

Main Idea: How much is Jesus worth to you? What happened in Mark 14:1-11 invites us to ponder that question. We see four types of people in the story each demonstrating a different value judgment regarding Jesus.

- I. Some reject Jesus (1-2).
 - A. They often use religion as a cloak.
 - B. They are threatened by Jesus.
- II. Some worship Jesus (3).
 - A. We see this in an unnamed woman.
 1. She gave much.
 2. She had received much (see Luke 10:38-42).
 - B. We can learn from her.
 1. Serving is good, but sitting at Jesus’ feet is better.
 2. In order to have something to give, we must first receive.
 3. Once we have received, the appropriate response is to give.
- III. Some ignore Jesus (4-9).
 - A. The people rebuked Mary (4-5).
 1. They said they were concerned about waste.
 2. They said they were concerned about the poor.
 3. What they should have been concerned about was Jesus.
 - B. Jesus commended Mary (6-9).
 1. It is good to give to the poor.
 2. It is beautiful to give sacrificially to Jesus.
- IV. Some betray Jesus (10-11).
 - A. Mary’s act of worship revealed the truth about Jesus.
 1. He was going to die.
 2. He wasn’t going to be the kind of Messiah many wanted.
 - B. Mary’s act of worship revealed the truth about Judas.
 1. He wanted money more than Jesus.
 2. He was willing to use Jesus to get what he wanted most.

Take Inventory: How much is Jesus worth to me?

Today’s text is important. That’s true of every passage in the Word of God, for sure. But it’s even more so today. Why? Because today, as we continue our series in the Gospel of Mark, we’re going to be looking at someone who did something so amazing that Jesus Himself said these words, “Truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her (Mark 14:9).”

Who is this woman, and what did she do, and why does Jesus want us to remember her? We’ll seek to answer those questions this morning, as we turn to Mark 14.

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:1-11

When I was in college, I learned a helpful principle from one of my professors, Jim Grier, who later became the dean of the seminary I attended. The principle? Our values determine our actions. We do what we do because of what we value.

It’s true. If I value athletics, I will spend money and stand in the rain to watch a Friday night football game. If I don’t, I won’t. Unless of course, I value a child or grandchild who is on the team or in the band. Once again, our values determine our actions.

We all attach value to things. The reason you did what you did this past week has to do largely with your values. You took the overtime, or didn’t, based on your values.

^{**}Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For a previous look at this passage, see the Mark series in 2006.

You attended church this morning because you valued it, or because you valued a by-product of coming (like keeping a family member happy). You read your Bible during the week, or didn't, based on whether you considered it a better value to spend 15 minutes longer in bed or learning from God's Word. You bought some items this week, perhaps some clothes or a recreational item or a new car, because you made a value assessment and decided the item was worth the money you spent to obtain it.

But there's another twist. Sometimes we don't value things as we ought because we don't really understand how much they're worth.

For instance, a story is told of a man who loved old books. He met an acquaintance who had just thrown away a Bible that had been stored in the attic of his ancestral home for generations. "I couldn't read it," the friend explained. "Somebody named Guten-something had printed it." "Not Gutenberg!" the book lover exclaimed in horror. "That Bible was one of the first books ever printed. Why, a copy just sold for over two million dollars!" His friend was unimpressed. "Mine wouldn't have brought a dollar. Some fellow named Martin Luther had scribbled all over it in German."²

People do what they do because of what they value. If I truly value something it will show up in my actions. You'll know it without a doubt. I can say I value my wife and children, but they (and others) know whether I do based on how I treat them.

Likewise, I can say I value Jesus, but the truest test of my values is not what I say. It's by looking at what I do (not *did* but *do*). My actions speak louder than my words.

The question of the morning, indeed, a question with eternal significance, is this. *How much is Jesus worth to me?* All of us have made a value judgment about Jesus. All of us ascribe either much value, or little value, or no value to the One who holds ultimate value. Without question, He is worthy of great value, the greatest value, and for many reasons! He is the Maker of heaven and earth. He came to earth in order to rescue sinners, which He accomplished by dying the death sinners deserve to die. For those of us who know Him as Savior, He is preparing an eternal home in heaven. Truly He is worthy.

