

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to John 12

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the Gospel of John.

The Apostle John has been very careful in the first eleven chapters, to lay out evidence for us on who Jesus is.

And the evidence that we saw in the previous chapter, the raising of Lazarus, may be the most outstanding evidence we have seen thus far.

What makes the raising of Lazarus stand out among the other signs that John provides for us is that no one could dispute what occurred.

That Jesus raised Lazarus from among the dead (he had been dead for 4 days – he was stinky), and now, he is walking among the people.

That Jesus makes the announcement “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

And then He proceeds to raise Lazarus

It’s hard to argue against that.

The religious rulers never disputed that Jesus raised Lazarus – they couldn’t

So as we saw two weeks, they determined that they must kill Jesus – and we will see later on in chapter 12, they even determined to kill Lazarus – let's get rid of the evidence.

“We need to stop people from coming to Jesus because it is undermining our authority.”

So John spends 11 chapters providing us with a lot of evidence of who Jesus is, beginning in our study today, John is going to spend the entire second half of his gospel – providing us with one more piece of evidence.

Church, this evidence, is the greatest evidence of who Jesus is.

This is the greatest evidence of His deity

That Jesus is King over death – even His own death

In our text this morning, we are going to see the response of certain individuals to the evidence that has already been provided.

Some will respond in worshipping Him and some will respond in betraying Him.

Let's pray...

**[Jhn 12:1-8 NKJV] 1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. 2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those**

who sat at the table with Him. 3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. 4 But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], who would betray Him, said, 5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. 7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. 8 "For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

On our sign out in front of the building – we have the motto “To know Him and make Him known”

That is why we come to church, that is why we come to fellowship, that is why we read our bibles, that is why we have the men and women’s ministry, that is why we have our fellowship lunches

Because we want to know Him and then we tell somebody about Him.

Jesus said in John 17

**[Jhn 17:3 NKJV] 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**

But what does it mean to know Him?

You see, God doesn't just want us to know Him as a subject we study in school.

He wants us to know Him personally; He wants us to experience Him

He wants us to enjoy Him, not just study Him as we would Physics or Calculus.

God delights when people realize they were created to know Him & orient their lives toward that end.

God's whole posture toward us is to reveal Himself, not hide.

But in order to know Him – in order to be in a right relationship with Him, we must allow our will to be broken, we must allow our ego to be destroyed

Paul said it best –

**[Gal 2:20 NKJV] 20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

In order to have a right relationship with Him, we must totally surrender to His will.

That is what we are going to see Mary of Bethany do.

Let's look at our text closely -

**[Jhn 12:1-8 NKJV] 1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. 2**

**There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.**

After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead –

We know that many people began to follow Jesus

However, we also know that there were some who did not follow Jesus. They proceeded to tell the religious rulers of what Jesus had done.

And upon hearing their report, the religious rulers intensified their efforts to arrest and put Jesus to death.

This means that Jesus fled Bethany for a few days – and then returns to Bethany here at the beginning of chapter 12. Why?

Because the time has come.

We are less than 1 week from Jesus' crucifixion.

So Jesus shows up in Bethany – Matthew 26 and Mark 14 tell us that this is taking place in Simon the leper's house.

We can assume that Jesus had already healed Simon from the leprosy – or else He would have been violating Mosaic Law. The name just stuck – kind of like Rahab the harlot, he couldn't shake it off.

There is another popular assumption – and that is that Simon was either Martha’s husband (as we see her serving) or Simon could have been Martha, Mary and Lazarus’ father. We really don’t know.

The important thing to know is -

This was a feast in honor of Jesus

The goal of the individuals who were present at Simon’s house was to honor Jesus.

How were they honoring Jesus, John tells us.

Martha was serving – she was a doer – Martha does what Martha always does – and that is to serve. Martha had the spiritual gift of service.

Now, there was a time in her life where Martha was not allowing her gift to be used by Jesus – where she used the circumstances to complain about her sister not helping her.

However, this time, her worship was her service.

So Martha made a decision of who Jesus is –

Jesus is worthy of her service.

She saw the evidence of who Jesus is and her response is worship.

Lazarus -

Lazarus was seated at the table / most likely reclining at the table next to Jesus.

He might have been listening to Jesus teach – he might have been talking to Jesus about his four days in paradise.

