

JOHN
“That You Might Believe”
Sunday, June 30, 2019
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John 12:1-26

INTRODUCTION

Jesus’ public ministry began at a big celebration...a wedding at Cana, where He performed His first public miracle, turning the water into wine. In this passage, he is nearing the end of His public ministry, and the setting is once again a celebration, a feast.

FOCUS SENTENCE...

Our greatest effectiveness comes NOT when we have carefully preserved and protected our lives, but when, with reckless abandon, we entrust our lives into the purpose of God, willingly allowing our will to be buried in death and keeping our eyes on the One who gives life.

1. A Banquet With An Unexpected Event

It is important for us to realize that Jesus fully knew what awaited for Him during Passover. The disciples would understand fully AFTER these events occurred.

Some key moments to consider in verses 1-8:

- Guests were reclining at a low table.
- Martha is serving –And Lazarus is there too, reclining near Jesus.
- Mary does a most unexpected thing...
- This is a different incident than the one in Luke.
- The price for her act of devotion was equivalent to **a year’s salary**.
- John calls Judas, who complained about this extravagant act, a “thief”.

“Before ever was a betrayal of Jesus’ person there was a betrayal of Jesus’ trust. Judas’ acting as treasurer would certainly have been with the approval of Jesus, if not by his direct appointment. Presumably he had some aptitude in this area... Possibly because **‘Temptation commonly comes to us through that for which we are naturally fitted’***, the task was given to Judas, and with it the trust of his colleagues and above all Jesus. And he woefully, and wickedly, betrayed it.”

~ Bruce Milne (with an inserted quote by E.F. Westcott)

- Mary’s other controversial move, wiping Jesus’ feet with her own hair.
- Jesus defends Mary’s devotion.
- Mary’s act is immortalized.

For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward. (Mark 9:41)

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (1 Cor. 15:58)

2. The Hit List Has Widened

John records that huge crowds came...not only to see Jesus, but to see the man that Jesus had raised from the grave.

And the response of the Pharisees? They planned to kill him too.

3. Palm Sunday and an Illustration From Planting

This passage moves from the banquet in Bethany – to the actual approach by the disciples and the Lord to Jerusalem .

John continues to refer to Lazarus, stating that much of the crowd that welcomed Jesus by waving palm branches were there – because of having seen what happened at the resurrection of Lazarus.

For the Pharisees resort to hyperbole – THE WORLD HAS GONE AFTER HIM.

Our passage ends with many Greeks, Gentiles...who were seeking out audience with Jesus.

And keeping the motif that has been present during this entire chapter...Jesus gives an illustration that involves death and burial.

“Here again Jesus speaks in absolute terms to emphasize a point: **loves his life** means “delights in his life in this world more than in God,” and **hates his life in this world** means, by contrast, ‘thinks so little of his life, and so much of God, that he is willing to sacrifice it all for God.’ Following Christ entails self-sacrifice, shown supremely at the cross.” (Emphasis mine)

~ ESV Study Bible

CONCLUSION

Jesus’ illustration about the grain of wheat...such a perfect picture of what had happened to Lazarus. Many people might never have been impacted by Lazarus’s life. But...like the grain of wheat, he went into the ground, and was dead.

But he wasn’t alone...and – he wasn’t done. Jesus called him up, and gave him new life. AND – the impact that he had – AFTER burial – was so great that he went on the Pharisee’s hit list, for many were believing in Jesus because of him.