But the question is, how much is Jesus worth to us? What happened in Mark 14:1-11 beckons us to ponder that question. We see four types of people in the story, representing four types of people in the world today. And each demonstrates a different value judgment regarding Jesus.

I. Some reject Jesus (1-2).

Mark introduces us to this kind of person in verses 1-2. "It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him,² for they said, 'Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.'"

We're told that Passover is at hand, a day when thousands of lambs would be slain in Jerusalem, including the final Lamb that would take away the sin of the world.

It's interesting that Mark 14 is the longest chapter in the book, seventy-two verses. In Mark 14, Jesus will observe His final meal with the disciples, agonize in Gethsemane, be arrested, mocked and condemned by the Sanhedrin, and abused horribly by wicked men.

Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are actually two separate holy events. Passover was one of three major holidays for Jews (in addition to the Feast of Pentecost

² *Our Daily Bread*, June 7, 1994.

and the Feast of Tabernacles). It occurred on 14th Nisan, that is, around April 14. The Feast of Unleavened Bread took place the seven days following Passover.

According to Barclay, it was the ambition of every Jew to eat at least one Passover in Jerusalem in his life. Lodging was free, and since the city itself couldn't hold all the guests, the pilgrims lodged as well in the outlying villages, including Bethany and Bethpage.

To get a sense of just how big an event Passover was for the Jews, listen to Josephus. This Jewish historian records that in AD 65, the number of lambs slain during Passover was 256,500. Since the law said there must be a minimum of ten people to one lamb, there must have been close to three million pilgrims in Jerusalem.³ During the "off peak season," Jerusalem was home to 50,000 people.

We know that Jesus' critics had been after Jesus most of His public ministry (see 3:6). Now Mark mentions that the chief priests and scribes were plotting to kill Him. We learn here a couple of insights regarding people who reject Jesus.

A. They often use religion as a cloak. Remember, these are the religious leaders of God's chosen people that we're talking about! And they're conjuring up a plan to get rid of Jesus. They couldn't use legitimate means for there was none. Apparently, their intent was to wait until after the Passover season, after the crowds left, to arrest and kill Jesus. As unthinkable as it was, God had come to earth to live with them, and they rejected Him. Why? The same reason folks reject Him today. They don't want to change.

Religious people are some of the most difficult to reach. Why?

B. They are threatened by Jesus. And why? For several reasons, but here's the one at the core. As the perfect man, Jesus exposes the religious. When we look at His life, they see, we see, how life is supposed to be lived. Loving God, and loving others, selflessly, all the time. And none of us do that. Jesus exposes our sin. Jesus makes it clear that we need something, and it's something that we cannot do for ourselves. We need *salvation*. And that's a threatening thought to a proud sinner, to admit one's need.

Yes, some reject Jesus. They did *then* and *now*. Thankfully, in verse 3 we meet a second type of person, one who made a very different value judgment about Jesus.

II. Some worship Jesus (3).

Verse 3 says, "And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head."

Mark simply identifies her as "a woman." He doesn't give her name. He doesn't give the names of the critics either. There's another name he's going to give us in a moment, and this text is building to that shocking revelation.

The apostle John gives her name, though, as well as some other details (see John 12:1-3). This is Mary, and her sister, Martha, is the one serving this meal while Mary anoints Jesus. Their brother Lazarus was reclining with Jesus at the table. According to John's account, Mary applied the ointment, not only to Jesus' head but also to His feet, and then wiped His feet with her hair, and the fragrance of the perfume filled the house.

The event took place at the home of Simon the Leper. Who was he? We're not told. Apparently, he was a leper that Jesus healed (or no one would be coming to his house!).

³ Barclay, p. 324.

To show his great appreciation, he's now throwing a dinner to honor Jesus. J. D. Jones suggests that Simon may have been Martha's husband, but that can't be proven.

It's worth noting that John says this incident took place six days before Passover. That would be the Friday before the triumphal entry. Mark (and Matthew) seem to place the narrative at the very beginning of Passover. Or do they? As J. Vernon McGee points out, "We must remember that neither Matthew nor Mark is attempting to give a chronological order. Their obvious purpose is to place this lovely incident next to the dark deed of Judas—that is, the plot to betray Jesus."⁴

So some people reject Jesus. But in stark contrast, because of God's gracious working in their hearts, some people worship Him, and do it sacrificially, and selflessly.

