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One for All

These Things are Written that You May Believe Series

John 11:47-12:11

Pastor Bryan Clark

In John chapter 10 we learned that Jesus is the Good Shepherd, and the Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. The Good Shepherd will die on behalf of the sheep. So that's like a foreshadowing of the mission of Jesus, where He ultimately will die on the cross for the sins of the world. This raises a question people often ask, "Why did Jesus have to die? Why couldn't God just forgive? Why couldn't God just let it go?"

Well, that's what we want to talk about today. So if you have a Bible, you can turn with us to the Gospel of John, Chapter 11. The story that we talked about last week was Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Probably it's the greatest sign so far that Jesus is God in the flesh—the long-awaited Messiah—and as a result of that, many people believed. But there was also a group of Jews that went back and told the Pharisees. So there's debate about whether they were kind of telling on Jesus to get Him in trouble or I think more likely, they're trying to persuade, maybe even their fellow leaders, that this Jesus may actually be who He says He is. It's hard to really know, but that's then where we pick up the story in verse 47:

Therefore (meaning *therefore*, as a result of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead,) **the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs. If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."**

(*NASB, John 11:47-48)

So as a result, they convene as a council. This would have been the Sanhedrin—it's seventy plus one. So seventy members plus the high priest gather together and the question they're asking is not, "What shall we do?" It's, "What are we doing?" It's very similar to how we would say it today. They have this sense that if we don't do something, He's gonna take over, like, "What are we *doing*?" So it is interesting that they state, "*If He continues to go on like this, all men will believe in Him.*" There's this sense in which His signs are so real and so authentic and so convincing, if somebody doesn't stop Him, everybody's gonna believe in Him, which is an interesting thing for them to say. You'd think, at some point, they'd stop and wrestle with those questions themselves. But their concern is if Jesus becomes even more popular, Rome is gonna think it's some sort of a revolution. And Rome is going to come in and they're going to lose their **place**, which means the temple, and they're going to lose their **nation**. So their concern is probably legitimate. If Rome actually thought some sort of a revolution was happening, it's highly likely Rome would have come in, and it wouldn't have been good for anyone. But for them, at this point, this is no longer about the truth. This is about position and power. They're going to lose their place; they're going to lose their nation. So this really isn't about what's true or not true. This is, "It's either Jesus or us."

Now I find that interesting, because I think that's where a lot of people ultimately find themselves. It reaches a point where it's not a proof issue. It's not a truth issue. It's not a lack of evidence. People get really good at saying things like, "The Bible is full of contradictions." "Churches are full of hypocrites." "All they want is money." "The Bible is full of errors," you know, a mountain of reasons why they don't believe. But oftentimes you could have a mountain as high as Mount Everest of evidence, and it won't convince them because it's no longer about what's true or what's not true. It's about power and it's about, "I want to be my own God; I want to run my own life. I don't want Jesus

poking His nose into my life and changing things.” So no matter what the evidence is, they're not going to listen. Maybe there are some of you listening today, and that's where you find yourself. You're just determined not to believe. That's where these religious leaders were. Verse 49:

But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.” Now, he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but in order that He might also gather together into one, the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on, they plan together to kill Him. (Vs. 49-53)

So we're introduced to Caiaphas. Caiaphas is the high priest. Years before this, there was a high priest by the name of Annas, and he was high priest from AD 7 to 14, followed by three of his sons that kind of took turns being high priest, and then his son-in-law named Caiaphas. So Caiaphas was a strong leader. He took over as high priest in AD 18 and remained high priest all the way to AD 36. The last ten years of his rule as high priest, he partnered up with Pontius Pilate and they, in many ways, ruled together. Then in AD 36, both of them were ousted at the same time. But Pontius Pilate and Caiaphas will be the two main players, then, in the trial and ultimately the execution of Jesus. Caiaphas was known for being self-righteous. He was known for being arrogant, being rude, being boorish. Actually, a lot of these religious leaders were described that way, and, essentially, what he says to them is, “*You people have no idea what you're talking about.*” What he goes on to say is, “This time of year it's **expedient**—which means it's beneficial, it's profitable—*that one be sacrificed on behalf of the nation.* In other words, even though Jesus had committed no capital crime, for the sake of the nation it would be expedient if **one man dies**, instead of everyone perishing. So, at this point, what he's suggesting is that Jesus must die, so that we protect the rest of the people. What's interesting about this is, then John adds that *Caiaphas, without knowing it, had just prophesied about what was to come.*

