

May 19, 2019 – Elmont Baptist Church

Message Series: The Gospel of Mark

Week 45: “...A Beautiful Thing...”

Text: Mark 14:1-11

We’re unpacking and understanding the Book of Mark. The Gospel writer’s audience are Roman believers and he writes to help us see Jesus as the Messiah King and Suffering Servant. He works to answer three questions throughout the letter: “Who is Jesus?”, “What did Jesus come to do?”, and “What does Jesus expect of you?”

We love stories of people doing things that we look at as acts of great sacrifice and love the story even more when the person says they don’t think of their action as sacrifice, but they were just doing their job, or doing the right thing. The best stories are ones where someone sacrifices or does something special for someone they care about deeply. You see the love come through in the emotions that are displayed by those on both the giving and receiving ends. We know we’ve just seen a beautiful thing.

We’re are now dealing with the events just a couple of days before the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus and in the text today we look at a truly remarkable story of someone doing a beautiful thing. Matthew, Mark, and John all included this story in their writings and Luke tells of a very similar, but different, account that also happened.

Let’s READ our TEXT

Through this passage we can see that...

***Beautiful things are done out of love and delight in Jesus
not guilt, obligation, or duty to Jesus.***

Think for a moment about this – Jesus, the agent of creation, the one who knows beauty we have yet to experience, says, “She has done a beautiful thing to me.” Was it because the ointment she used was so costly? Probably not that alone to the King of the Universe, the one who owns everything. We know from several accounts throughout our time in Mark’s Gospel, that Jesus knows the heart. Her act was beautiful because of the heart through which it was done. We may not have a \$20,000 bottle of anything to give to Jesus, but we can develop a heart like this that frees us to do beautiful things.

We are Free to do Beautiful Things when...

✓ **We Trust God’s Sovereign Goodness – v 1-2**

- In every detail of His story
- In every detail of your story

One thing that can keep us from holding everything we have with an open hand for God’s use comes down to trust. If I don’t think God will take care of me, then I have to hold something back. He doesn’t call everyone to sell all they have and take a vow of poverty, but He has the right to do so. He calls us to trust Him in such a way that if He were to lead us to give it all away and move to Iran, we would ultimately go. With many tears and even fears, but we would go. Or if He calls us to go across the street and invite our neighbors to dinner, we would go.

So how do these verses help build our trust in God's sovereignty and goodness. The religious leaders decided they want to kill Jesus, but they are not going to do it during the Passover. Done. It's decided then. Expect one little detail. The Passover was an instruction of God a couple of thousand years before but only a shadow or illustration of something much bigger – Jesus, the true Lamb of God whose blood was shed to cover the sins of many. It was always God's plan that Jesus would die during the Passover and the plans of man could not stop that plan. History is His-story and no one can thwart His plan. In this we see His goodness to give Jesus for our sin, and His control over every detail of history for His purpose. Your story is not outside His plan or control. Your success and suffering, your pain and promotions, your triumphs and your trials are never wasted and all meant to help you see the goodness and sovereignty of God.

So if God says, sell it, give it, quit the job, move here, go there you can trust that He is good and in control and you are still rich in Him and forever He will take care of you.

This kind of trust helps free us to do beautiful things as...

✓ **We Delight in God Himself – v 3-9**

- Not in what we can get from Him
- But that we get Him

Daniel Akin said, *“Some people find Jesus useful because of what they can get from Him. Others find Jesus beautiful because they get Him.”* When delight and love are what fuel your actions, you won't see anything you do, not matter how costly, as sacrifice. Others may see it that way, but you won't, but most others also won't think you are all that special if Jesus alone captivates your heart. Religious people may even be your biggest critics. We know from the other accounts of this story, that it's the disciples who were frustrated with this woman's actions. Did this event expose their hearts, so they tried to discount it? What we do know is that Jesus captivated this woman's heart.

✓ **We Fight Our Sinful Tendencies – v 10-11**

- Know where you are tempted
- See where it can lead you
- Keep asking for God's help

We have to give thought to our sinful tendencies and where that can lead if given into. Pastor, Ray Ortlund, said *“Judas is legendary for betraying Jesus. This woman is legendary for loving Jesus.”* Judas was one of the disciples that Jesus called to follow Him. Did Jesus know Judas' heart? Yes. Does this make Judas' actions ok? No. We have to know that if we let other things get in the way of us loving Jesus most, then those things can and will destroy us. This woman's love for Jesus caused her to, as Jesus put it, “do what she could”. And that something was to sacrifice a \$20,000 flask of ointment to do a beautiful thing to Jesus. Judas sold Jesus out for less than \$500. We know from John 12 that Judas was a greedy man and his love for money at some level drove him to betray Jesus. Love will drive us to do extreme things, so make sure you love the best thing. Make sure you love Jesus most.

Love for Jesus doesn't look for the approval of others. Love for Jesus doesn't measure sacrifice. Love for Jesus is considered a waste by others. Love for Jesus does beautiful things. From changing diapers in the nursery to building orphanages in Africa, love for Jesus does beautiful things.

Response

- Ask Jesus to help you see and fight your sinful tendencies
- Ask Jesus to help you truly delight in Him
- Ask Jesus to lead you to do a beautiful thing

Storying Mark 14:1-11

Spend a little time coming up with your own Observation and Interpretation questions. Look back at past message notes for help.

Questions

✓ **Observation: What does it say?**

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✓ **Interpretation: What does it mean?**

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✓ **Application: How do I respond?**

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