

Week 5: A Question about Worship

Series: The Questions Jesus Asked

Key Verses: Mark 14:1–9; John 12:1–8

Speaker: Dr. Justin Hardcastle

Big Idea: This is the story of Mary anointing Jesus’ feet with perfume. This simple gesture of personal worship caused several in the room to be offended, which prompts Jesus’ question, “Why are you bothering her?” Something about this act caused Jesus to say, “Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

The setting is a banquet in Bethany, given in Jesus’ honor, at the home of someone called Simon the Leper. Could this be the same leper Jesus had healed in Mark, Ch.1? If so, this dinner may have been a sort of reunion of Jesus’ closest friends who had been touched and changed by him in some way. We know from John’s account that Mary, Martha, and Lazarus were there, the same Lazarus Jesus had raised from the dead just a week or so earlier. And John records that it was in fact this Mary who performed this act of kindness.

What she _____.

She brought a bottle of very expensive perfume—worth a year’s wages—broke it open, and poured it on Jesus’ head.

What else can we _____ about it?

1. It wasn’t a proper religious act, like worship or prayer.

2. It was lavish; extravagant.

- She didn’t dab a little bit. She poured it out.

3. It was humbling.

- She got down on her knees; undid her hair; got at Jesus’ feet.

4. It was costly.

- Worth a year’s wages.

5. It was risky.

- What would others think? What would Jesus think?

6. It was not philanthropic.

- This extravagance had no benefit for anyone other than Jesus.

How some others responded.

- They took note of the cost of the perfume, and suggested that it could have been spent more wisely.
- So, they rebuked her harshly.

How Jesus _____.

- He rebuked the rebukers with today’s question, “**Why are you bothering her?**”

He spoke prophetically about this woman and her act of kindness.

- “*Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.*”

What Is God Speaking to me today?:

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