



March 24, 2024

“Why Do You Trouble Her?”

Mark 14:1-9

SUMMARY

When reading through Mark, we discover that Jesus has repeatedly told his disciples he will suffer, die, and rise again on the third day. However, the disciples struggle to grasp this concept. There is one however; the woman in our text who responds, and she responds in a most extravagant way.

Jesus is with his disciples, eating a meal at Simon’s house and in walks a woman who carries a jar made of alabaster, containing jar of precious perfume from India. Anointing with a splash of perfume was somewhat common at dinner feasts, yet this was very precious and expensive. We are told it could be bought for a year’s wages. Perhaps this was a family heirloom passed from mother to daughter? Wherever it came from, it was costly. It was something that anyone would have held onto tightly.

Eugene Peterson in his Message translation tells the story with these words:

Opening the bottle, she poured it on his head. Some of the guests became furious among themselves. “That’s criminal! A sheer waste! This perfume could have been sold for well over a year’s wages and handed out to the poor.” They swelled up in anger, nearly bursting with indignation over her.⁶⁻⁹ But Jesus said, “Let her alone.

Why are you giving her a hard time? She has just done something wonderfully significant for me. You will have the poor with you every day for the rest of your lives. Whenever you feel like it, you can do something for them. Not so with me. She did what she could when she could—she pre-anointed my body for burial. And you can be sure that wherever in the whole world the Message is preached, what she just did is going to be talked about admiringly.”

In our sermon this morning, we will hear about the call to give extravagantly but also to receive willingly. Both are needed if we are to be followers of Jesus.

QUOTES/THOUGHTS FROM THE SERMON:

“The lowliest aspect of Jesus is infinitely more precious than the highest gift of man.” – John Piper

“It is hard for me to accept that the best I can do is probably not give but receive. By my receiving in a true and open way, those who give to me can become aware of their own gifts.” – Henri Nouwen

“My friends, one thing that I have learned over the past 28 years is this: The Jesus of my journey will never say to me, “Brennan, you were too reckless, you confided in Me too much, you trusted beyond reasonable limits, you hoped too much of Me. You should have only played with my word, 'Have confidence in Me,' rather than foolishly acting it out.” No, the Christ of my life would never say that.” – Brennan Manning

QUESTIONS

Which of the ‘Quotes and Thoughts from the Sermon’ (see above) surprises, encourages, or challenges you the most...and why?

From the sermon or your direct reading of Mark 14, share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you.

Share a story of a time when you felt called to give generously. How can we cultivate a more generous spirit in our daily lives?

How can we apply Jesus' teaching about extravagant giving to our own lives?

Why do you think the woman anoints Jesus at this time? What might her motivations be?

What does the perfume symbolize, and how does the woman's anointing foreshadow future events?

How does Jesus' response model the importance of receiving love that is shown to us?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Consider using Psalm 150 to guide you as you pray.