A. We see this in an unnamed woman. She did what she did, not for public recognition, but for Him alone. The Scriptures reveal two things regarding this remarkable woman.

1. *She gave much.* In first century culture, it was common to anoint the head in the dry and hot East. But this was no ordinary anointing.

Jesus was reclining at the table. In that culture people didn't sit to eat. They leaned on low couches, resting on the left elbow and using the right hand to eat.

Mary approached Jesus, took her alabaster jar, snapped the neck, and rather than applying a few drops (which they often did for medicinal or other purposes), she poured the perfume, apparently all of it, on Jesus. Mark clarifies the perfume was made of pure nard, a very precious ointment made from a rare plant imported from far off India. Mark also says the perfume was *very expensive*, worth more than a year's wages.

Which raises the question, "Why?! Why did Mary give so much?" The short answer?

2. *She had received much (see Luke 10:38-42).* We need to know that this isn't the first time Mary has been with Jesus. Let's look at two other accounts.

One is John 11. Verse 1 says, "Now a man named Lazarus was sick. He was from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha." Perhaps you remember the story. Lazarus ended up dying. Mary grieved tremendously and said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died (32)." At that point, Jesus wept (35), then went to the tomb of Lazarus, and raised him from the dead!

Yes, I'd say Mary had received much from Jesus, for starters, her brother back from the grave! But there's more, something she experienced before Jesus did the miracle with Lazarus.

Let's look at Luke 10. We're told this in verses 38-39, "As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said."

What's Mary doing? Sitting at Jesus' feet, feasting on His life-giving words. By contrast, notice her sister in verse 40, "But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, 'Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!'" We're told that Martha was "distracted." In fact, she was upset with her sister for not helping in the kitchen. Apparently, she complained to Mary but that didn't help, so she told Jesus.

Listen to His response in verse 41, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Note Jesus' assessment. Showing hospitality to a guest is

⁴ McGee, p. 165.

good, cooking a meal is good, cleaning your house is good, but...Mary chose *what is better*. What's better than serving? Sitting at Jesus' feet.

We'll come back to that thought in a moment, but for now, consider carefully what it says to us regarding why Mary gave so much. The answer? She gave much because she had first *received so much*. Jesus had given her more time with her brother, but more than that, had filled her soul with His eternal-life-giving word.

B. We can learn from her. Three lessons...

1. *Serving is good, but sitting at Jesus' feet is better.* If we don't receive from Jesus, we won't have anything to give to Him. Frankly, we won't *want* to give anything to Him, not something as costly as Mary gave for sure. Why not?

2. *In order to have something to give, we must first receive.* Mary appears in three accounts in the Gospels, and each time her posture is the same. She is at the feet of Jesus (Luke 10:38-42; John 11:31-32; 12:1-8), humbly listening to and learning from the Master. That posture is not unrelated to Mary's generosity in Mark 14. Mary had incentive to give lavishly to Jesus because she had first received lavishly from Jesus.

Do you see the contrast? Martha served, that's good. But Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and Jesus said that is *better*.

"You mean all Jesus wants us to do is *sit*?" No, not all. But that's what must come first. Sitting at Jesus' feet, that is, sitting under the ministry of His Word, must be priority in our lives.

We must never let *serving* the Lord become a substitute for *sitting at His feet*. If we do, in time we'll burn out and stop serving, with our spiritual gas tank on empty. This is why we need to carve out time on a daily basis to sit at the feet of Jesus.

"But," you say, "my schedule is so full today! I don't have time to sit at Jesus' feet." Someone has rightly said, "Either you come apart, or you will come a part."

This also applies to our involvement at church. It's easy to equate serving with spirituality. "I'm a spiritual person because I do a lot of things at church!" Yes, it's good to serve in church. In fact, if a person claims to know Christ and doesn't serve in church, something's wrong, for God saves us so we can serve Him.

But let's learn from Mary. Service must never become a substitute for sitting under the sound of the Savior's Word. Are you making it a priority to hear the words of Jesus?

