

Pouring Out Our Devotion

Mark 14:01-11

Series: Christ our Focus

1. Introduction:

- a. This is the longest chapter of the book of Mark and the general theme found within it is of abandonment.
 - i. A total defection begins in this chapter and records in sorry detail how the earlier opposition of the Pharisees now spreads among the ruling council of Jews, the Roman rulers, and the populace. The disciples also all flee and abandon our Lord.
 - ii. At the cross, Christ utterly dies alone. He is condemned by Rome and abandoned by the nation, his people, his followers, and even the Father.
- b. In the midst of this abandonment process, we see one that comes to Christ in utter thankfulness and unlike the others, identifies with Christ in his death.
- c. Markian sandwich –
 - i. Verses 1-2 – Abandonment and betrayal—insiders—payers of money
 - ii. Verses 3-9 – The Woman’s faithfulness—outsider—pours out in without regard of cost
 - iii. Verses 10-11 – Abandonment and betrayal—insider—betrays the Lord for money

2. Verses 1-2 – Insiders – Ruling class

- a. The religious leaders are devoted to the destruction of Christ
 - i. The irony here is that the religious should be the one that would have accepted Christ first but we see that this is not the case.
 - ii. The religious leaders see Christ as a threat
 - iii. Disguising their hatred and religious zeal, they are looking for a way in which to apprehend Christ but they are afraid of the timing.
- b. However, the betrayal does not originate from them but from one of Jesus’ own disciples making the betrayal more heinous and loathsome.
- c. By stealth—*adolos*—carries the sense of guile and deception
- d. Because of the influx of people, the threat of a Jewish uprising is in the air.

3. Verse 3 – An intruder
 - a. The house of Simon the Leper – Jesus had previously healed him
 - b. A woman – most probably Mary – Jesus had just brought her brother up from the dead – but in Mark she remains unnamed.
 - i. What is important is her whole devotion
 - ii. It was against tradition and custom for a woman to interrupt a male gathering but she does not care.
 1. She is extremely grateful and wants to demonstrate that gratefulness.
 - c. Pure Nard – about a years’ worth of wage
 - i. A woman could not work to earn this
 - ii. Most probably a dowry or family heirloom.
 - d. Broke the flask – could never be used again
 - i. Total devotion of the gift
 - e. Poured it over his head – as an act of worship

4. Verses 4-5 – Shock and disgust
 - a. The disciples react with vehement opposition
 - b. They do not think that Christ is worth the gift but that the gift could have been better use in another manner.
 - i. The gift, the woman, and Christ are demeaned
 - ii. There is a juxtaposition for our consideration – what the woman thought Christ was worth with what the disciples thought he was worth.

5. Verses 6-7 –Christ’s defense
 - a. A command – leave her alone
 - i. She like the poor widow did what she was able to do
 1. Their gifts are vastly different but they come from a place of total devotion, in that sense, they are the same.
 - ii. It is not the value of the gift but the condition of the heart.
 - b. There is no indifference to the poor, but a simple understanding the Christ supersedes all. Before the second, comes the first great commandment.
 - i. **Mark 12:29-31** Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. (30) And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' (31) The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

- ii. The value of her gift, and that of the widow's gift, show that they understand the immeasurable gift of Christ.

6. Verses 8-9 – Anointing

- a. The disciples understand that Christ will die and yet they have done nothing for him.
- b. He accepts the woman's anointing as a preparation for his burial, sparing him the indignity of a criminal's death.
- c. The gospel is experienced in suffering and she knew this so that Christ will commemorate her act forever in His unfailing Word.

7. Verses 10-11 – Betrayal

- a. Judas's betrayal is a prototype of the defection of the other apostles
 - i. Have you ever betrayed our Lord?
- b. Mark does not mention Satan like Luke does
 - i. **Luke 22:3-4** Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. (4) He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them.
- c. Mark wants us to know that beside everything else, Judas was fully responsible for his betrayal of Jesus. He goes to the Chief priest, they do not come to him.
- d. The freely chosen evil of humanity, and the overarching providence of God are juxtaposed. Divine grace uses even human evil for its saving purpose.
- e. Notice their delightful glee in having a member of the inner circle betray Christ.
 - i. Yet their glee is unfounded because all of this is part of God's sovereign plan.

8. Benediction –

- a. **Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.