

Mary Anoints Jesus

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John 12:1-11

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A Major Transition

- 12:36 is often marked as a major transition in John's gospel
- It is a move from Jesus' public ministry (~3yr) to His private ministry (~week)
- After raising Lazarus, Jesus stepped out of public eye^{11:54}
- Jesus is now a 'wanted' man^{11:57} the crowds are looking for Jesus^{11:56}

A Final March on Jerusalem

- Jesus stops in Bethany 6 days before Passover in Jerusalem^{12:1}
- Jesus' arrival greeted with joy & thanksgiving: feast - Simon the leper^{Mt26:6; Mk14:3}
- Banquet pic of different types of believers...
- Martha is serving – joyfully this time^{Lk10:48}
- Lazarus reclines at table serving as a witness to Jesus' saving power
- Mary who loved sitting @ Jesus' feet^{Lk10:39} now displays devotion

A Powerful Display of Devotion

- Mary interrupts the meal³ anointing head^{Mt26:6; Mk14:3} & feet³ of Jesus
- Generous amount - pound=~pint so sweet fragrance fills the house³
- Even Jewish servants didn't need to wash feet – left to Gentile servants
- Mary shows humbleness & devotion - like John the Baptist^{Lk3:16}

Her Devotion Challenged

- John focuses on Judas objection; synoptics show others joined him...
- Costly amount of perfume (almost a year's wages) in face of abject poverty
- Judas' focus on what he could gain, not devotion or faith to Jesus?
- John notes for us Judas' thievery and money focus⁶

Jesus Defends Mary's Devotion

- Jesus quickly answers these naysayers! He protects her - *leave her alone*⁷!
- Mary's actions have prepared His body for burial^{Jn12:7; Mt26:12}
- Jesus declares 'poor you will always have...' find balance between devotion to God and ministry to the poor^{Mk14:7} which believers should be involved in
- The Gospel must drive our spiritual and material life - be wise

Private Dinner Interrupted

- A large crowd showed up when the learned Jesus was there¹⁰
- The crowds had been looking for Jesus^{11:56} Anticipation is building...
- See the contrast: devoted Mary threatens Judas' conscience... a resurrected Lazarus & Jesus' signs and speech^{Jn7:46; Mt7:28-29; Mk1:22} threaten leadership

The Plot to Kill Jesus and Lazarus

- John concludes with the reaction of the Jewish leaders *plans to death*¹⁰⁻¹¹ ...
- Lazarus - unlikely 'star witness' for Jesus' power needs to be eliminated
- Lazarus speaks no recorded words – but note the power of his witness
- If you are believer then live your life as a witness for Jesus
- Simply live out the Gospel and be ready to articulate it^{1Pet3:15-17}