**John 12 - THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE “All to Jesus”**

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The end of the first half of John known as “The Book of Signs”. The rest of the gospel of John contains only The Upper room to the empty tomb. So this chapter wraps up Jesus’ public ministry before the cross.

 ***(Triumphal Entry)***

**John 12:12**The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. **13**They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna”

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”

“Blessed is the king of Israel!”

**14**Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

**15**“Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion;
    see, your king is coming,
    seated on a donkey’s colt.”

**16**At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

**17**Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word. **18**Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. **19**So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

This triumphal Entry was what was a Messianic Prophesy from Zeph. 9:9. Jesus knew what it meant, The Pharisees knew what it Meant, perhaps some of the people knew what it meant but the disciples did not understand the significance of this act. It was not a random pony ride into town, it was an audacious declaration by Jesus that He is the King Messiah that Zephaniah wrote about. It rapidly sped up his journey to the cross, which happened less than a week later. (Listen to Palm Sunday Message called “Triumphal Entry” for more).

**20**Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival. **21**They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.” **22**Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

**23**Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. **24**Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. **25***Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life*. **26**Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

These Greeks who came to celebrate the Passover wereeither Hellenistic (Greek) Jews or proselytes, Greeks who converted to Judaism.

Jesus used the analogy of a wheat seed. Unless it falls it is buried in the ground and gives up its current life, it can not turn into a majestic wheat stalk which produces over 100 seeds (kernels) per plant. This is why Jesus said, the “hour has come” for him to be glorified, which can only come through His death (and resurrection), which will produce eternal life for all eternity.

He tells us, that if we hold on to, and love our earthly lives too much, we will miss out on the eternal life that He offers us.

**27**“Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. **28**Father, glorify your name!”

Never forget that Jesus had a soul (a mind and emotions), just like us. He was thinking about the suffering he was about to face, and anguishing about taking on sin upon the cross. He considered asking God to spare Him from it, but instead said “not my will, but yours be done”, “for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” **29**The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

**30**Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. **31**Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. **32**And I, *when I am lifted upfrom the earth, will draw all people to myself*.” **33**He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

Remember in John 3 (Nic at Night) He talked to Nicodemus about Numbers 21?

**John 3:14-15** “Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, **15**that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

Now was the time he was going to be lifted up on the cross. Through the cross all people for all time have access to the Father through Him.

**34**The crowd spoke up, “We have heard from the Law that the Messiah will remain forever, so how can you say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this ‘Son of Man’?”

**35**Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going. **36***Believe in the light while you have the light*, so that you may become children of light.” When he had finished speaking, *Jesus left and hid himself from them.*

This was a final invitation for that Jesus gave the “to believe”. Some did, but others hardened their hearts.

**Belief and Unbelief Among the Jews**

**37**Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. **38**This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

“Lord, who has believed our message
    and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

**39**For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:

**40**“He has blinded their eyes
    and hardened their hearts,
so they can neither see with their eyes,
    nor understand with their hearts,
    nor turn—and I would heal them.”

**41**Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus’ glory and spoke about him.

This is sometimes a difficult passage to understand. Remember that when Isaiah gave prophecy, he usually presented it in past tense (ex. “He WAS wounded for our transgressions…). Here He is saying that the signs God gave them, including His own voice from heaven, did not cause them to believe, instead they chose to harden their hearts and continue so deeply in their blindness that they could not believe.

**42**Yet at the same time many even among the leaders *believed* in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; ***43****for they loved human praise more than praise from God.*

**44**Then Jesus cried out, “Whoever believes in me does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. **45**The one who looks at me is seeing the one who sent me. **46**I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. **47**“If anyone hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge that person. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

Jesus stated multiple times, that came to seek and save the lost and that He did not come into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. This does not mean however that the world escapes judgement. Quite the contrary, Jesus’ death was given so that we can escape the Judgement to come.

**48**There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day. **49**For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken. **50**I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

There is a judge, and there is a judgement for those who reject Jesus. We don’t like to think about it, or talk about it but we should because it’s real. Sometime in an effort to try to convince people to come to Jesus, and make it very easy and welcoming, we sometimes neglect to tell them what happens if they don’t.

(Example: *Rock and roll friend* at Bell Works – “*We’ll judge you, because that’s what we do isn’t it…”)*

*(Imagine teaching your kid to drive and not telling them what happens if they ignore the rules…? You must be completely surrendered to the traffic laws in order to enjoy the privilege of driving.)*

Our message must be; “Yes, come as you are to Jesus, freely receive salvation, and the love, peace, and joy of the Holy Spirit, and be welcomed into abundant life on earth and everlasting life in heaven, but you must be willing to come with your whole heart and give all to Him who gave all for us.”

