

Sermon Notes and Home Group Guidance

Week following 3 April: Matthew 26:1-16

Extravagant Love

Introduction:. This passage records Jesus' anointing at Bethany, an extravagant act of love serving as a powerful illustration of God's extravagant love for us.

Read Matthew 26:1-16 then answer the following questions:

To clarify understanding

- a. (v7) ***"a woman came to him..."*** Who was this (John 12:1-3)?
- b. (v15) Read Exodus 21:32. What does this say of the value that Judas placed on Jesus' life?

To encourage honest response

- a. How has God spoken to you through this text and sermon? What questions does it raise in your mind?
- b. (v7) ***"a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume..."*** What is your own 'alabaster jar of perfume'? Career? Money? Status? Approval? When was the last time you sacrificed something valuable to you for the Lord?
- c. (v8) ***"Why this waste?" they asked."*** Do we criticise others sacrificial choices for Jesus? This church project; that church ministry; that person's passion...? When are we most likely to criticise the commitment/devotion of other believers?
- d. (v9) ***"This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."*** (v9); ***"All a person's ways seem pure to them, but motives are weighed by the Lord."*** (Proverbs 16:2) A critical spirit masquerades as righteousness. It's easy to judge others for the way they spend their money, their time, and their talents. Do we hold ourselves to the same standards?
- e. (v13) ***"...wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."*** The fragrance of the perfume lingers on: Mary is remembered for all time for her extravagant love. Judas is remembered for his greed and treachery. What would we most wish to be remembered for?
- f. ***"Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all."*** (Isaac Watts)
Around the world, millions of believers face high levels of persecution for following Jesus. Between Oct 2020-Sep 2021, around 6,000 Christians were martyred for their faith. (Source: Open Doors) Many are called literally to give their all for Christ. How does their sacrifice inspire you?

Prayer

- a. Spend some time in adoration and praise, thanking Jesus for all He did for us.
- b. Pray that we would each display sacrificial extravagance in our use of our wealth, time and talents.