

## Small Group Bible Study Questions

- A) Sunday's Sermon concluded with three key areas where each of us can concentrate in our worship of God. Out of those three areas, which is the toughest for you personally? How do you feel God is changing you to be a more authentic worshipper in this area of your life?
- B) Our leadership friends in the business world recommend that you accommodate for your greatest weaknesses (don't let them kill you), but really work hard at developing your greatest strengths (get better at the best). Out of the three worship applications, which is your area of greatest strength? How can you determine to make your greatest strength even better?
- C) One of the tough areas for all of us in worship is our financial giving. We are often saddled with great debt and rising costs for numerous ideas and needs. Some of us walk around feeling as though we are second-class Christians because we can't give more. What do you feel about this tension in your own life, and how have you found balance in your personal worship through giving financially?
- D) Whenever I read the story of Mary pouring out the fragrant oil/perfume onto Jesus' head and then wiping His feet with her hair, I remember that this fragrant act of worship was remembered by Jesus as He went through the difficulties of the Passion Week which was about to begin. I have been reading a book that asks me (and us) to imagine that each of us is like a bucket with water in it... When we serve God and each other, it not only pours water into our own bucket (it is fragrant to us), it also pours water into another person's bucket (it is fragrant to them). The goal is to glorify God (add water to His bucket), serve Him (sometimes through others) extravagantly (add water to another's bucket), and God will bless you in the process (add water to your bucket). Take some time in your small group to determine and pray as to how you can fill God's bucket, and in serving others, fill each

# True Worship

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**THEREFORE JESUS SAID, "LET HER ALONE, SO THAT SHE MAY KEEP IT FOR THE DAY OF MY BURIAL. "FOR YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE POOR WITH YOU, BUT YOU DO NOT ALWAYS HAVE ME." ~JOHN 12:7-8 (NASB)**

## **1) Mary's Example Of Adoration**

- A) John, lending intensity to upcoming dinner, reminds us that there are only six days left until the fateful Passover (when Christ was crucified) and that Christ is getting closer (geographically) to Jerusalem (John 12:1-2).
- B) Jesus and His friends are at the home of Simon the leper (Mark 14:3). While Martha (characteristically) is helping to serve the meal and Lazarus and Jesus are reclining at the floor-level table, Mary approaches Jesus (John 12:2-3).
- C) Mary, breaks open a jar of extremely expensive scented oil/perfume and pours it out on Jesus' head (Mark 14:3) and feet (John 12:3). She further wipes the excess oil from His feet with her own hair (12:3).

## 2) Judas' Example Of Selfishness

- A) Judas (who was to betray Christ) verbalized his disapproval of Mary's extravagant gift and wondered aloud why the perfume couldn't have been sold and the money used for the poor (12:4-5).
  
- B) Judas was not alone in his concern, other people were genuine in their concern that Mary was being wasteful. They were even "scolding" Mary for her gift to Jesus (Mark 14:4-5).
  
- C) Judas joined these in their public scolding, but John informs us of a key difference in Judas' heart. Judas wanted the large sum of money so he could steal some of it for his own use (John 12:6).

## 3) Jesus Defends Mary's Extravagance

- A) Jesus tells the misdirected group to leave Mary alone, viewing her act of extravagant adoration as part of the preparation for His impending death and burial (12:7).
  
- B) Further, Jesus notes that what Mary has done will not impede the opportunity or ability of the people to reach the poor (12:8).
  
- C) Jesus notes that while the poor will always be available, He will not be. Mary's act of worship and service to Jesus has special validity because of His impending death (12:8).

## 4) An Empty Threat

- A) The "crowd" (those who followed Jesus for the signs, but not necessarily because they believed, cf. John 6:2) discovers Jesus and the now popular Lazarus (12:9).
  
- B) The very existence of Lazarus puts the chief priests of the Sanhedrin in a moral quandary of sorts. To let him live, admits that Christ's miracle of resurrection was authentic and might lead to more "followers" of Jesus (12:11).
  
- C) The chief priests, using the same logic as they did in seeking Christ's death (11:50), seek to kill Lazarus (12:10).

## 5) Applying Mary's Example

- A) **Audience Of One Worship** ~ Mary's service and worship to Jesus Christ was very public. Her example invites us to worship God without regard for anyone but God alone.
  
- B) **Extravagant Worship** ~ Mary's service and worship to Jesus Christ was sacrificial. Her example invites us to worship God with financial extravagance.
  
- C) **Selfless Worship** ~ Mary's service and worship to Jesus Christ was intentionally humbling. Her example invites us to worship God in an obviously humble manner.