This brings us to the beautiful story of **Mary of Bethany** at the beginning of this chapter.

**John 12:1-10 “**Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2**Here a dinner was given in Jesus’ honor. **Martha** served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. **3**Then **Mary** took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus’ feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

**4**But one of his disciples, **Judas Iscariot**, who was later to betray him, objected, **5**“Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” **6**He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

**7**“Leave her alone,” Jesus replied. “It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. **8**You will always have the poor among you,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John%2012&version=NIV#fen-NIV-26589c)] but you will not always have me.”

**9**Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. **10**So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, **11**for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.”

Jesus had “Friends”.

Jesus was enjoying a dinner party that was given in His honor by his closest friends. Jesus was a close friend of the family to Mary/Martha/Lazarus. These are most likely a household of adult siblings who were unmarried and whose parents are not in the picture, Martha was likely the oldest and in charge of the house. They probably have some wealth because they have a house large enough to host guests and the alabaster jar of perfume that Mary had is valued at a year’s wages.

*(that could buy a lot of Patchouli, Musk or Old Spice, or Essential Oils)*

Jesus had very personal and candid relationship with this family, their conversations were very informal:

Example: Martha complained to Jesus about her sister Mary just sitting at His feet while she did all the work;

**Luke 10:40-41**“Lord, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.”

But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! **42**There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.

In the previous chapter, John 11 they seemed to be upset with Jesus for not coming sooner to heal their brother Lazarus;

**John 11:21-27 & 32-36** **”**Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22**But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.”

**23**Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”

**24**“Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”

**25**Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. **26**Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

**27**“Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.”

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**32**When Mary arrived and saw Jesus, she fell at his feet and said, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

**33**When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, a deep anger welled up within him, and he was deeply troubled.**34**“Where have you put him?” he asked them.

They told him, “Lord, come and see.” **35**Then Jesus wept. **36**The people who were standing nearby said, “See how much he loved him!”

Jesus went on to raise Lazarus from the dead, but not before showing us the relationship he had with this family. He had a genuine familial love and deep personal friendship with each of them.

THE ANOINTING:

The “Nard” or Spikenard was contained in an Alabaster Jar. Alabaster is a translucent stone that is carved into shapes. In this case a fancy container for the precious ointment. The value of this jar of nard is said to have been worth 300 denarii (Roman Coins). About a year’s wages.

Judas superficially protested that the oil should have been used for the poor instead of wasted on Jesus. Jesus defended Mary’s actions and commended her commitment to Him.

Mary’s actions were of a heart of true worship. Judas’s suggestion, as disingenuous as it was, is that it is more important to care for the poor.

Jesus said that both are important, and appropriate in the right times. But what Mary was doing took precedent over any act of charity or good deeds that could have been done.

We are commanded to love the Lord first and foremost, after that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Matt 22:37-39 **37**Jesus said to him, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ **38**This is the first and greatest of the Laws. **39**The second is like it, ‘You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.’

If we mix up these priorities, we are not putting God first the way we are commanded to worship Him.

Jesus said, “The Scriptures say, 'You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him.”

Mary poured it all out before the Lord. She knew he was about to die, Jesus even said that she is preparing his body for burial. *In fact it’s very likely that Jesus still smelled like this fragrance the whole time he was arrested, beaten, crucified and buried.*

Mary took what was most likely her most valuable possession, and poured it out upon Jesus. It’s possible that could have been her dowry that her father might have left for her, in order for her to someday be married. *Mary was giving her future to Jesus*. *Do we give Jesus what is most valuable in our lives?*

She endured ridicule and humiliation because of her humble posture of anointing Jesus’ feet with it, wiping his feet with her hair. *She was giving Jesus her reputation*. *Do we willing to give our name, image and reputation to Jesus?*

Mary demonstrated that she was more interested in honoring Jesus than anything else in her life. *She gave Jesus her complete devotion. Are we willing to love Jesus more than anyone or anything else in our lives?*

This is what it means to love and worship the Lord with all your heart, soul mind and strength. To Bless the Lord with all that is within us.

How can we respond?

**Let’s devote ourselves to loving, worshipping and serving Jesus with all that we’ve got. He is the one who gave all of Himself for us. <>**