

# STONE HARBOR

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Dear Readers,

What follows is one man's weekly attempt to know the truth of God's Word and bring it to His people for their good and ultimately for His glory. Please regard these only as notes belonging to a busy pastor uploaded as they stand (for better or for worse, complete or incomplete, almost always with grammatical errors, and always with room for refinement in content, structure, presentation...) to support the ongoing study of God's Word. I firmly believe that the community of faith which is the body of Christ can and should bring their gifts to bear for the good of the rest of the body and that any one teacher can be taught by the others with an understanding of the truth. Therefore, should you have insight that would sharpen any of the thinking expressed here, know that I would be pleased to receive it. Clearly, the input that is most welcome and most helpful is that which is more concise than verbose, Biblically grounded and expressed with the goal of displacing misunderstanding and apprehending the truth of God's Word. Your thoughts of that nature are most welcome, certainly appreciated and will be thoughtfully considered. You are invited to send those insights to me at [johnny@stoneharborchurch.org](mailto:johnny@stoneharborchurch.org).  
In pursuit of truth and growing a shepherds heart,  
Johnny

## ***Transformation Card***

*This page provides an overview of the message and resources for individual and group study.*

Date: October 25th, 2009  
 Series: Who Jesus Is & Why He Matters  
 Section: Jesus on Mission in Jerusalem  
 Topic: The Passion  
 Message Title: How Jesus Allowed Others to Treat Him  
 Short Title: How People Treated Jesus  
 Text: Mark 14:1-11  
 Key Words: Chief priests, scribes, seize Him, kill Him, Passover, perfume, anointed, Judas, betray

### ***Message Outline***

How Jesus Allowed Others to Treat Him

- I. Religious **Authorities** Sought to **Kill** Him
- II. A Woman **Anointed** Him for **Burial**
- III. A **Disciple** Began to **Betray** Him

### ***Related Scripture***

1. Mat 26:2-5
2. Luke 22:1-2
3. Mat 26:6-13
4. Luke 7:37-39
5. John 12:1-8
6. Mat 26:14-16
7. Luke 22:3-6

### ***Questions for Thought and Discussion***

1. Who were the people seeking to kill Jesus and what is ironic about that?
2. Why were they seeking to seize Him by stealth and what does that say of them?
3. What was the significance of the woman's action?
4. Why did some need Jesus correction as to the appropriateness of the woman's extravagance?
5. Speak out what notable thing the woman did (see v. 9)
6. Why might Mark have included the note that Judas was "one of the twelve"?
7. Why would Jesus allow Himself to be betrayed to death?

### ***Memory and Meditation Verse***

"...there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard; *and* she broke the vial and poured it over His head."

*Mark 14:3b NASB*

## **Exegetical Idea**

Mark now tells the story of Jesus' passion, beginning here with the account of the conspiracy against Him between the religious leaders (1-2) and one of Jesus' own disciples (10-11) which is held out as all the more evil in contrast to the account of a woman's anointing Him with costly perfume.

## **Homiletical Idea**

History shows that Jesus invokes either devotion or disdain; and this raises the question, "How will you respond to Him – will you honor and embrace Him and bring what you have to participate in His plan, or will you push Him down and away and go after what you want?"

## **Goal of Message**

That we would see the ugliness of working against Jesus and the beauty in honoring and embracing Him and bringing what we have to Him to compliment His plan of redemption.

## How Jesus Allowed Others to Treat Him

### *Introduction*

In the passage before us this morning we will see that Jesus allowed Himself to be treated with disdain by those against Him and with devotion by those for Him.

It strikes me that Jesus was not so much the victim of a world full of fallen and hostile people as He was a willing participant in God's plan to restore those same people to a place of fellowship with the one true God.

*He did not fall into a trap that caught Him off guard or unprepared or under-gunned; rather He allowed Himself to be harmed for a good beyond the comprehension of those who raised their hands against Him.*

Likewise, it similarly strikes me that Jesus did not so much need the help of those who rallied to Him as He did bend His perfectly capable knee to allow His disciples that privilege.

*He did not find Himself wanting of power or the resources needed to accomplish His task; rather He allowed His disciples the dignity of bringing what little they had to be a part of something inconceivably greater.*

We see in Jesus' life (with His enemies and His disciples) what He allowed them to do to Him. How did Jesus allow others to treat Him? This passage before us answers that question and it gives us even more light into the who Jesus is and why He matters to us.

He is the strong One who allows the weak to treat Him as they do, using both hands lifted against Him and hands reaching out to embrace Him, to accomplish His plan – a plan that is altogether greater than the highest conceptions of man's understanding.