Lazarus responded to the evidence of who Jesus is – remember, he was called from death to life - by wanting to be with Jesus.

Now, as believers, we need to remember that we have been called from death to life just like Lazarus.

So what should our response be – “I want to be with Jesus”

If I have been called from death to life then my response is just like Lazarus’

Then we get to Mary in verse 3

**3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.**

So Mary walks in and she brings with her an alabaster flask of this very costly oil of spikenard (both Matthew and Mark tell us this in their account)

Now, one of the things that we have to consider is that this oil of spikenard – this is not something that Mary could have picked up at the local Walmart.

The oil of spikenard was imported.

It was made from a plant in India

And as we will find out later in our text, the price tag on this oil was – 300 denarii. That is equivalent to a year's salary for the average person.

So in today's terms – it was a \$30,000 - \$40,000 bottle of fragrant oil.

We need to understand that this was her livelihood, this was possibly her dowry

And so, Mary brings the flask – not give to Jesus as a gift.

Mark's account tells us that she breaks the flask and pours it over Jesus' head – John tells us here that she also anointed His feet with the oil and wiped His feet with her hair?

Now, why is Mary doing this???

I see two reasons –

The first -

Now, if we look to the Old Testament – what Mary is doing here resembles what was done to the priests and kings.

It's an anointing -

Regarding the priests, **[Exo 29:7 NKJV] 7 "And you shall take the anointing oil, pour [it] on his head, and anoint him.**



And we also see Samuel anointing King Saul and also David.

And the reason for the anointing –it was to be an outward symbol that God had chosen and set apart the person for a specific holy purpose.

So just as kings and priest were anointed in the OT, Mary anointed Jesus – knowing that Jesus was going to carry out His ministry as king and priest in death.

Now, the second reason that Mary responded in this way – is that she is giving a drink offering.

Now, in the scriptures, the first time we find mention of a drink offering is with Jacob – when God changed his name from Jacob to Israel, God once again reminds Jacob of His promise – and Jacob responds by building a pillar of stone, and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it (Gen 35)

Now, it is important to note that a drink offering was separate from a sin offering.

A drink offering is given out of our own free will.

A drink offering is our response to who God is and what He has done for us.

It is an act of worship. That is why Jacob responded with a drink offering.

He was in the desert, water is the most important commodity that you can have – yet, Jacob responded with an act of worship.

Turn with me to 2 Sam 23

I am going to give you another example of a drink offering.

**[2Sa 23:15-16 NKJV] 15 And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which [is] by the gate!"**  
**16 So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that [was] by the gate, and took it and brought [it] to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD.**

David asked for a glass of water – not just any water – he wanted the best water he had ever tasted in his life.

He wanted water from a particular well where he grew up in Bethlehem.

There is nothing that he wanted more than to savor that water.

His men hear him – they go on a mission behind enemy lines, they risk their lives to get David his water.

They bring David his precious water – David takes one look at it, and pours it out as a drink offering to the Lord.

Was David being a spoiled brat? No

You see church, David looked at the water that his men brought to him – he valued the water, it was precious to him – but he also realized that God was more precious to him – so he poured it out.

It was an ultimate expression of praise and worship to God

Church,

This is exactly what Mary is doing here – as much as she likes the smell of the spikenard, as much as she knows how valuable it is and how precious it is – she looked at the flask with the oil and realized that Jesus is more precious to her than the oil – so she pours it all out as a drink offering to Him.

Just like with David - It was an ultimate expression of praise and worship to God

What Mary is doing here is a picture of her pouring out her will before God.

God, let Your will be done – not mine.

Why did she respond in such a way?

1. Mary understood she had a need for Jesus. Last Sunday RJ, did the study on Luke 7 – the sinful woman who like Mary of Bethany, began to anoint the feet of Jesus with oil and she washed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You see church, when we understand our need for Jesus – we begin to understand the praise He deserves.
2. Not only did Mary understand her need for Jesus, she also never had someone who loved her as much as Jesus did. In Luke 10 – Luke provides for us the details of what happened years earlier when Jesus went to Martha's house to eat – and Martha began to complain. Now, we have to understand that during this

time – women were treated like 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens. That is one of the reasons that Martha is all upset. The social norm of the day - role of the women was to serve – it was unheard of a woman to sit and listen to what a rabbi was teaching – and where do we find Mary? at Jesus' feet. In fact every time we see Mary of Bethany – she is at Jesus' feet.

