

Overcoming Mediocrity

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Assignment for tonight:

1. Memorize 2 Cor 10:3-5
2. Go over questions from week 3
3. Outline 2 Cor chapters 1 & 2.
4. Bring two passages that relate to tonight's topic: Extravagant Love

Thought for tonight:

"Please do not touch" - a phrase reserved those things that are considered priceless and need to be handled with special care; small as a fine china cup or large as a one-of-a-kind classic car. Beethoven's piano - we are "not worthy to play the same keyboard as the great Beethoven."

Extravagant Love

Mark 14:1-9

Matthew 26: 6-13

John 12:1-8

Mary's Extravagance

- She broke the vase and poured it on His head – ran down his body and clothes. Fragrance filled the room.
- Lastly, she poured the remaining drops on his feet and wiped it off with her hair!
- He was "pre-embalmed."
- At all six of his trials the next day His fragrance must have filled the rooms where He was led. No one could've have escaped the fragrance or the memory of the smell of Jesus; not those who gambled for his garments, not Pilate, Herod, Caiaphas, Annas, the chief priests – no one.
- Shouldn't our own fragrance "fill the air," shouldn't our "vases be broken?" – Gal 2:20, Phil 1:21-26.

Justification & Defense - Mark's account

- Jesus not only defends Mary, He justifies her actions;
 - On the basis of motive and urgency of the hour, vv 6-8,
 - He sees her devotion as properly extravagant, v.9.

- Mary will probably always be one of those misunderstood characters. Her story seldom told, and when it is, it won't receive its proper attention/care. But maybe her story is similar to playing on Beethoven's piano. Look at it as if it is a ...

Lasting Memorial - Lingered Lessons

- Certain times when extravagance is appropriate
- We need to learn (me!) to "break a vase!"
- Tabernacle in the wilderness – God broke a vase with all that He required be done in this "temporary" house for Him. Gold, tapestry, wood craftsmanship, etc.)
- Temple that Solomon built, he "broke a vase" – Pure gold, solid and pounded, inlaid, silver, veils, curtains, ornate windows, wood work, elegant steps, the Mercy Seat!
- Jesus calls us to excellence, a call to "live above the level of mediocrity."
- "New Jerusalem" as described in Revelation is "wall-to-wall broken vases."

Four more questions:

1. Must all the places where God is represented look mediocre?
2. Must all furnishings be low grade quality or moderate? "The lowest bid?"
3. Must we live our lives under constant restraint and self-imposed guilt for fear of being told that we are overlooking the poor?
4. Must everything just be "adequate?" Why not occasionally use something of the highest quality?

Did you ever notice that Mary never spoke?

- It takes pure motive and strong inner confidence to be that secure.
- In Mary we are challenged by extravagant love.
- Extravagance is the exception, but there are times when it is appropriate.
- Mary gave HERSELF.
- As Christians we should regard ourselves as broken vases, too. Gal 2:20, Phil 1:21-26.
- THAT'S WHAT SOARING IS ALL ABOUT!!