There are perhaps billions of ways people can respond to Jesus, but this passage set's before us a contrast between each end of that spectrum. And as I look first to the left, the camp of disdain, and then to the right, that of devotion, I am stirred to flee from the one and move with determination to the other. I am sobered by the reality that due to our common human condition each of us has it in us to respond to Jesus according to the evil intentions of that heart. It is only bathed in God's grace and in embracing Jesus as God's Son and Savior come to redeem us from that fallen state that we can position our selves to respond to Him from the camp of those who are for Him. It is only through a death to our old selfish self and the receipt of new life in Christ.

It is my hope for this morning that we would see how Jesus allowed Himself to be treated with both disdain<sup>1</sup> and devotion; and that we would not fall into the default response of disdain but rather give ourselves to treating Him with the utmost of genuine devotion.

Let's let God's Word help us to that end.

## I. Religious Authorities Sought to Kill Him

When I first read the Bible I found it ironic that it was the religious leaders who most defiantly set themselves against Jesus. How unexpected! How could that be? Now almost 30 years later -- older, wiser, more exposed to the dark side of human failings especially the failings of the religious, sadly the irony has given way to almost an expectancy. Religious authorities, perhaps even more than the congregations they lead, are susceptible to responding to Jesus amiss.

I can lead others following Jesus myself and in so doing serve God well. But, I have to watch out that I don't get all intoxicated in my leadership capacity and forget about my responsibility to follow Jesus as my leader. I am an under-shepherd to the great shepherd, Jesus. A pastor who leads having himself stopped following Jesus is a menace to the sheep entrusted into his care. He becomes autonomous and begins to make decisions that are according to his own wisdom and for his own good. He forgets that he is only an under-shepherd and that the sheep really belong to God not him.

The chief priests and scribes of Jesus day were these religious authorities who had become entrenched in a system of religion with positions of leadership that defined their identity and brought them status in the community. They had some power, some ability to influence, some status. Heady stuff this leadership position. So when Jesus comes on the scene, this son of a Galilean carpenter, this unknown who did miracles, this one who taught the Scriptures with authority people recognized as greater than their own, this one who was becoming increasingly popular with the people, their people... -- when Jesus came on the scene in that way, the religious authorities of the day had much that they valued at risk of being lost -- their positions of importance and influence, their jobs, their identity. This colored the way they responded to Him.

Let's look at the text.

### **A. Read Mark 14:1-2**

### **B. Jesus Allowed Threats from Without**

#### **1. Source of Threat Endured**

- a) **Outside of the Core 12**
- b) **Outside of the Disciples**
- c) **Inside His Traditional, Cultural Religious Community**

### **C. Forces Us to Look at an Ugly Heart of Disdain**

#### **1. It was not a question of IF they should kill Him**

##### **a) The wanted him dead**

At this time they were not asking what they should do with this man Jesus. That had already been decided. In fact that had been decided quite some time earlier.

*(1) Earlier passages referring to their intent to kill*

**2. It was a question of HOW they should kill Him**

- a) **How could they seize Him “by stealth”? (1)**
- b) **How could they kill Him so as not to cause a riot? (2)**
- c) **How could they kill Him without negatively affecting themselves?**

**3. Their Intent, His Death**

- a) **Dead He Would Have No Impact -- Or So They Thought**

**4. The Irony, His Life and the Life He Would Give**

**a) In His Death He Brought forth Life**

The religious leaders unwittingly would bring about for all eternity the very thing they were trying to get rid of – Jesus and His impact on God’s people. They would find out soon enough that the grave could not hold Him. And their act of eliminating Him would yield -- for all the multiplied millions of future disciples -- His exaltation to THE MOST IMPORTANT figure in their lives. Instead of diminishing Jesus impact by their evil intent, God used even their murderous actions for His good. Something God has done time and time again in redemptive history.

In this we see the hand of God. Their sin was condemnable but God used even it to accomplish His will.

Now, in sharp contrast to the ugly response of disdain, we have a beautiful account of a woman’s response of devotion.

**II. A Woman Anointed Him for Burial**

***A. Read Mark 14:3-9***

***B. Jesus Allowed/Accepted Love from Those Who Loved Him***

**1. Source of Love Accepted**

- a) **Outside of the Core 12**
- b) **Inside of the Disciples**
- c) **Normal follower of Jesus -- like many of us**

***C. Permits Us to See a Beautiful Act of Devotion [v 3]***

1. Verse 3b Again
2. What She Was Thinking (What she intended to accomplish)

- a) Textual Indications of Her Motives

*(1) None in Mark, only record of her actions*

- b) What I Imagine She Was Thinking

Women seem to get it before men.

*(1) “What can I bring to this man, my Lord, who I love?”*

Admittedly, this is looking at her actions through my eyes of faith and knowing the end of the story. As beautiful as this scene was, to the disciples, it was a hidden beauty. They did not have such a good vantage point.

3. To the Disciples this was at first a Hidden Beauty

- a) Read 4-5

- b) The Disciple’s Were Indignant

*(1) What Was She Thinking!?*

*(2) What a waste!*

*(3) They scolded her*

But once again we see Jesus correcting and teaching His disciples. It is as if He is saying, “Things are not what they appear, you have much to learn. Receive my correction and a clearer picture of reality.”