3. The third reason that Mary responded this way is because she had never known a comforter like Jesus – we saw this in chapter 11 – she goes to Jesus, falls on His feet and pours her heart to Him and Jesus cries with her.

So because of this – Mary responded the way she did.

Now, as I was reading the text this week – I actually realized something.

The scriptures don't mention Mary of Bethany or Martha at the crucifixion or the tomb.

Which is really odd – because these two women were really close to Jesus.

As we saw in our study over the last three weeks, they loved Jesus and Jesus loved them.

They lived in Bethany – two miles east of Jerusalem.

So, we can't say that they didn't have transportation

So why were they not there?

You see church, they were not there because they knew that Jesus was going to rise again.

How is it that she knew and none of the disciples knew???

Simple church – because she listened.

She listened

Jesus said over and over again

I am going to die and I am going to rise three days later

I am going to die and I am going to rise three days later

I am going to die and I am going to rise three days later

Sometimes, He did in a subtle way and other times He simply hinted at it.

The problem with the disciples is that they didn't listen.

Every time Jesus started to talk about how He was going to die – they blocked it out because that is not what they wanted to hear.

The disciples had a view of Jesus that they were not willing to part with.

They wanted a Jesus that was going to be a conquering king

They wanted a Jesus that was going to free them from Rome.

In other words, they were still asking for their will and not willing to surrender to God's will.

They were not willing to offer a drink offering of their own.

But Mary was – she might not have fully understood God's will – but she was willing to say, "I trust You with my everything"

**4 But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], who would betray Him, said, 5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.**

So here in verse 4, we are introduced to Judas – boooooooooo

He was the treasurer among the disciples.

And John provides for us a little commentary here – and tells us that Judas had been embezzling some of the funds.

Judas makes it appear that he cares about the poor - but in reality, he only cares about how much money he is pocketing.

In fact, as he sees the oil pour – all he sees is money going down the drain.

He doesn't see the selfless act of worship by Mary

In fact Matthew tells us in his gospel that this is the event that drives Judas to go to the chief priests to see how much money they will give him if he delivered Jesus to them.

**7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. 8**

**"For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."**

While the disciples were still debating among themselves what Jesus meant by going to Jerusalem and dying, Mary was actually responding in faith to what Jesus had said.

She worships – while the others complain.

I think many believers struggle with verse 8 – and they think that Jesus is saying here that we shouldn't worry about the poor.

That is not what Jesus is saying here.

What He is saying here is the following, there's a time to worship God by taking care of the needs around us & there's a time to worship the Lord directly & intimately.

Intimacy with Him cannot be neglected in favor of these other things.

Many people go into ministry to change the world, to end world hunger, But they often forget that the truest & greatest need is not food, but the Bread of life – Jesus!

Church, Mary seized the moment to do what needed to be done; to pour out her devotion on Him directly.

She didn't care that others might see & misunderstand.

She knew Jesus would understand.

And just like Mary, there will be times in our lives where we will sense His presence in a special way.

And so we ought to respond to those moments with intense devotion and worship

We need to pour out our drink offering

Not worrying about what people might think of us - but like Mary, only caring to show Jesus how much we love Him and that He's the only one for us.

Amen

Let's pray...

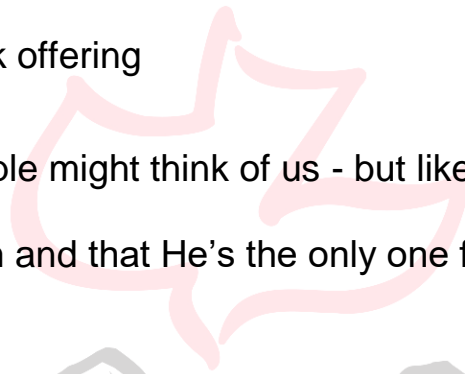
To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.



CALVARY  
Santa Cruz



Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Phl 2:5-8 NKJV] 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, [and] coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to [the point of] death, even the death of the cross.

Our lives are a drink offering to Him because He became a drink offering for you and me first.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