That is actually Jesus' mission. That's why He came. He came to seek and save the lost. John the Baptist introduced him as *the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.* Jesus actually came to die on a cross. He would die for the nation. He would be the Good Shepherd that would die for the sheep. But John goes on to say, *not just for the nation, but for those that are scattered, meaning the Gentiles.* Jesus came to die for all people. **“For God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”** It's the same word actually, that Caiaphas uses. So this is again that message that Jesus has come to die *for* the people. John in his Gospel actually uses that word **“for”** very strategically in his Gospel. In almost every case, he's specifically using it to mean *“on behalf of”*. The Good Shepherd dies **for**—*on behalf of*—the sheep. He dies so the sheep don't have to. So that's how John uses it, and that's how it's used here. It's kind of a technical use of the term.

So we're back to our question as to why that is necessary. It's really at the core of what separates the gospel from just religious activity. At the core of the gospel is what we call the *substitutionary atonement of Christ*, which means Jesus died in our place. Jesus died for us. He's our substitute. The Good Shepherd died for the sheep.

Now this is taught throughout the New Testament. I just want to read you a couple of passages real quick. So Paul says in Romans chapter 5, verse 6:

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

There's this exact same language. It shows up again in 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. Paul is doing a summary of the gospel you might say in chapter 15, verse 3:

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins.

So we could spend the rest of our time just going through verses that say the same thing: “Christ died for us.” So, again we're back to our question, “Why is that necessary? Why couldn't God just forgive? Why couldn't God just look the other way?” Well, I want to finish the story, and then I want to come back and talk about that at the end, because it's a really important question. Verse 53, again, “**From that day on, they planned together to kill Him.**” That Greek word translated **planned** is way too mild. It's not just planned; they *resolved*, they *determined* from that day forward, Jesus must die! So the stakes have gotten much higher. Verse 54:

Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.

So, nobody's quite sure what this city is, but most think it's a town that's about fourteen miles north of Jerusalem and right on the edge of the Judean wilderness. And basically He's there with His disciples, pouring Himself into them. These are the last few days before the arrest and the crucifixion, and He's got a lot He still needs to teach them. Verse 55:

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves. So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?” Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him. (Vs. 55-57)

So now we're about a week out from Passover. We had the Feast of Tabernacles about six months out, and then three months to the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah, and now another three months to Passover. So thousands and thousands of Jews would flood into Jerusalem. Many of them would come about a week early in order to go through their purification, to be prepared for the Passover. So the big conversation, according to John, was whether or not Jesus would come. There had to have been a lot of tension, wondering what's going to happen, and the Sanhedrin basically puts out word, “If anybody spots Him, then let us know.” And then they're going to seize Him, and this time they're going to arrest Him and they're going to kill Him. So the tension is pretty high. Chapter 12, verse 1:

Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining *at the table* with Him. (Vs. 1-2)

John tells us now we're *six days out from Passover*. So we're actually now in the final week of Jesus' life before He's to be crucified. Jesus goes to Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, which is less than two miles from Jerusalem. So this is the beginning of the final journey into Jerusalem and His crucifixion.

