
Mk 14:1-11 Second reading Deut 16:1-4

The Woman who anoints Jesus

Today we pay due attention to Lent, and because of Mothering Sunday we put a woman centre stage.

1. The title Christ or Messiah means 'Anointed One'. In today's story Jesus is indeed anointed, and he accepts it. He accepts his role, his office, his identity: he is the Messiah, the King of Israel (cf. 1 Sam 10:1; 16:12-13).

A woman anoints him. The reactions of the male audience are not positive: 'some of those present' (vs 4) grumble. Yet Jesus himself is entirely positive: vs. 9, one of my favourite verses. If Jesus were Anglican, he would call the woman a saint. (We Baptists don't do saints.)

2. Meanwhile the Jewish leaders are 'scheming' and Judas is willing to sell his master.

This will be a case of murder, deadly serious, and yet Mark pokes fun at the clumsy attempts:

- The Jewish leaders think that they need to be inventive, but Judas is willing to help them, making the capture of Jesus very easy.
- They don't want the murder of Jesus to happen on the festival, but in the end it happens exactly on that day! It had to, for Jesus fulfils Easter by dying as the perfect Passover lamb.
- They don't want the people to riot – well, most of the people are quite happy with the murder of Jesus.
- They want it to happen secretly, but the murder of Jesus of Nazareth is one of the best documented murders in history.

3. The men mess up, they resist the Messiah – again a woman gets it right. She is close to the heart of the Lord. Her action is prophetic, as it predicts Jesus' death. So the anointing has two aspects: Jesus' death and his kingship.

This is a great story. This woman is captivated by Jesus, she loves Him. She has the courage to enter the men's company. (Jesus has broken down barriers for women.) She spends a year's salary on Jesus! The love of Christ is reflected in her. She brings her cosmetics, and uses the entire jar!

4. In the church and in our private lives God's love can be hidden behind rules, conventions, obligations. Let us look to the Lord Himself again and fall in love again!

Which reasons do you have to be grateful to Jesus? We can show our love abundantly, extravagantly. We can give and act and love generously.

Whatever we do in genuine love for the Lord, is good. Do not let bystanders hinder us.

5. Is Jesus worth everything for you? Let our community, and our own home and life, be filled with the smell of our love, to his glory! Our love for Him merely reflects his love for us. We love the Messiah who obediently went all the way to the cross for us.
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