

October 28, 2018

Sermon Series: LIFE IN HIS NAME

Sermon Title: A Beautiful Thing

Text: Mark 14:1-11

Discussion Questions:

- What were some of the fads that were around when you were growing up?
- If you were able to spend a year's wages on something, what would you spend it on?
- What was something that stood out to you from the message? Why?
- Before you move into the examination section, I want you to read the whole passage, Mark 14:1-11. Answer the following questions:
 - What emotions do you experience as you read through this passage?
 - Consider the roles played by the chief priests and scribes; Simon the Leper; the woman; the disciples; and lastly, Judas. In what ways can you relate to each one of them?
 - Notice the way Mark tells this story: he introduces the chief priests and scribes as opponents to Jesus, and closes the scene with their conversation with Judas. Sandwiched in the middle of these scenes is the story of the woman. What is it about this order of events that is so discouraging? What about this order of events is encouraging?

Examination Questions:

Read Mark 14:1-3

- Why is the time marker found in Mark 14:1 important? What did the Passover mean to Jesus? What did the Passover mean to the chief priests and scribes? What did it mean to the people?
- Why were the chief priests and scribes so afraid of the people and their reactions during the feast?
- Was "Simon the leper" currently afflicted with this disease? How do you know? Why might he be referred to as the leper, and why do you think Jesus and the disciples were at his house?
- Why do both Mark and Matthew keep this woman anonymous (John 12 reveals she was Mary, Martha's sister)?
- Why did the woman "break the jar?" What symbolic meaning might be behind this action?
- If you were at this home in Bethany when this occurred, what would be your initial reaction?
- If you were in this woman's place, what emotions would you be feeling as you entered the dinner (which would have been uncustomary for a woman to do) and as you proceeded with your act of anointing?

Read Mark 14:4-5

- Why do the disciples respond in the way that they do?
- On what basis did the disciples think that the woman's act as wasteful?

- When the disciples say that the use of the perfume as “wasted,” what are they implicitly saying about the woman? About Jesus?
- What do the disciples’ responses to the woman’s actions reveal about their own hearts?

Read **Mark 14:6-11**.

- How would you have felt as one of the disciples who called “wasted” what Jesus calls “beautiful?”
- Why did this woman who anointed Jesus know to prepare him for his burial when the disciples did not?
- Compare and contrast this woman’s gift with the widow’s gift in Mark 12:41-44. What similarities do you see? What challenges you from this story?
- What do Jesus’ words in verse 9 reveal about the magnitude of this woman’s actions? How have His words come true?
- For Judas, this was the last straw. Why?
- Compare and contrast Judas’ action at the end of this passage with those of the woman? What is he remembered for and what is she remembered for?

Application:

Just as the woman was willing to give her most valuable possession for Jesus, and as we remember that Jesus gave His very life for us, how should we respond?

Why is it easier for us to focus on the practical rather than the extravagant? What specific things must you sacrifice for Jesus and His kingdom? Why do we struggle with giving costly things to God? What do you struggle to give to God? What is something that God may be calling you to give up this week for Him?