

## THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

### John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

#### Part XXXI: Trusting In Christ For His Accurate Anticipation Of His Imminent Death (John 12:1-8)

##### I. Introduction

- A. John's Gospel claims that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God (John 20:31), so it must explain how He could be crucified and die at the hands of His foes, for if His death was a mistake, Jesus is not who John claims He is!
- B. The events of John 12:1-8 in the *context* reveal that Jesus **knew** of His imminent death, and even **positioned** Himself for that event **to occur!** We view that passage as evidence that Jesus is the Messiah and Son of God:

##### II. Trusting In Christ For His Accurate Anticipation Of His Imminent Death, John 12:1-8.

- A. The Apostle John explained that the events in John 12:1-8 followed closely on the events in John 11 of Christ's raising of Lazarus from the dead, John 12:1b.
- B. We recall from John 11:45-57 that Israel's leaders had reacted to Jesus' raising of Lazarus by deciding to put Him to death to save their leadership roles (John 11:45-53), so Jesus had responded by leaving for the town of Ephraim 15 miles north of Jerusalem to avoid these leaders, John 11:54; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 316.
- C. However, just six days before Passover, Jesus *reversed* that move to Ephraim to **return** to **Bethany** where **He** had **raised Lazarus** to be served at a meal in the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, John 12:1-2. He was thus intentionally exposing Himself at that time to the religious leaders who ardently wanted to kill Him!
- D. In this setting at the meal in Bethany, Mary expressed worship of Jesus for raising her brother, John 12:3 NIV:
  1. She took a pint of pure nard, "a fragrant oil prepared from the roots and stems of an aromatic herb from northern India" (Ibid.), an expensive perfume worth 300 denarii, about what "a rural worker would earn in one year" (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, ftn. to John 12:5), John 12:3a.
  2. She moved to Jesus' feet and there anointed them with the nard and wiped them with her hair, John 12:3b.
  3. The odor of the pure nard filled the whole house, so everyone present noticed the event, John 12:3c.
- E. Judas Iscariot, who would betray Him, complained that the perfume had not been sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor, John 12:4-5. This criticism arose from greed, for John added that Judas as treasurer of the group was a thief, and often stole of the collections, John 12:6. His complaint was spurred by displeasure over not being able to steal more money that could have come into the treasury had Mary donated it to his treasury.
- F. Jesus' response in this context both ministered to defend Mary's action and served to validate His John 10:18 claim that no man would take His life from Him, but that He would lay it down of His own initiative:
  1. First, Jesus defended Mary's action, John 12:7-8:
    - a. Christ told Judas, "Leave her alone" (John 12:7a ESV), for Mary's anointing "was in anticipation of His burial," John 12:7b. Though some hold Mary was aware Jesus would soon die, the NIV and ESV suggest He wanted to apply her devotion expression toward the day of His burial so that even if she did not know Jesus would soon die, He wanted her anointing to **apply** toward His coming **burial to her credit!**
    - b. Jesus also added that the poor were always with them (contrary to Socialism!), so they always had opportunity to give to them, but He would not always physically be with them as He would soon die, John 12:8. This made Mary's choice to use the nard on Jesus in worship better than giving to the poor.
  2. Second, by way of the **historical context**, Jesus was indicating by His words that He would soon die:
    - a. In returning to Bethany, a humanly highly dangerous place for Jesus to be because of the Jerusalem leader's decision to kill Him, Christ had put Himself in danger of death! (John 11:45-53 with 12:1)
    - b. Besides, Jesus spoke here of His burial, signaling He was close to death as He predicted in John 10:18.
    - c. Passover was close, and John 1:29 revealed John the Baptizer predicted Jesus as the Lamb of God would take away the sin of the world, so Jesus was aiming for His death that would occur on Passover that He might then atone for the world's sins as God's Passover Lamb, cf. John 19:14-16 with 1 Corinthians 5:7b.

***Lesson:*** (1) *Though aware of the human danger of being at Bethany as first seen in His move to Ephraim, Jesus returned to dangerous territory just before Passover and spoke there of His death in anticipation of giving His life for man's sins God's Passover Lamb. No man took His life from Him -- He gave it!* (2) *Jesus also accepted and protected Mary's worship of Him and graciously applied it for her credit to the anointing of His body at His burial!*

***Application:*** (1) *May we trust in Christ for eternal life, for no man took His life from Him, but He gave it Himself, John 20:31.* (2) *May we worship Him as Mary did, and see God graciously bless and reward us like He did Mary!*