

Treasuring Christ Above All (John 12:1-11)

I. The Final Visit to Bethany (1-2)

A. Jesus Treasures the Father's Will

1. The Pharisees have put the word out to arrest Jesus
2. Six days before the Passover, Jesus returns to the scene of the miracle that brought down all their persecution
3. No longer will he "hide" in the back country (He wasn't really hiding, he was waiting for the Father's timing)
4. Jesus loves the Father so much to put himself back in harm's way
5. Jesus loves us enough to give his life away

B. Jesus is Given a Supper in Bethany (2)

1. Lazarus, who was drawing attention of his own, was there
2. Martha was there serving
 - a. While Mary will be the focus of this passage as she demonstrates her love for Christ, Martha should not be passed over
 - b. She treasures Christ by serving Him
 - c. This is a demonstration of love that is sorely missing in the Church today.
 - d. Love always serves – Even if a person thinks they are sincere, true love for Christ results in a life of service for what Christ loves.

II. The Evaluation of Our Treasure (3-8)

A. Treasuring Jesus Above All Else (3)

1. Mary Anoints Jesus' Feet

- a. She uses a pound of expensive perfume (nard)
- b. Later Judas will estimate the value of the perfume at 300 denarii (pence).
 - i. A denarii was about a day's wage for a common laborer in the first century
 - ii. 300 days wages for a minimum wage worker in modern America would be about \$25,000. (First century people worked 12 hour days.)
 - iii. The bottle of perfume was very expensive and probably very precious to the family.
 - iv. It may have been an heirloom, or bought specifically for this occasion. Whatever the case, it was saved specifically to be poured out on Jesus.
- c. Mary demonstrates that Christ is a greater treasure than money

2. Mary Wipes His Feet With Her Hair

- a. To wash a person's feet was the lowest of tasks

- b. Mary goes to great lengths of humility to demonstrate her love and devotion to Christ.
 - c. A Jewish woman would never unbind her hair in public much less wipe someone's feet with it.
 - d. A Jewish woman's hair is her honor and she laid it at Jesus' feet.
 - 3. Mary's Perfume Filled the House
 - a. Imagine dumping a whole bottle of today's expensive perfume in your house.
 - b. All those in the house experience Mary's devotion to Christ. The smell of what she did would linger for a long time to come in the house for others to experience.
 - c. Our worship and devotion is a sweet savor to God and should be noticeable to others.
 - 4. Mary Treasures Christ over everything
- B. Treasuring Self Above All Else (4-6)
 - 1. Judas Complains that The Perfume is Wasted (4-5)
 - a. He says the money from the perfume was worth more than Christ Himself
 - b. For Judas, the value of the perfume was wasted on Christ
 - c. The perfume should have been used for better purposes
 - 2. Judas' Complaint Stems from Selfishness (6)
 - a. Judas didn't really care about the poor
 - b. Judas only cared about lining his own pockets
 - c. Judas didn't want Jesus to get what he himself wanted
 - d. Many of us give spiritual sounding excuses when we really have selfish motivations
- C. Jesus Evaluates Their Treasure (7-8)
 - 1. Jesus Commends Mary's Love for Him (7)
 - a. He commands Judas to leave her alone
 - b. He says she has kept the perfume to anoint him for burial
 - i. She may have purchased it for that reason
 - ii. It may have been a family heirloom
 - iii. Regardless of where she got it, she saved it for this special occasion
 - iv. Maybe Mary, who had sat at Jesus' feet, understood better than others that Jesus was about to die.
 - v. She gave a great gift in honor of Him, to show her love and devotion
 - 2. Jesus Criticizes Judas' Priorities (8)
 - a. Jesus tells Judas that the poor will always be here
 - b. Jesus tells him that the Son will not always be with them.

- i. Jesus is speaking of his physical presence
- ii. He would soon die and go back to the Father
- iii. They received a particularly special gift in walking with the Son of God
- iv. He would soon be gone

III. The Evidence of Your Treasure (9-11)

A. Lazarus' Life was a testimony to Christ's Power (9)

- 1. People came not just for Jesus but to see Lazarus
- 2. They wanted to see a resurrected man
- 3. People should see resurrected men and women in us
- 4. The resurrected life is proof that Christ is our treasure

B. Lazarus' Life Brings Persecution and Fruit (10-11)

- 1. The priests planned to kill Lazarus too
 - a. The persecution could not stop just at Jesus
 - b. Lazarus had to die as well because he was proof of Jesus' work
 - c. The resurrected life brings persecution
- 2. The people believed in Christ because of Lazarus
 - a. Lazarus' life bore fruit
 - b. The resurrected life brings forth witness and fruit as people see this new life and are brought to faith.

C. There is Always Evidence of What you Treasure

- 1. You may not like the way the evidence points but it is always there
- 2. If a space alien came to earth and observed your life 24 hours a day, what would they say is the most important thing?
 - a. Would they say that you worship a flat screen in your living room?
 - b. Would they say you worship your career?