

### Jesus Encourages ‘Wasteful’ Worship!

John 11.55-12.8; Mark 14.3-9

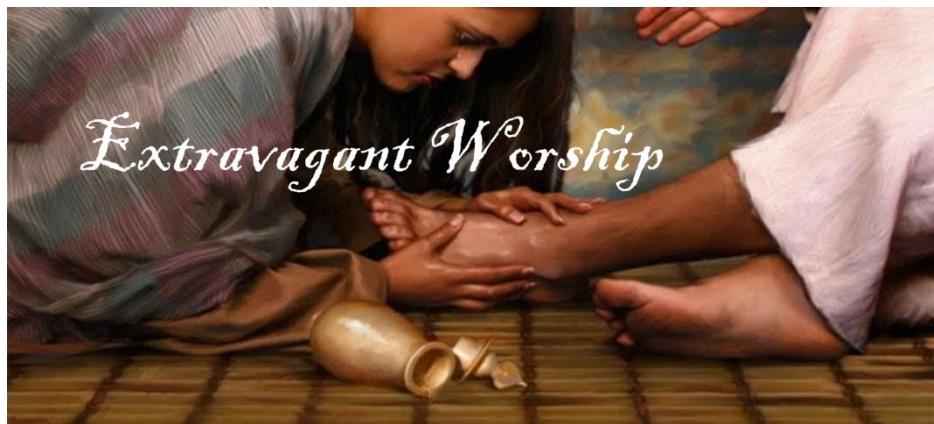
After raising Lazarus, Jesus took one final journey, performing miracles and teaching, eventually returning to Bethany. It was Passover time, and Jesus’ crucifixion was imminent. John tells us of an intimate supper, and an emotional act of worship. Is there an example here for us to follow?

#### Jesus’ Final Journey to Jerusalem

- Jesus visits Samaria and Galilee (John 11.54; Luke 17.11)
- Jesus heads toward Jerusalem, passing through Jericho  
Matt. 19.1; 20.17, 29; Mark 10.1, 32, 46; Luke 18.31, 35; 19.1, 11, 28
- Jewish leaders seek to arrest Jesus (John 11.55-57)
- Jesus is in Bethany 6 days before Passover (John 12.1-2)
- Mary anoints Jesus with costly perfume (John 12.3-8)

#### Lessons from the Supper in Bethany

- There are different ways to show love for Jesus!
- Mary’s adoring worship is extravagant!
- Judas exhibits the self-righteous values of this world
- An act of worship for every believer to emulate!



1. In his Gospel, John chose certain events from Jesus’ life to exhibit that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. For this reason, we fill in other events from Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John 11.54 tells us that Jesus left Bethany (the area near Jerusalem) and went to the country, because the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Him. This was around the time of the Feast of Dedication (10.22), so Jesus was away for two or three months (until Passover; 12.1). What happened during this time? Matt. 19-20, Mark 10, and Luke 17-19 tell us. Jesus knew His crucifixion was near (Matt. 20.17-19; Mark 10.32-34; Luke 18.31-33). What do His actions reveal about His concern for people and commitment to His Father’s will – even at this critical time?
2. John 12.1-8 is a study in various responses to Jesus. Let’s start with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. These three siblings loved Jesus, but showed their love in different ways. How did each demonstrate their love? Is one way superior to the others? Too often, Christians tend to “rate” each other based on our actions. The fallacy in this is exhibited in the different spiritual gifts – all of which show love for the Lord (see 1 Cor. 12.1-26)! How do you show your love for the Lord? Are you more like Mary, Martha, or Lazarus?
3. Too often, those who give the *appearance* of being spiritual are not! Imagine someone today echoing Judas: “Instead of wasting money on evangelism and church planting, we ought to be giving it to the poor!” What is wrong with this statement? In Judas’ case, John tells us that he didn’t really care about the poor – he just wanted to pilfer from the moneybox! If we care for others, what is more important: Providing for them physically, or spiritually? Can we do both? If we do, what must our ultimate goal always be?
4. Jesus’ words in John 12.7-8 can be confusing. Read v7b in different translations. For what purpose did Mary plan to use the perfumed oil? How does Jesus respond to Judas’ objection that it should have been sold and the money given to the poor (8)? Why is ‘extravagant’ giving a worthy expression of worship and love for Jesus? Is your giving an ‘extravagant’ expression of worship and love for Him?