God made her to be!

vs. 3, A pound of perfume, pure and expensive nard.

Nard - an extract from the root of the nard plant.

She anoints Jesus.

She wipes his feet with her hair.

- An extreme act of humility. An extreme act of vulnerability
- Publicly showing her strong affection for Jesus
- Cultural expectations concerning a woman's hair (married / single)
- The very pious would be offended and suspicious with affection shown between a man and a woman who were not related and appeared in public. (Categorized as immoral).

The house is filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

Exodus 30:8 There is to be an incense offering before the Lord throughout your generations.

Psalms 141:2 May my prayer be set before you as incense, the raising of my hands as the evening offering.

Exodus 40:34-35 The cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. **35** Moses was unable to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud rested on it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

1 Kings 8:10-11 When the priests came out of the holy place, the cloud filled the Lord's temple, **11** and because of the cloud, the priests were not able to continue ministering, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple.

The fragrant power of perfume was measured by the extent of its permeation.

vs. 4-6, Judas -> Why the extravagance?

That much perfume could be sold for three hundred denarii.

One denarii = One day's wage

Three hundred denarii = One year's wage

John gives insight into the character of Judas.

- He would betray Jesus.
- He didn't care about the poor.
- He was a thief. (In contrast, Judas would betray Jesus for 120 denarii).
- He was in charge of the "money-bag" (communal funds) and regularly helped himself.

Remember the extravagance of the wisemen who visited Jesus after his birth.

vs. 7, Jesus responds.

1. Leave her alone.

2. She has kept it for the day of my burial. This phrase recorded by John means Mary has already performed this action.

Caiphas spoke prophetically. "one man should die for the people rather than the whole nation perish."

In contrast, Mary is acting in a way that prophetically reveals what will take place concerning Jesus.

Caiaphas -> ignorant unbelief

Mary -> intelligent faith

- She expresses unwavering faith and love.
- She recognized the dignity and greatness of Jesus.
- She is simultaneously recognizing his royalty and preparing for his death.

3. The poor will always be with you, but you will not always have me.

Deuteronomy 15:11 For there will never cease to be poor people in the land; that is why I am commanding you, 'Open your hand willingly to your poor and needy brother in your land.'

It is good and right to take care of the poor.

Acts of devotion and acts of compassion for the poor are not mutually exclusive.

John highlights the humble devotion of a female follower of Jesus.

Mary's humble example foreshadows what Jesus will do in chapter 13.

John 13:14:15 So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done for you.

Mark 9:35 Sitting down, he called the Twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last and servant of all."

vs. 9, News travels fast. Is it true that Lazarus is alive? Who is this Jesus?

vs. 10, The chief priests had decided to kill Lazarus as well.

Deceit which leads to destruction leads to more deceit and therefore more destruction.

vs. 11, To follow Jesus is a risky endeavor!

Let's go back to the quote I referred to a couple of weeks ago from C.S. Lewis.

In C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* Lucy and Susan are in a discussion with Mr. Beaver.

Lucy - "Is--is he a man?"

Mr. Beaver - "Aslan a man!" "Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the great Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know who is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion--the Lion, the great Lion."

Susan - "Ooh!" "I'd thought he was a man. Is he--quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion."

Mr. Beaver - "That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver. "If there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."

Lucy - "Then he isn't safe?"

Mr. Beaver - "Safe?" Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you."

John 12:25 The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

John 15:18-20 "If the world hates you, understand that it hated me before it hated you. **19** If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. **20** Remember the word I spoke to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.

John 16:2 They will ban you from the synagogues. In fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering service to God.

Matthew 10:24-25 A disciple is not above his teacher, or a slave above his master. **25** It is enough for a disciple to become like his teacher and a slave like his master. If they called the head of the house 'Beelzebul,' how much more the members of his household!

Luke 9:23-24 Then he said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. **24** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will save it.

2 Timothy 3:12 In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Question: In what ways does your affection for Jesus lead to extravagance? Are you an extravagant worshiper, friend, giver, listener, host, etc.?

In regards to your faith, are there any areas you hold back, unwilling to put yourself at risk (reputation, influence, etc.)?

How can you follow the example of Mary? In what ways do you serve for the goodness and glory of Jesus?