

# Remembered

## Mark 14:1-11

<sup>1</sup> Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. <sup>2</sup> “But not during the festival,” they said, “or the people may riot.”

<sup>3</sup> While 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.

<sup>4</sup> Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? <sup>5</sup> It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly.

<sup>6</sup> “Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. <sup>7</sup> The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. <sup>8</sup> She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. <sup>9</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

<sup>10</sup> Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. <sup>11</sup> They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

## **Textual Concerns**

An anointing found in all 4 gospels.

Is this one event or two different ones?

Personalities named or un-named.

Feet or head. Locations differ.

Not a matter for this sermon as it will deal only with Mark's account.

## **Hunted & Betrayed**

Jesus' state of heart and mind

The Bookends of this scene

The Priests and Scribes want to kill him.

Just not over the holidays for fear of people.

Judas offers to trade him for money.

One of his friends.

# Anointed

The meaning of Anointing

Favour, Presence, Power, Healing

Oil was used both practically and symbolically

The uniqueness of this anointing

Oil was commonplace

Perfume was extraordinarily rare (oil based)

It would have been unusual that this woman was admitted - a lot of gumption.

The jar was sealed and had to be broken.

It could never be sealed again.

The most notable thing was not what you saw but what your smelled.

Jesus would have smelled like this perfume for days, perhaps even up until his death.

Why did this woman do this?

How do we honour Christ? How can we?

# **Wasted**

Jesus is surrounded by opposition.

Now this woman faces opposition - called a wastrel for honouring Jesus.

Why do you think she was attacked?

This happens in our day:

We look not at the heart but the appearance.

It is easy to judge others by what they have or don't have.

We elevate ourselves by denigrating others.

By what they do or don't do.

It takes a little more time, wisdom and insight to see the heart.

It is not impossible.

Just do not work on your first impressions.

Do not assume or more accurately, presume.

How does it feel to be wrongly accused?

Misunderstood?

## Remembered

Jesus defends the woman.

He sees her motivations.

"The poor you always have with you..."

is not a critique on the poor but a quote of Deut 15:11 that continue to command generosity. In other words, Jesus reinforces the command but pointed note that this is not really the concern of the attackers.

Jesus adds an additional understanding to anointing: Death (embalming)

He will remember her for she remembered him. And all will remember her.

So as we come to Lent - How do we prepare, how do we honour, how do we remember the death of Jesus?

# Lent

As we approach Lent we ask these same questions to adjust the trajectory of our lives. If you are sinning, confess and turn from your sin.

Lust, Wrath, Sloth, Pride, Gluttony, Avarice, Envy

The *ascesis*, the self denial, of Lenten practice is not to be reduced to a mere religious practice that does not touch sin.

Refraining from luxuries or commodities is not enough. It's like taking a vitamin for your cancer.

If you choose a form of *ascesis*, we say no to something in order to make space for something else.

Chastity, Patience, Diligence, Humility, Temperance, Charity, Kindness