



Week 18 Discussion Questions

Text: John 12:1-19

Icebreaker: What does worshipping God look like in your everyday life? What is your favorite way to worship God?

1. Read this week's passage. What stands out from the text or sermon?
2. We are halfway through our series in the book of John, and John 12:1 tells us that it is once again the Passover. This is the third Passover mentioned in John's gospel, which indicates that the first half of the book covers roughly three years, while the second half focuses on one final week of Jesus' life and ministry. John's gospel account is highly intentional. Recall what the main idea of the book is and consider why John chose to include the specific events and details that he did.
John states his purpose in John 20:30-31—"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;³¹ but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John does not account for every moment of Jesus' life in the three years he documents, and he does not include many of the stories we find in the other gospels. John specifically chose each of the signs he did to highlight Jesus' divinity. Each one is meant for us to identify Jesus with the expected Messiah, who came to save the world and to bring life from death. Through Jesus death, we have life. John wants us to see that clearly.
3. What is the purpose of Mary pouring out the perfume on Jesus' feet in this context?
This act by Mary is a lavish act of worship. Mary humbles herself at the feet of Jesus and gives up possibly her most prized, or at least most expensive, possession. Judas says that the perfume was worth 300 denarii. One denarius was equivalent to an average day's wages. So, this one bottle that she emptied on Jesus' feet was worth almost a year's wages. Mary, worships Jesus lavishly because she has believed in who He says He is. Commentators suggest that Mary's anointing of Jesus is related to a burial ritual, which would usually be preceded by a cleansing. There is no mention of Mary washing Jesus' feet before pouring out the perfume. The absence of the cleansing could be because it was unnecessary for Jesus to be cleansed--he had no blemish (sin).
4. What stands out when you compare Mary's actions with Judas' intentions? Reflect on each of their responses to Jesus and what they teach us about worship.
Mary demonstrates devotion, sacrifice, care, appreciation, humility, and generosity. Judas demonstrates selfishness, greed, scarcity mindset, harm, and pride. A true heart of worship

includes the characteristics that Mary demonstrates. This perspective can help us evaluate how we understand “worship” and help us redefine what it looks like in our everyday lives.

5. Mary worships Jesus in a lavish way, unconcerned with the cost. With Mary’s actions in mind, what worldly possession would be difficult for you to give up for Jesus?
Maybe it’s not a possession, but an activity or habit that takes our time and directs our heart away from God and changes our posture in worship.
6. Judas’ greed blinds him to Jesus’ truth. What sinful desires blind you to God’s truth, keeping you from living life to the full?
Sometimes sin blinds us to God’s truth because we excuse the sinful desires as “not so bad.” We justify ourselves by saying “It feels good, it must not be bad” or comparing our sin to others’ and deciding it’s less serious (i.e. “It’s not like I murdered someone or something.”) When we measure our sin against others rather than against God’s holiness, we convince ourselves it isn’t really harming anyone. In doing so, we miss the ways it damages us, weakens our witness, and affects those around us. More than that, when we dismiss our sin we are drawn further away from God.
7. What would it look like to worship Jesus lavishly in your own life?
8. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 15:11 in his response to Judas. Read Deuteronomy 15:7-11 and discuss why Jesus uses this passage to correct Judas. In what way does this response shape our worship today?
Jesus knows Judas’ heart and we are told that Judas doesn’t care about the poor, but is concerned with his own greed. Jesus reference to Deuteronomy 15 is a correction to Judas, because it directly outlines what it means to take care of the poor. Jesus’ is not telling them to stop taking care of the poor. As we see in Matthew 25:40, He tells His followers that to take care of the poor is an act of worship. However, Jesus words in John 12 signify the immanence of His death and the urgency of preparing Him for it. When you have Jesus in the flesh before you, and you are in His presence, lavish worship is appropriate. The lavish worship of Jesus and care for the poor are not mutually exclusive here.
9. Why are the Jews and Pharisees threatened by Jesus work and message? What about Jesus’ truth is threatening to the world today?
His claims of authority threaten the status quo and their current grasps at power. Jesus is asking them to live radically different and it will disrupt the systems that work for them.
10. Just like those in John’s gospel, we can respond to Jesus truth in one of two ways: worship or rejection. Do your choices and actions reflect worship or rejection of Jesus?