

The Extravagant Worship of The King – Mark 14:1-19

Returning to the Gospel according to Mark, we pick up at Mark 14. We see this story told from a slightly different perspective in the Gospel according to John 12:1-8. This passage talks about the Worship of Jesus. Not our ability to sing, play an instrument or make beautiful music, but the attitude and heart behind our worship. How do we live a life of worship?

At Simon's house, John's Gospel describes three different responses to Jesus and three different hearts brought to worship Jesus.

1) Mary Brought

Mary comes with perfume and anoints Jesus. Perfume worth 300 denari (an average person's salary). Something she would have had to scrimp, save and go without for. This perfume came at a real cost to Mary, but she knew that the one she worshipped was worth more. She was unreserved in her worship of Jesus. Everything came from God and Mary wanted to use it to worship him.

Jesus did not rebuke Mary for having the expensive perfume. He did not consider it a waste, unlike Judas who did not come with a heart of worship. Mary knew Jesus' purpose (although perhaps not full understanding) and anointed Him for His burial. We, looking back, can see the full purpose of Jesus and can bring him worship.

Q. What has God given you to bring to worship? Talents, time, gifts, money... what can you sacrifice and use for His Glory?

Q. What "better uses" get in the way of our worship? How does our perspective on the life of Jesus change our view?

2) Lazarus Reclines

The record simply states that Lazarus reclined at the table. Like an invited guest, he did not bring anything and simply reclined. He rested, knowing that Jesus' would provide.

Our worship of God can often seem like an invited guest who brought a meal, just in case. Imagine inviting a friend round for dinner, cooking a lovely meal and preparing everything, to have them turn up with a lasagne – "I wasn't sure I'd like what you cooked, so I brought this just in case". We are a guest at the table of Jesus', where everything we need will be provided. It is an act of worship to trust His provision in every situation.

Q. What concerns and worries do we need to lay aside in worship?

Q. Where have we seen God's provision in our lives of worship? Where do we need to trust Him more?

3) Martha Serves

Often this passage is used to highlight the need to stop and sit at the feet of Jesus. Martha was busy doing, while Mary sat at Jesus' feet. However, Martha's act of serving in this passage is just as much an act of worship as the other two responses. As long as it comes from the correct heart.

People serve for a number of reasons. Both inside the church and outside. Guilt, duty, shame, expectation, to please others or just to keep busy are just some of the reasons people serve. As Christians, our reason to serve is an act of worship. Seeing how we were first loved and served by God, our response is to worship and serve Him.

Q. Where are you serving, in the church, community, family, city? What is your motivation?

Q. 'As God has shown mercy, so we should show mercy' – how does our serving bring glory and worship to The King?

Only one thing has been big enough to change the Worship song in Heaven. Not all of creation, not the exodus of God's People, nothing except the work of Jesus'. Only then did Heaven declare a new song, not replacing the holiness of God, but declaring the Jesus was worthy.