



## “Waste or Worship”

February 22, 2026

Mark 14:1-11



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### Introduction:

What about Jesus satisfies you most?

### Plotting to Kill Jesus (Mark 14:1-2):

*“It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.”*

- A Markan sandwich - The worship of Jesus *sandwiched* between two mentions of the plot to kill Jesus.
- Notice *who* is added to the second mention of the plot - Judas. It seems like there was something about this event that further propelled Judas into betraying Jesus.

### Waste or Worship (Mark 14:3):

*“And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head.”*

- See Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:1-8. There are apparent discrepancies, but they can be resolved with further study and understanding.
- **This woman is likely Mary** - sister of Martha, and of Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead.
- **Pure nard is highly prized** for its precious aroma, and its anti-fungal, anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.
- This “offering” of worship is breathtaking, on several levels, one of which is the value of the nard - **a year’s worth of wages**.
- Mark is the only one who mentions that she *broke* the flask in order to get the nard out. **What might the significance of this be?**

### Waste..... (Mark 14:4-5)

*There were some who said to themselves indignantly, “Why was the ointment wasted like that? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they scolded her.”*

- Some who were present rebuked the woman strongly - calling it a waste!

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### **Or Worship.....(Mark 14:6-9)**

*“But Jesus said, “Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”*

- **What others called waste, Jesus called worship!**
- It was a high priority in Judaism and in the early church to care for the poor (See Galatians 2:10, Deuteronomy 15:11)
- Using our resources to care for the poor is an act of worship, but according to Jesus, **we can also worship with our resources in ways that might seem like a failure to steward well.**
- There might be prophetic implications in this woman’s worship, an act which Jesus receives as an “anointing” for his soon to come death.

### **Freedom to Worship:**

- Remember the first greatest command is to..... Love God, then love others second.
- This woman, probably Mary, was *loving God with all of heart, all of her mind, all of her soul and all of her strength.*
- She was overcome with a deep sense of love and gratitude towards Jesus!

***Do you sense there is something holding you back in worshipping Jesus fully and freely? Are you overly concerned with what those around you think in such a way that it hinders the genuine overflow of your heart?***

### **Prayer:**

Father, we pray that you might release us from tradition, church hurt, cultural obligations that hinder our ability to freely express our love for Jesus with all that we are.

We pray for a freedom to worship Jesus, a freedom that might, at times, look foolish, silly or unwise, but at its heart is a genuine overflow of praise and gratitude towards the one who has saved us for all eternity.

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