

Matthew 26:1-16

¹ When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, ² “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, whose name was Caiaphas, ⁴ and plotted together in order to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him. ⁵ But they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar among the people.”

⁶ Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at table. ⁸ And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹ For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.” ¹⁰ But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. ¹¹ For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. ¹² In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial. ¹³ Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, whose name was Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, “What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?” And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him. (ESV)

John 12:1–8

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. ³ Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶ He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷ Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.” (ESV)

Wednesday: Seeing the Beauty of Jesus

March 21, 2021

Holy Week

Open: What are some of the more beautiful things that you have seen?

Read: Matthew 26:1-16

Discuss:

1. What has happened so far in Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday in Matthew 21? How has what has happened so far contributed to the anticipated fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 26:2?
2. From verses 3-5, how would you describe the chief priests and the elders' perception of Jesus? Given what they must have known of God's Laws regarding murder and justice, how would you explain their choice to act as they did? What warning might there be for us in this?
3. What appears to be going on in the mind of the woman in 6-7? (*Note that according to Mark 14:5, the value of the perfume was worth approximately a year's wages.*) Jesus later commends her actions (vv. 10-13). What makes her actions commendable according to Jesus? How do we cultivate a heart like she had? What might be some ways we could likewise honor Jesus?
4. In contrast, the disciples were indignant at this woman's action (vv. 8-9). Why? Jesus cared for the poor more than anyone, so how would you explain His statement to the disciples in verse 10? What are some ways we could make an error similar to what the disciples did here?
5. Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, about four month's wages (v. 15). How does Judas' heart contrast with that of the woman who poured the perfume on Jesus? Are there ways we may treat Jesus with a similar fashion as Judas? How could we guard against such behavior?
6. Jesus said that what this woman did would be told wherever the Gospel was proclaimed (v. 13). How would you use her story in sharing the Gospel with someone?

Apply: What has impressed you so far in the plan of God for Jesus through Passion Week? How are you preparing your heart to celebrate the upcoming Resurrection Sunday?

Pray: Ask God to open the eyes of the spiritually blind around us, increase our own appreciation of Jesus' beauty, and give us opportunities to honor Him through generosity in our worship.

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