4. To Jesus it was a Commendable Act of Devotion

- a) Read 6-9

- b) He Accepted It (3)

- c) He Defended It (6)

*(1) Let her alone! – He stopped the disciples scolding.*

*(2) Why do you bother her?*

With these words He both communicated His disapproval of their scolding the woman and He asked a provocative question that they possibly benefited from as they considered it later. Why had they bothered her? They made a natural human assessment and may have

regarded her extravagance as we regard the extravagant bonuses paid out to the executives of the bailed out banks. But Jesus is no self-motivated bank executive. He is in a league of His own and wholly unique in His worthiness of extravagant devotion.

*(3) She has done a good deed to Me.*

#### **d) He Explained Its Goodness & Meaning (7-9)**

*(1) The Uniqueness of the Situation – Time Limited Opportunity*

(a) Small Window of Jesus Incarnate with Man

*(2) “She has done what she could” (8a)*

(a) What she had the power to

This is very much like the commendable devotion of the widow who gave the two copper coins, all she had to give.

(b) May Jesus rightly be able to speak these words of each of us

*(3) “She has anointed My body beforehand for the burial” (8b)*

(a) Meaning of anointing for burial – act of love, respect, honor...

(b) **“The burial”** – Indicates Jesus’ sureness of His death

I see the hand of God given how the timing of the events of the crucifixion and burial will play out giving no opportunity to anoint Him between the cross and the grave.

*(4) In explaining the goodness of Her actions He places before us the rightness of our own acts of costly devotion.*

(a) Tip – If you think someone is going overboard in their devotion to God, you are probably wrong!

Now we return from beauty of this tender scene, back to beast... and from thinking of ourselves at our best, to seeing in ourselves the possibility of the worst.

### **III.A Disciple Began to Betray Him**

**A. Read Mark 14:10-11**

**B. Jesus Allowed Threats from Within**

**1. Source of Threat Endured**

**a) Inside the Core-12**



**b) A fully committed fully embraced follower of Christ**

**C. Confronts Us with the Horror of Insider Betrayal**

If the threat from chief priest is ugly, this is ugly on steroids. And it progresses in degree of horror as we think about it first as it relates to Judas two thousand years ago in Jerusalem and then think about as it relates to issues closer to home and ultimately as it relates to us.

**1. Horror Level 1 – That Jesus Would Allow Himself to be Betrayed from Within**

He didn't need to subject Himself to the additional hurt of betrayal if His goal was simply getting to the cross. I think He had a reason to suffer the extra insult and heartbreak.

**2. Horror Level 2 – That It He Would Allow Himself to be Betrayed by Someone in His Inner Circle**

**a) Heightens the Grievousness of the Attack**

(1) *Judas was “one of the twelve” (10)*

(2) *He betrayed Jesus to His enemies (10)*

(3) *They were glad*

Gladness indicates the degree to which they were enemies indeed. We are not glad for the misfortunes of those who are our friendly competitors. We are only glad about the likelihood of harm when their harm is our goal.

(4) *Judas “began seeking how to betray Him at an opportune time.”*

This indicates his engaging into a continuing activity which itself shows a determined intention to betray. This was no slip in a week moment. This was planned and pursued.

(5) *Contrasted Uses of Opportune Time*

(a) Judas – looking for the right time to betray

(b) Woman with the Perfume – looking for the right time to express her love

(c) Contrast makes us see both the depth of the evil and the height of the good

**b) Heightens the Graciousness of our Lord**

(1) *That He would allow such an abuse speaks to His bigness. Magnanimous<sup>ii</sup>*

### 3. Horror Level 3 – The Possibility that We Might Have it In Us to Betray Jesus

We might say, “Those foolish disciples!” But, watch out! We could fall into the trap Judas did!

#### a) Could We Really Betray Jesus?

*(1) We’d like to think not...*

*(2) We’d better think so...*

*(3) Our Betrayal Would Be More Subtle*

#### b) Our Safeguard

*(1) Don’t think you don’t have it in you*

*(2) Do live in the reality of who you are in Christ*

*(a) Not who your flesh would enjoy being*

*(b) Not who the enemy would have you believe you are*

### *Conclusion*

**Goal:** That we would see the ugliness of working against Jesus and the beauty in honoring and embracing Him and bringing what we have to Him to compliment His plan of redemption.

Let’s Pray!

### *Endnotes*

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<sup>i</sup> : a feeling of contempt for someone or something regarded as unworthy or inferior : **SCORN** "disdain." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2009. Merriam-Webster Online. 24 October 2009 <<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disdain>>

<sup>ii</sup> **1**: showing or suggesting a lofty and courageous spirit -- "Magnanimous." Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. 2009. Merriam-Webster Online. 24 October 2009 <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Magnanimous>>

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