

## “A Costly Devotion”

Isaiah 43:16-21; John 12:1-8

April 3, 2022

### Parties

- My family does celebrations well.
- Now that my mom is moving to assisted living, gone are the two houses where I've celebrated Christmas and Easter and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July just about every year since I was born.
- There are lots of celebrations waiting to happen – the prom season isn't far off, neither is Easter or graduations.
- Today's reading comes at a celebration of sorts.
  - o A DINNER to honor Jesus for raising Lazarus from the dead.
    - Wonder what you serve at a party celebrating someone's resurrection?
- But it's an unusual celebration in that something profound happens.
- MARY, a sister of Lazarus does something, doesn't she?
  - o It draws everyone's attention in the room.
- Honoring Jesus with the passion and intensity he warrants is always a bit overwhelming to the uninitiated.
  - o Yesterday I had breakfast with the guys from Kairos and we were sharing stories of some of the things that have happened on our weekends.
    - One of the guy's family thought he was crazy.
- Everyone at that table would've thought Mary a bit looney.

### Read the Passage:

*“Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So, they gave a dinner for Him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with Him at table. 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. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (he who was about to betray Him), said, ‘Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?’ 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. Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have Me.’”*

### Honoring Jesus properly

- This passage, to me, is all about showing Jesus the proper honor in your life.
  - o Judas, in a way, is here to serve as the contrasting way of doing things.
  - o It shouldn't be lost that while Mary honors Jesus with a costly display of devotion, Judas uses WORDS.
    - Ever noticed that actions speak louder than words?
      - Free throw shooting.
      - We were all talking smack.
      - One kid was quiet, didn't say much.
        - o Hit 10/10 free throws.
        - o We talked a lot. I hit maybe four.
- Judas wants to talk
  - o About the poor but, in reality, he has other designs for the money.
  - o Those who do not see the value of Christ will criticize those who give Christ what He deserves.

### Honor Jesus in the Home

- Mary shows proper honor.
  - o 300 denarii would have been a laborer's entire wage for the year.

- Home is where our heart is but it is also the space where we let down our guard on honoring Jesus.
  - After all, it is in our homes that we believe nobody is watching that we can do our worst stuff.
    - My friend David, just signed a new mortgage this weekend.
    - It's been a long time coming as David and his wife have struggled with addiction in past years.
      - But it was when they started honoring Jesus in the home, that things began to change.
        - David said the simple act of praying at mealtime led to a change of heart.

#### Honor Jesus with your whole heart

- YOU give your best to Jesus.
  - Martha served.
  - Lazarus experienced.
  - Mary devoted herself.
  - How many of us come to worship as an afterthought?
    - When it's convenient?
- You're willing to humble yourself to honor Jesus.
  - Marcia Owens – talented person, advertising executive.
  - Turned it all over to serve Jesus, coalition for a Non-violent Durham.
- You're willing to take criticism for honoring Jesus.
  - Judas and others mocked her.
  - Are you willing to be mocked, counselled, told what you should not be doing?
    - STORY!!! Pastor getting called by parent. Daughter wanted to go to seminary.

In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.