The Jews factor days differently than we do in the West. We kind of go midnight to midnight, but they actually went sundown to sundown. So at 6:00 in the evening, essentially the day ended, and at 6:01 the new day began. So it's likely that Jesus and His disciples arrived in Bethany sometime Friday afternoon before Passover. So Friday at six o'clock would start the Sabbath, and the Sabbath would run until six o'clock Saturday evening. And then it was common that the people would gather, have some sort of a meal, end their day together, and the next morning, which would be Sunday, would

start their work week. In this case, the next morning after this story will be what we refer to as Palm Sunday, and Jesus will make His entrance into Jerusalem. So that's where we're at timewise in the story. So Jesus is there with Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead. A lot of people think probably Lazarus had been in hiding because of the danger now to him as a result of being raised from the dead. Martha is busy serving and Lazarus is with Jesus reclining at the table. Verse 3:

Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

So the consistency of Martha and Mary stays through the Gospels. Martha is typically doing and serving, and Mary tends to be more at the feet of Jesus. And it's not to say one is right or wrong; they're just different personalities. So Martha is busy serving, and Mary comes along with a pound—that would be a Roman pound which is twelve ounces—**of very costly perfume of pure nard**. So nard would be a Greek word describing a perfume that came from northern India. It was extremely valuable. The idea of **pure nard** is the idea that it wasn't weighted with another substance. Typically these were weighed for value, and people would put something else in there to make it weigh more. This was just pure nard, so very, very valuable. As a matter of fact, we'll find out later in the text, it was worth about three hundred denarii, which would be a full year's salary.

So imagine working hard all year long, and not spending your money on anything except this container of perfume. So it had a tremendous amount of value. In the ancient world it was hard to figure out what to do with things of value. If you had money, there weren't banks where you put your money, so what do you do with it so it doesn't get stolen? That was always a problem, so a lot of people put it into spices and perfume, or else clothing. They put it in expensive clothing, so you could wear your bank account. In this case Mary's got this container of perfume. It's probably her life savings—fairly small, could be hidden, could be stored, could be easily traded or sold. So it made a pretty valuable asset to have.

So Mary comes out; Jesus is reclining at the table. They didn't sit at the table and eat like we do. They typically leaned on their left elbow and reclined their head which was in toward the table, and their feet were out. So Jesus' feet were very accessible. It's possible she anointed Jesus' head and other parts of His body, but John focuses specifically on His feet. So she pours this out, and then in quite a scandalous move, she actually wipes Jesus' feet with her hair. For a first century Jewish woman, she really wasn't supposed to let her hair down in public. As a matter of fact, nobody was supposed to see her hair down except in private, and then only her husband. So this is kind of scandalous. It's kind of surprising. It's just this extravagant, extraordinary moment of worship.

One of the problems with 21st century culture is we want to sexualize these scenes. There's nothing sexual about this, but it is kind of this unexpected, extravagant act of worship that I think probably shocks everybody. John tells us *the fragrance of the perfume filled the room*. It reminds me of places in the New Testament where Paul talks about our worship as a fragrant aroma to God. So I think Mary had a sense that the end is near. I think she realized Jesus' days were numbered. Maybe this is the last time she'll ever have a moment like this. I don't think she probably planned this out, but she was so in love with Jesus and so thankful for what Jesus did with her brother Lazarus, that in the moment, she took the most valuable thing she possessed, and she gave it to Jesus in this extraordinary moment of worship.

In the Old Testament there is a story about David, and David wants to offer a sacrifice to God. He offers to buy a piece of ground to offer the sacrifice, and the owner of the ground offers just to give David the ground for free. But David insists on paying for it and says, "I will not give to God that which costs me nothing." It's something I often think about. What does it cost me to be a follower of

Jesus? What does it *really* cost me? So for Mary, in this moment, this probably was the most valuable thing she had. And in the moment, her heart was so for Jesus, so in love with Jesus, that she sacrificed the most valuable thing she possessed. She anointed Jesus' feet, and probably in a pretty emotional, spontaneous moment, she took her hair and she wiped His feet. And it is this beautiful, glorious moment as she just adores and worships Jesus. But often in moments like this, there are going to be those who sit back in judgment—and that's the case here. Verse 4:

But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?” Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it. (Vs. 4-6)

So I'm going to guess Judas gave voice to things probably a number of them were thinking. “Why would you waste this valuable perfume? Why not sell it and give the money to the poor?” And at first glance, that seems like a pretty practical thing to do. But John reminds us, this is the Judas who is going to betray Jesus. This is the Judas that didn't care about the poor. This is the Judas who was the treasurer, who had the money box, and he was known for pilfering money out of the box. He just wanted more money in the money box so he could pilfer more money. So, his heart is exposed pretty quickly.