You say, "Where are these words?" In this Book. This Book reveals Jesus to us. In this Book, Jesus speaks to us and ministers to the needs of our soul.

Friends, we have lots of ministries in our church, and they're important, for we ought to be serving. But if we are serving so much that we're not placing ourselves under His Word, that's not good.

A practical note. If you're serving in a ministry during the Sunday morning worship service (like children's church, or nursery, or on our safety and security team, or whatever), thank you. We appreciate what you're doing to enable others to sit under the Word. But please make sure you are taking advantage of other opportunities to sit under the Word yourself (in Sunday School, in the evening service, in the Wednesday Bible study, etc).

My observation as a pastor is that serving is often the last thing to go. I've seen it over and over. We start coming to church and are thrilled with being under the teaching of God's Word. We delight in sitting at Jesus' feet. We know we need it. Then we start serving, which is good and right, for once we have received we should give. But not at

the expense of receiving. The moment we stop sitting at Jesus' feet is the moment the branch starts shriveling.

In order to serve the Word, we must first be *in* the Word personally and *under* the Word corporately. So let's put ourselves *under* the Word at least one service a week. If we can't, we probably need to stop serving, ask God to enable us to change our schedule, and then start serving again. Are there exceptions to this? Probably, but they should be exceptions. If I am not consistently sitting at Jesus' feet receiving His Word, two things will happen, and neither are good. I will become weary. And I will be missing what the Lord desires and deserves most from me, which is not what I do for Him, but *me*. He wants *me*.

This brings us to the third lesson Mary teaches us. One, serving is good, but sitting at Jesus' feet is better. Two, In order to have something to give, we must first receive.

3. *Once we have received, the appropriate response is to give.* If misunderstood, sitting at Jesus' feet could become a selfish thing, a way to avoid reality. But sitting at Jesus' feet leads to something. Receiving leads to giving. Mary received much. Consequently, she gave much, and she was glad to do it.

Some reject Jesus. But some, like Mary, worship Jesus.

III. Some people ignore Jesus (4-9).

Notice verses 4-5, "There were some who said to themselves indignantly, 'Why was the ointment wasted like that?'⁵ For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.' And they scolded her."

Interesting, isn't it?

A. The people rebuked Mary (4-5). On two grounds, and both sounded so pious.

1. *They said they were concerned about waste.* "Why this waste of perfume?" Mark doesn't tell us who "they" were. Matthew tells us it was the disciples (Matt. 26:8). That's right. Jesus' own followers rebuked Mary. The Greek verb is graphic. It indicates the disciples snorted like stampeding horses.

"That perfume cost a year's wages (300 denarii)! What were you thinking, woman?!"

And whenever you hear a group of critics getting fired up about something, there's a strong possibility someone is stoking the fire, as it were. And there was such a person here.

Who? Judas. John's Gospel makes it clear that Judas Iscariot was the instigator and spokesman for the critics who were hounding Mary (see John 12:4).

"Judas, with calculator in hand," writes Kent Hughes, "a man who knew the price of everything and the value of nothing, instantly calculated the waste (in terms of today's economy, \$25,000 to \$30,000)."⁵

"What a waste!" said Judas and the others.⁶ It's significant that this word "waste" in verse 4 is translated "perdition" in John 17:12 *and applied to Judas!* As Wiersbe rightly points out, "Judas criticized Mary for 'wasting money,' but he wasted his entire life!"⁷

But according to the critics, it wasn't just the waste. They offered a second, rather pious-sounding reason for their rebuke.

⁵ Kent Hughes, p. 146.

⁶ The Greek word is *apoleia*, which means "needless squandering of resources," hence, *waste*.

⁷ Wiersbe, p. 159.

2. *They said they were concerned about the poor.*⁸ Ironically, John 12:6 states, “He [Judas] 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.”

