

Week of April 28 - **Anointing at Bethany** Small Group Lesson 1

Connect

What do you think is the meaning of Romans 14:4? How does it apply to you?

Verses - Matthew 26:1-16 (CSB)

1 When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he told his disciples, 2 “You know that the Passover takes place after two days, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified.”

3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the courtyard of the high priest, who was named Caiaphas, 4 and they conspired to arrest Jesus in a treacherous way and kill him. 5 “Not during the festival,” they said, “so there won’t be rioting among the people.”

6 While Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, 7 a woman approached him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume. She poured it on his head as he was reclining at the table. 8 When the disciples saw it, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. 9 “This might have been sold for a great deal and given to the poor.”

10 Aware of this, Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a noble thing for me. 11 You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me. 12 By pouring this perfume on my body, she has prepared me for burial. 13 Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

14 Then one of the Twelve, the man called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, “What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?” So they weighed out thirty pieces of silver for him. 16 And from that time he started looking for a good opportunity to betray him.

Study

1. **DISCUSS:** The following questions are difficult and some of them may have more than one right answer:

   (a) ***Why*** did the woman anoint Jesus? (26:6-7) *This may be the key point!*

   (b) What was ***Jesus' understanding*** of what she had done? (26:10-13)

   (c) What was ***Jesus' disciples' understanding*** of what she had done? (26:8-9)

   (d) Why did Jesus and his disciples (at first) have a ***different understanding*** of what the woman had done?

   (e) After listening to Jesus' teaching (vv 10-13) do you suppose that his disciples understood and agreed with Jesus' understanding of what the woman had done? ***All of them?*** (see v. 14)

   (f) How can we be sure that ***our understanding*** is consistent with Jesus' understanding especially when we evaluate the behavior of other believers?

2. **SHARE**: Please consider the following questions and share your own experiences, if you are comfortable to do so. *(Hint: it may be helpful to consider the story of Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42).*

   (a) Have you ever been critical of someone for doing something which they were doing in obedience to God? How did you come to recognize this? Did you then become less critical of them? Was this easy for you?

   (b) Have you ever thought that what you were doing was godly only to discover that you were wrong - i.e. that your behavior was not godly? How did you discover this? Did you change your behavior? Was it easy?

Magnify

Based on today's lesson,

- How can you serve God better?
- How do you need to change?
- Do you need to be less critical? About what?

Take prayer requests and pray for each other.