

For week of March 19 to March 25

Tasting and Seeing #3: Offensive Extravagance

Getting Started

What is the most extravagant gift you have ever received? Did it make you feel greatly loved or greatly uncomfortable? Did anyone around you suggest it was foolish for someone to “waste” so much money? Were they right to say so?

Read the Text Together: **John 12:1-8**

Discussion

Who are Mary, Martha, and Lazarus? What do we know about them?

It seems this story appears in all of the Gospels, though with different details or a different emphasis in each. Read also **Matthew 26:6-15**, **Mark 14:3-11**, and **Luke 7:36-50**. Which details connect the stories? What are the differences? Do you think these passages are all referring to the same event? Why or why not?

What does Mary do in **John 12:3**? What is the result? How did the others in the room react? How would you have reacted?

In v. **4-6**, John makes a serious accusation against Judas, not just at the level of behavior but also at the level of motive. What does John claim? Is the charge fair? Can it be corroborated anywhere else in scripture?

Do you agree that Mary’s actions are extravagant? Why or why not? What is the difference between appropriate extravagance and wasteful behavior?

Both **Matthew** and **Mark** indicate Judas took action immediately after this event. What did he do? Do you think Mary’s actions and Jesus’ response pushed Judas over the edge to take the action he took? Why or why not? Is this a normal result of extravagance?

Wrap Up

What does extravagance towards Jesus look like in our day? What would you think if someone consumed a year’s wages on a one-time act of devotion to God? Would you be inclined to say, “What a waste! That money could have been given to the worthy student fund/building fund/needy family fund/Sabbath School fund/etc.”? Would you be right to say so?

What do you learn from Jesus’ reply to Judas in v. **7,8**? Are you extravagant towards Jesus?

- What must I change?
- What decision must I make?
- What action must I take?