

~Other Speakers S-Z: David Servant:

According to Mark, the value of the perfume which that particular woman poured over Jesus' head was equivalent to about 300 days' wages for a common laborer (see Mark 14:3-4). To bring it into some perspective, imagine a perfume worth fourteen months of your labor, working five days a week for fifty weeks each year. It was "very costly" (26:7) indeed.

Had she poured her perfume upon anyone other than Jesus, the disciples would have had a valid complaint. But she realized, as they should have, that Jesus, being God, was of greater importance and value than all the people of the world combined. If Jesus wasn't God, His rebuke of His disciples and His praise for the woman would expose Him as being an egomaniac of the highest degree. God, however, can't be guilty of pride, as it is impossible for Him to think more highly of Himself than He should.

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper during a Passover meal in a home, and it seems obvious that the Lord's Supper was eaten as part of a full meal in the homes of Christians in the early church (see 1 Cor. 11:20-34). The ritualistic snack consumed in most modern Protestant churches is a tradition inherited from Roman Catholicism. How wonderful it is, however, to practice the Lord's Supper as part of a meal with true brothers and sisters in Christ! That is true Communion!

At the close of a Jewish Passover meal, the head of the household would take a thin, unleavened loaf of bread and divide it among all at the table. After that, he drank from what was called "the cup of thanksgiving" and then passed it to all the guests. It was apparently that bread and cup which Jesus consecrated to be a continual memorial of His sacrificial death. He, the "Lamb of God," was about to fulfill what every other Passover lamb, for hundreds of years, had only symbolized.

There is no need to speculate about Judas' reason for betraying Jesus. He had no higher motive than the love of money (26:15). Amazingly, Judas had heard Jesus' warnings about the lure of wealth, but perhaps he was tired of a life of self-denial. Mammon, the god who competes for the hearts of people more than any other false god, enticed and deceived him. What a sobering warning to us of the powerful seduction of riches! Even one who literally lives with Jesus is not beyond its temptation.

When Jesus prayed that if it were possible, to let "this cup pass from Me," it reminds us of Jeremiah 25:15: "Take this cup of the wine of wrath from My hand." Jesus suffered more than the pain of crucifixion; He suffered God's wrath. On the cross, God treated Him as if He were the vilest of sinners, as He had taken upon Himself all the sins and guilt of the world. It's no wonder Jesus recoiled from the thought. But thankfully He also prayed: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." There was no other way to procure salvation for sinners. An innocent man had to die, and only Jesus was qualified. It was not the nails that held Him to the cross, but His great love.

Christ's confession before Caiaphas, "You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven," was a quote from Daniel 7:13, recognized by all present as a messianic prophecy. Tragically, they found the Son of God guilty of blasphemy. It is painful to read how they abused Him then. Yet it is very possible that some of the very men who so cruelly beat Him and spat in His face eventually repented and were born again, as we read in Acts 6:7, "And the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith." How great is God's mercy! And even the bruises Jesus received at their hands worked towards our redemption, as He was "bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5). Amazing grace!