

Extravagant Love

John 12: 1-11

1. Imagine you are in Lazarus's garden for the dinner party. What can you see? What can you hear? What can you smell?
2. What is so surprising about Mary's actions? (v2) *{hint: hair, feet, cost}*
3. What was Judas's objection? (vv4-5)
Was it reasonable?
What do you think about his mixed motives? (v6)
Can you think of contemporary issues where we might take a firm stance 'for good' but actually be doing it from mixed motives?
4. How does Jesus react to Mary's love? (v7) Is he critical of her?
5. What extremes should be avoided in interpreting Jesus' comment that "You will always have the poor among you"? (v8)
6. What was the impact of Mary's extravagant gesture on those at the party?
Why did the chief priests want to have Lazarus killed? Why was he such a threat?
(vv10-11)
In what sense (if any) is the Christian Church a threat/challenge to society? Should it be?
7. Think of this story in its context. In what sense is it a bridge between the 'Will he or won't he come to Jerusalem' of ch 11 v56 and 'The Triumphal Entry' of ch 12 vv12-19, which marks the beginning of John's narrative of the days leading up to the Crucifixion?
8. Are there ways that as Christians we show our love for Jesus, which non-believers might (do) find strange and inexplicable? Does it matter that we are not always understood?
Are we 'extravagant' enough? {not just financially}
Or are we too balanced, careful and eager not to offend?

JGK

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