But I do think it raises attention that I think probably others in the room were feeling, and that is this tension between what does it mean to be really practical—we'd probably say be a really good steward—versus this emotional, spontaneous, extravagant expression of worship? Those two things are often in tension. The only way to really sort it out is, “It's a heart issue.” It's not like there are certain rules and guidelines. I don't think Mary thought, “I wonder if Jesus would like ten percent of the perfume—you know, ten percent before or after taxes?” Or if she thought, “I wonder how much money is in my own IRA; what other bills do I have to pay?” I don't think she probably thought about any of that. This was just an extraordinary act of worship.

But it's also true that it's important to be a good steward, and what about the poor? Who is going to take care of the poor? And I think these things often are felt in tension. I remember after we opened our D wing, years ago. It was within probably two or three weeks of the opening and I ran into somebody in the hall I'd never met before. I don't think I've ever seen him since. But he was coming out of the bathroom, and the first thing he said is, “Hey, I notice you have automatic faucets in the bathroom.” And I said, “Yes,” and he said, “This is a really rich church. I'm just wondering, do you do anything for the poor?” Well, in his mind, he was trying to justify automatic faucets and basically judging that we're spending all our money on ourselves and not doing anything to help the poor. Well, those kinds of comments come from people that think God has limited resources. There is a scarcity, and if we spend money on the faucets, there's not money left over for the poor—and that certainly is not the case. Now, there are some practical reasons why automatic faucets actually save money. They save water—there's good about that. But it's more that that mentality is, if you spent money on the faucet, then you don't care about the poor. And at some point, where does that start and end? So, we don't *really* need carpet. We don't *really* need fancy instruments. We don't *really* need air conditioning. We don't *really* need a coffee shop. We don't *really* need padded chairs, but then let's just take it home. You don't *really* need much of anything that you possess. So where does it start, and where does it stop? The issue is really an issue of the heart, and I think it's trying to balance my love for Jesus and those extravagant expressions of worship for Jesus, that maybe some people won't understand, and my need to be a good steward and be practical and care about the needs around me. So you have kind of a typical collision of values here that I think is fairly common. Jesus immediately speaks up and defends Mary. Verse 7:

Therefore Jesus said, “Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me.” (Vs. 7-8)

Now, I don't think Jesus is diminishing the importance of taking care of the poor. Part of what He's saying to Judas is, “Judas, the poor will always be there. Feel free to help them as much as you want. But you won't always have Jesus in a moment like this.” This is an amazing moment where God has become flesh. Jesus and Mary have become deep friends. Mary loves Jesus. I think Mary believes that Jesus is the Messiah, that He is God in the flesh, that He is the *sent one*, just like Martha said earlier in chapter 11. I think Mary has a sense that the end is near, and in this moment, this may be the last moment she ever gets to express this. She pours out this extravagant act of worship, and I'm pretty sure that there will never be a moment in Mary's life where she will ever regret what she did in this moment. That's what Jesus is saying. “This is an amazing moment; you don't have Me much longer.” And for Mary, she would not have another opportunity like this, and it's a beautiful expression of worship. Part of what flows out of this is because of what Mary understands to be true of Jesus, of who He is, and what He came to do. It translates in Mary's heart to this act of worship. This isn't religion. This isn't a ritual. This isn't some sort of rule she has to obey. When we understand what Jesus has really done for us—why Jesus did have to die for us—when we understand that, it should flow then out of our lives in expressions of worship. This isn't religion; this isn't duty and obligation. This is a love relationship with Jesus, and that's what Mary is representing in this moment. Verse 9:

The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; because on account of him, many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus. (Vs. 9-11)

So, many people came to see Jesus, but also to see Lazarus. I mean, the story of Lazarus being raised from the dead was a powerful story, and so as a result of that, many believed. But for the religious leaders, they're determining they may have to put Lazarus to death too, because his testimony of what Jesus has done is so strong, they have to eliminate him as well. We've seen this several times now in the Gospel of John, where these stories end with the people believing, but the religious leaders are determined not to believe, no matter what! Now they've concluded the only chance they have is to kill Jesus and maybe Lazarus too.