Listen to this insight by J. D. Jones, “There is nothing so shallow and so utterly and wholly false as the opinion so popular today [he’s writing in 1914 but the opinion hasn’t changed], that if only we spent less on religion we should spend more on philanthropy. Again I ask, are the people who spend nothing on religion the people who spend most in philanthropy? Is it secularism that built hospitals and orphanages and homes? Is it atheism that is foremost in caring for the little child? Look around over those great charitable institutions that are the glory of our land. The answer is there... The universal testimony of history and experience is that religion is the mother of philanthropy, that from the philanthropic point of view no money is ever wasted that is spent on Christ. The Church has been all down the centuries the best friend of the poor...All that we do for Christ comes back in blessing upon men...Mary is always a better friend to the poor than Judas.”⁹

What waste! That’s what folks said of Henry Martyn when he left a successful ministry in his homeland and went to India as a missionary.

What waste! “That is what they said,” according to Jones again, “about a brilliant young teacher in the United States, who, after the conclusion of the Civil War, felt it to be her duty to go and teach the emancipated slaves; who, after a few months of toil, sickened and died far away from home.”¹⁰

What waste! But as we’ll learn from Jesus in a moment, it’s this kind of joyful, even extravagant devotion, this *waste*, that thrills the heart of our Savior.

J. D. Jones offers this needed challenge, “Is not this the mischief with us today, that our love is so cold; that we are so prudent and calculating in all our religious service? There is no suggestion of abandonment in our love. This is the prayer for us—‘Warm our coldness we implore.’”¹¹

Ironically, Mary’s gift *was* a gift to the poor. What poor? We read in 2 Corinthians 8:9, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.” Jesus was the poor man *par excellence*.¹²

So the critics said they were concerned about *waste* and *the poor*.

3. *What they should have been concerned about was Jesus.* He had told them repeatedly He was going to die soon. But they missed it. Mary didn’t miss it, and Jesus came quickly to her defense.

B. Jesus commended Mary (6-9). “But Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. ⁹ And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.’”

⁸ The word “poor” means “one who crouches and cowers,” hence, “beggarly” or “poor.”

⁹ J. D. Jones, pp. 511-12.

¹⁰ J. D. Jones, p. 507.

¹¹ J. D. Jones, p. 507.

¹² Observation by Kent Hughes, p. 148.

We learn two things from the Master's words.

1. *It is good to give to the poor.* Jesus' isn't downplaying the importance of caring for the poor. He's just putting it in perspective. It is good to give to the poor, and we should. But...

2. *It is beautiful to give sacrificially to Jesus.* That's the word Jesus used, *beautiful*. "She has done a *beautiful* thing to me."

Jesus tells us in verse 8 that Mary "did what she could." She gave, not what she could spare, but sacrificially, even extravagantly.

My friend, it's not wrong to have a lot. The question is, "Does it have us?" In other words, "Do we use what we have for the honor of Jesus or for some lesser purpose?" God has blessed the American church with unrivaled abundance, not so we can hoard the abundance, but so we can use it for kingdom purposes.

Mary did what she could. Can that be said of us? Ask yourself, "Is my devotion to Christ costing me anything?"

Several years ago, it cost something for our brother and sister, Steve and Nicole Lee. As you may recall, they came to know the Lord through the ministry of this church, and we rejoiced. Then Steve, a physician, took a new job in Hartford, Connecticut and moved his family there. A month into his new job he was told by his boss, who operated a physical rehab facility that worked with a lot of auto injury people, to remove information from his medical records. The owner had a partnership with an attorney who sent a lot of auto-injury-business to the rehab center. So the boss told Steve to delete information from his reports in order to make the lawyer's job easier.

Steve, though a young believer, knew God would not be honored by such action. His boss, who was a professing Christian, insisted. So Steve prayerfully chose the God-pleasing option. He resigned, gave his ninety day notice according to his contract. Two days later, his boss countered with an email notifying Steve he was terminated *immediately*. Ironically, the boss rebuked Steve, saying his problem was that he was just a young and immature Christian.

Steve and Nicole made a decision to show Jesus that they loved Him, more than money, more than security, more than reputation, more than life. And it cost them. But they are rejoiced in His pleasure!

I asked Steve, "How is Nicole handling this?" Nicole had just become a believer earlier that year and was baptized just a few months before they moved. Steve's response, "If this would have happened before she was saved, she would have gone into 'panic attack'! But now she is saying, 'Well, this is a chapter that must be written before God can write the next chapter for us!'"

