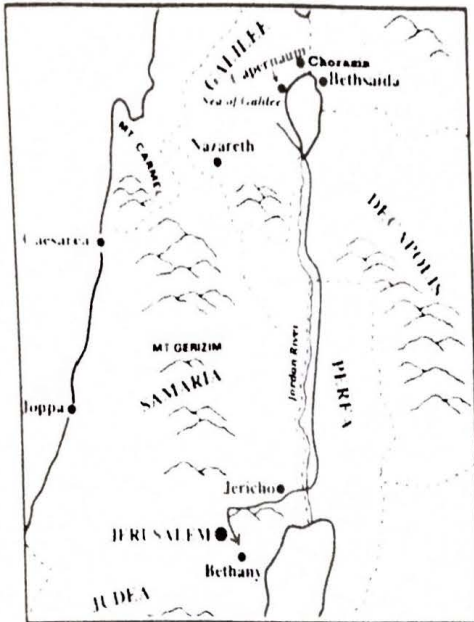


FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS
Beauty in Devotion, Ugliness in Deceit
John 12:1-8

What to listen for:

- God's attitude regarding material things and devotion to Jesus.
- An answer for why some Christians have greater devotion to Jesus than others.



1. The Historical Context: The previous three months of journeyings.

- Ten Lepers healed but only one received eternal life.
- A rich young magistrate rejects eternal life because of love for his money.
- James and John rebuked for their selfish ambitions.
- Jericho's most notorious sinner—Zaccheaus—welcomed into life by Jesus.

It was early April. Passover was a week away. Jesus and the disciples were marked men. John 11:45—57

2. The Setting, 12:1-2 (Matthew 26:6/Mark 14:3)

A. The time and Place—Evening, a house in the village of Bethany.

The details so similar to Matthew and Mark indicate the same event. John give specific detail about the time it occurred, Matthew and Mark place it out of chronological order to where it fits the themes of their gospels.

B. The arrangement of the room—typical oriental style

C. The atmosphere—Calm and peaceful in contrast to Jesus' enemies.

3. The Action of Mary, 12:3.

A. The Symbolism of Mary's Action—honoring Jesus, humble service.

1) Treated Him as honored guest at the banquet—extravagant anointing.

2) Anointed Him as Messianic King

Mary's perfume value = 300 denarii = a year's worth of wages for a typical laborer. Approximately \$20,000 today.

B The Significance of Mary's Act for Us

Why did she do it?

Mary was consistently listening to Jesus whenever she had the opportunity.

No thoughts of self-importance distorted her reception of His teaching.

She meditated on His teaching and came to accept it.

Out of deepening love, she chose to spare no expense to honor Her Lord.

4. The Reaction of Judas, 12:4-6.

A. What Judas said (v. 4). Why this waste?

B. Why he said it (v. 6). He was a thief.

Matthew and Mark: the other disciples joined the criticism (Mtt 26:8, Mk 14:4).

How overbearing and distressing a self-serving negative appraisal can be to those seeking to express the feelings of genuine faith and devotion.

A warning to the Church: beware of spiritual bullies who mask their own prejudices and self-interests in earnest righteous speeches.

And beware of spreading your own discontent with things when you are out of step with the Lord.

5. Jesus' Response to Judas, verses 7-8

A. A Word in defense of Mary (verse 7)

Jesus credits Mary with sharing His thoughts.

B. Devotion to Jesus supersedes concern for the poor.

A right relationship to Him is the greatest solution for all social problems.

Why? Because Jesus changes the sinful impulses of people into Godly, wise, modest, and generous impulses.