It is a reminder of something we've talked about a lot in this John study, and that is, “It's not right to believe that religion ultimately leads us to God.” What we've seen time and time again in the Gospel of John is, more often religion becomes the barrier to getting to God. As long as religion can save you, there's no need for Jesus, and now it's become a competition between Jesus the Messiah and the religious leaders as to who's ultimately going to win out.

So let's go back to our question of Jesus' death on the cross for sin, and why is that necessary? I mentioned we refer to that as the *substitutionary atonement of Christ*. Jesus died *for* me. Why is that necessary? Why couldn't God just forgive? Why couldn't God just pretend it didn't happen? Why couldn't God just look the other way? And the answer is because that would violate the character of God; that would no longer be justice. He can't just pretend it didn't happen. When the Bible talks about our sin, it says the wage of that sin is death. In other words, what we've earned by our sin is death. Therefore, we have a debt. There are a number of New Testament passages that refer to the result of our sin as a debt that must be paid. So, I owe this debt. It's real. We can't just pretend it isn't there. And so because of that debt, the consequence of that is death. So what we're saying is, “Why can't God just pretend that there is no debt?”

So let me see if I can illustrate it this way. Just a few weeks ago, the US government paid out \$2 trillion dollars in stimulus money for the COVID 19. That is an unimaginable amount of money—\$2 trillion dollars! Now, the question would be, “Where does the government get \$2 trillion dollars?” I mean, they must have a huge bag of money. And my, aren't they generous with the money they have? There was an article in The New York Times asking the question, “Where does that money come from?” And their answer was, “Out of thin air. There is no bag of money. There is no pile of money.” Where does it come from? They're just pretending like they have money. Actually, what happens is it just increases the national debt more and more. They don't have the money they're giving away. Now the government somehow gets away with that, but you and I, we can't live that way. The debt we have is real, and we cannot get away with playing, “Let's pretend.”

So think of it this way. You buy a house for \$500,000, a half a million dollars. So you borrow and you owe the bank a half a million dollars, but you'd like to be free of that debt. The problem is you only have \$10 in your checking account. So you get a check, and you write a check for \$500,000, and you send it to the bank. And you think, “Let's pretend that I actually have that much money.” The bank is not going to get that check and wipe out your account and say your debt is paid. You cannot pretend like you have \$500,000 if all you have is \$10. It doesn't work that way. The bank is not going to send you a notice and say you are now debt free. The check is gonna bounce, and they're gonna say that didn't work. You still owe us the money; you still owe us a half a million dollars. You can't go and collect some Monopoly money or some play money from Walmart and take it to the bank and say, “Let's pretend this is real money.” It doesn't work that way. Your debt is real. You can't just pretend it's not there. You can't pretend to have money you don't have. It doesn't work that way in the real world. Now it is possible that the bank could decide to forgive your debt, but the bank isn't just looking the other way. The bank isn't just pretending you never took out a loan. The bank can't get a pencil and eraser and say, “Let's just erase it off the ledger; nobody will ever know.” You actually owe a half a million dollars. And if they choose to forgive it, it costs *them* a half a million dollars. The debt is real. Somebody has to pay it.