I would suggest that Steve and Nicole did a *beautiful thing*. By their actions they said that pleasing Jesus is their greatest value.

And now, the fourth type of person. Some reject Jesus. Some worship Jesus. Some ignore Jesus. And...

IV. Some people betray Jesus (10-11).

We read in verses 10-11, "Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. ¹¹ And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him."

Mary's actions produced two effects that day.

A. Mary's act of worship revealed the truth about Jesus. They made it clear...

1. *He was going to die.* “She poured perfume on my body to prepare for my burial,” Jesus said for all to hear. And since He was going to die, that meant this.

2. *He wasn't going to be the kind of Messiah many wanted.* The Jews were expecting a Messiah that would make life better in the *here and now*, and that's what they wanted. But that's not why Jesus came. He came with eternity in mind, and that meant He had to die first, then conquer death, and return to heaven. He had come to *save sinners*, not reward sinners with a better life here and now.

Yes, Mary's actions made it clear that Jesus had not come to be what many wanted. And one of those men included one of Jesus' closest followers.

Notice the first words of verse 10, “Then Judas Iscariot.” Right after Mary demonstrated her devotion, Judas showed his true colors.

B. Mary's act of worship revealed the truth about Judas. *Then* Judas Iscariot. What did he do? He went to the Jewish authorities to betray Jesus.

Why in the world would Judas do that? He's been following Jesus for three years, learning from Him, receiving power from Him to do miracles, enjoying friendship with Him. Why did he now betray Jesus? Here's the tragic answer. Money.

1. *He wanted money more than Jesus.* Matthew's account (26:15) indicates that Judas went to the authorities and asked them what price they were willing to pay. He actually bargained with them and agreed to put Jesus into their hands for thirty pieces of silver.

Let this sink in. There's a stark contrast between Mary's self-denying, sacrificial love for Jesus, and Judas. Judas wanted money more than Jesus. But it's worse than that.

2. *He was willing to use Jesus to get what he wanted most.* Yes, *use* Jesus. Think again about what Judas has been doing the past three years. He's been sitting at Jesus' feet, so to speak, but not really, for it was a sham. He had preached for Jesus. He had healed in Jesus' name. He had even endured ridicule for Jesus.

But it was all for a deficient, self-oriented motivation. He simply used Jesus. And now He's willing to trade in Jesus to get something he values even more.

For Judas, it was money. For us, it could be something else. Several years ago a man came to my office and said he wanted to get saved. In fact, he couldn't pray the prayer fast enough. But as soon as the prayer ended, he headed for the door. “Where are you going?” I asked. “To my court hearing,” he said. And then I understood. Getting Jesus was just a ticket to convincing a judge to stop the divorce proceedings.

Yes, people can come to Jesus for lots of reasons. Peace of mind. Physical healing. A better family. Encouragement.

You say, “Wait a minute. Doesn't Jesus give us those things?” Yes, sometimes. But He's not a ticket to get those things. He is the Living God Himself, and worthy of our worship and adoration.

My friend, did you come to Jesus to get *Jesus*, or something else?

Take Inventory: How much is Jesus worth to me?

May God give us hearts like Mary's, the woman who sat at Jesus' feet and poured a year's wages on those feet with gladness.

Closing Song: #364 “*My Jesus, I Love Thee*” (all four verses)

Benediction of the month: Nahum 1:7

Community Group Discussion:

1. In this morning's message, we looked at the account of an unnamed woman who did something so amazing that Jesus Himself commended her, saying, "Wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." So let's read the passage again, Mark 14:1-11.
2. The passage begins in verses 1-2 by informing us about the actions of the chief priests and scribes. What were they doing, and why? What do the words "by stealth" (ESV) indicate about these men?
3. What did the woman in verse 3 do? How do her actions affect you personally? Why do you think Mark doesn't include her name?
4. How did the woman's actions affect the people around her in verse 4? What do you think about the rationale for their criticism in verse 5?
5. In verses 6-9, Jesus silences the critics and defends the woman. He says she did a "beautiful thing." How so? He also says that He wants people to know what she did wherever the gospel is preached. Why?
6. What do we learn about the poor in this passage? Why is it significant that Judas betrayed Jesus right after the incident involving the woman (in verses 10-11)?