



A Beautiful Thing

Mark 14:1-11 | Ryan Pfeiffer | March 12, 2023

Ch14- longest chapter in Mark (72 verses) over 4 weeks:

- ❖ Records- Immediate triggering events leading to Jesus' crucifixion.
- ❖ Todays section: Begins with the scheming religious leaders
- ❖ Ends w/ Judas' Betrayal.

Between the scheming/ betrayal- a single act of extravagant devotion shines
This whole scene takes place in Bethany- just outside Jerusalem.

John 12 a fills in a few details:

- Simon Leper possibly the father of Mary/Martha/ Lazarus?
- This anonymous woman is likely Mary
- Judas is the one most angered— been stealing from the money bag.

There's an incredible contrast between Mary and Judas.

- Whereas Judas sacrifices his faith for his treasure...
- Mary sacrifices her treasure because of her faith.

Judas and the disciples are angered/ offended at the waste.

But Jesus is touched so deeply he says v6 "she has done a beautiful thing to me... truly I tell you wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what has she done will also be told in memory of her."

**FOCUS: What was so beautiful about her act that Jesus wants us to stop in wonder? 3
QUALITIES: FRAGRANT. EXTRAVAGANT. PROPHETIC .**

THE FRAGRANCE OF HER DEVOTION. 3While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

Mary comes with PERFUME... rich, rare, beautiful fragrance

John 12:3 The house was filled with the fragrance.

The perfume represents the passionate love of her devotion.

Sometimes our devotion is motivated by other things:

1. Duty- It's expected
2. Praise - looking good in front of others
3. Martyr-complex. If I don't no one else will...

But what touches Jesus so deeply is that it's love that inspires her act.

1 Cor. 13:3 If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing.

Love is the fragrance of our devotion that touches the heart of God and attracts the world to Jesus.

THE EXTRAVAGANCE OF HER DEVOTION. 4 Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? 5 It could have been sold for more than a year's wages and the money given to the poor." And they rebuked her harshly.

Mark mentions that it's expensive.

1. Year's Salary!
2. Probably a family heirloom or inheritance for her... maybe for a dowry?

Normal anoint a guest... with a few drops... BUT she breaks jar... pours all

When someone's life is touched by Jesus' extravagant love... he inspires a life of extravagant love.

To the uninitiated it looks like reckless waste. But to Jesus it's beautiful!

There is an "extravagant simplicity" to her love.

1. Extravagant because it cost her something significant.
2. Simplicity because as Jesus said... "She did what she could."

She didn't do what someone else could do... but what she could.

Our devotion to please God doesn't have to compete-others/ Expectations.

The widow touched Jesus because she gave what she had. 2 small coins...

Jesus' extravagant love for us inspires a beautiful life of love through us.

Don't let the voices of "waste!" quench your love!

THE PROPHETIC OF HER DEVOTION. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. 9 Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

W/out realizing it her devotion becomes a revelation of Jesus' crucifixion.

In vs3 She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.

These are the same words used later:

- vs 21 Jesus broke the bread... "this is my body."
- vs 24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,"

Jesus was broken—> our brokenness becomes place we receive God's love.

Where there is:

1. addiction...
2. unhealed hurt...
3. Shame/ Regret...
4. broken relationship...

Withholding our sin from Jesus only separates us from him... Like Judas.
But like Mary... it's opening our brokenness to him that transforms us.

Ephesians 1:7 Through the blood of his Son, we are set free from our sins. God forgives our failures because of his overflowing kindness.

When the fragrance and extravagance of Jesus' love touches our life... He inspires a life that pleases God and attracts others to Him.

2 Cor. 2:14-15 Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. 15 Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God.