So religion is kind of like the government. Religion is trying to spend money it doesn't actually have. Religion is trying to convince you that they have the resources to pay the debt. All you have to do is, “Follow these rules.” All you have to do is, “Do this ritual.” All you have to do is, “Follow this program, and we have the resources to pay off your debt.” But the truth is they have no resources. They have no bag full of money. They do not have what's necessary to pay for your debt. It's just pretend; that religious check is gonna bounce. It's not valid for the debt you owe. Some people are like, “Well, I don't really like organized religion. I'd kind of like to do my own thing, and I'm more spiritual than religious, and it's just me and God, and we'll figure it out.” That's like Monopoly money. That's like play money. It's like, “You know, I have this play money, and I'm going to give it to God and let's pretend like it's real and it pays off the debt. The Bible is very clear. That's never going to work. The debt is real; you can't pay it off with Monopoly money.

Jesus, on the other hand, has no sin. Therefore, Jesus has no debt. Therefore, Jesus is free to pay off your debt for you. As a matter of fact, when Jesus hung on the cross, at the end of His time on the cross, He uttered the word *Tetelestai*. which is actually a banking term. It is translated in our Bibles, “It is finished;” it's literally, “Paid in full.” Jesus has no debt, because Jesus has no sin. Therefore, He has a bank account filled with righteousness, and because He doesn't have to pay off His own debt, He's free to pay your debt. And having paid your debt, to offer His righteousness to you, so that you stand before God forgiven. Your sin is paid; you stand righteous before a holy God. That's why Jesus had to die on the cross. You owe a debt you cannot pay. No amount of religion or good works can ultimately pay for that debt. Only Jesus could pay the debt and offer you salvation...offer you forgiveness...offer you life in return.

At the end of the story, there are two options. You can choose to pay your own debt, and that debt will be separation from God now and forever. But there is no need for that. **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish.”** There is no reason to perish, forever separated from God, when God sent his only Son Jesus to pay your debt on a cross, and to offer you that payment, that forgiveness freely, if you're just willing to believe. At the end of John's Gospel, he writes, *“These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that in believing, you may have life in His name.”* I pray that that will be true for you.

Our Father, we're thankful that when we were lost in our sin, with no hope, that You sent Jesus to pay our debt, to be the Savior of the world. Lord, may we choose to believe, that we might have life. May we believe that Jesus paid our debt, that Jesus died our death, that we might know life. Lord, this we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

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Opening Discussion

1. The High Priest, Caiaphas, shows his allegiance to Rome and desire for power in proclaiming, “one man (Jesus) should die for the people” (John 11:50).

→ **Though his motive was selfish, what did Caiaphas accurately predict about Jesus’ death?** *(See also John 18:14, 11:52, 10:16)*

→ **Read Romans 5:6-8, then describe in your own words what it means that Jesus died for you.**

2. John often uses contrasts. In John 12:1-11, two distinct views of Jesus have developed as a result of Lazarus being raised from the dead: devout followers who saw Jesus as the Messiah contrasted by those who feared Jesus’ ministry and planned to put an end to it.

→ **Why do you think following Jesus has such a polarizing effect – either quickly drawing others in or dramatically making them resistant to Him?**

→ **Have you noticed times in your own life where you felt resistance to Jesus? What do you believe Jesus’ heart was for you during that time?**

3. Mary’s gesture of anointing Jesus and wiping his feet with her hair was extravagant. In that day, it would have seemed scandalous to some. But not to Jesus.

→ **Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8a.**

→ **What qualities of love do you see demonstrated in Mary’s sacrifice?**

→ **Take time to reflect on a recent time when someone showed you extravagant love. *Share with your group if you feel comfortable.***

4. Judas's response (John 12:4-6) starkly contrasts Mary's extravagant love by showing the stingy selfishness of our human nature. This challenges us to examine our hearts and ask, "who do I most relate to in this scene?"

→ **Reflect a bit on your relationship with your Savior. *Maybe you are practically minded and selfishly considering the bottom line like Judas. Perhaps you are like everyone else at the party, weighing your devotion and waiting without adding to the conversation. Or just maybe your love for Jesus more closely resembles extravagant worship.***

→ **How would your life look different this week if you lived with the level of surrender Mary showed?**