

The Beginning of the Last Week – John 12



MEMORY VERSE: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” John 12:24-25

DAY 1 JOHN 12:1-11 — Mary Anoints Jesus

1. How did Martha, Lazarus and Mary each honor Jesus in Bethany?
vv.1-3

2. Why did Judas’ object to Mary’s actions? What was his true motive? vv.4-

John 6:70-71

3. Each gospel has an account of Jesus being anointed by a woman.
What was the true significance of these anointings? vv.7-8

Mark 14:1-9 or Matthew 26:6-13 (they are quite similar)

Luke 7:36-50

4. Why do you think it is easy to criticize one who behaves as Mary did, yet approve of one who is false like Judas? What causes one to be like Mary rather than Judas?

5. How did Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead affect the crowd and the chief priests? vv.9-11

LEARN THE TRUTH

At this point in John’s Gospel, the cross is now only a week away and the reality of what lies ahead is heavy on the Lord Jesus’ heart. He was born to die and until that time He lives to love and prepare His followers for the difficult time they will face. His focus is on their belief and God’s glory.

DAY 2**JOHN 12:12-26 — The Triumphal Entry**

6. What happened when Jesus entered Jerusalem? vv.12-15

7. Why are the donkey and the palm branches so important in both this event and God's bigger picture? Zechariah 9:9-10

Leviticus 23:39-43

Revelation 7:9-17

8. What were the different reactions of the people gathered at this time and what might their reactions indicate about their hearts or expectations of Jesus?
Disciples v.16

The Crowd vv.17-18

The Pharisees v.19

Some Greeks vv.20-22

9. What were the main points of Jesus' answer to Andrew, Philip and the Greeks?

10. What great promise did Jesus give to those who were willing to serve Him? How does this apply to your life?

DAY 3**JOHN 12:27-36 — The Son of Man Must Be Lifted Up**

11. What stands out to you about Jesus' prayer to His Father? vv.27-28

12. How did God respond to Jesus' prayer, and what did the crowd experience? vv.28-30

13. What seems to be the main point of all of this? vv.31-33

14. What did the crowd know, and yet what were they confused about? vv.33-34

Isaiah 9:6-7

Daniel 7:13-14

15. How does Jesus' answer in response to their confusion (vv.33-34) apply to both the people who originally heard Him and also to us? vv.35-36

DAY 4 JOHN 12:36-43 — Belief vs Blindness

16. Why do you think many refuse to believe in Jesus, in spite of what is plain for all to see? vv.36-41

17. John quoted the prophet Isaiah in verses 38-40. How does Romans 1:18-23 clarify why people fail to believe?

18. How are we able to move from spiritual blindness and hard hearts to belief and trust in God?
Psalm 103:8-12

Psalm 111:10-112:2

Ezekiel 36:26-27

19. Why did many of the authorities who believed in Jesus fail to confess their belief? vv.42-43

20. We have all had moments when we failed to confess our faith out of fear or because we loved the glory that comes from man over the glory that comes from God. How can the 3 Scripture references in question 18 comfort us regarding past failures, and encourage us to speak up in the future?

DAY 5

JOHN 12:44-50 – Light of the World

21. What is true for the person who believes in Jesus and sees Him for who He is? vv.44-45

22. How and why did Jesus come into the world? v.46

23. Why does Jesus not judge those who hear His words but do not keep them? vv.47-48

John 3:16-18

24. What insight do verses 49-50 give you about Jesus' relationship with His Father?

25. Looking back over just this one chapter (12), how would you describe Jesus? i.e. Prophet, Friend...

LOVE THE TRUTH

Jesus came to die for our sins so that we might have life. He explained that we too must die in order to bear fruit. Think about your own life. Is there any part of you that needs to die in order for you to truly live? Can you share a personal experience of dying to self and the life that resulted from this?

John 12

The Beginning of the Last Week

The first 11 chapters of John covered events from the beginning of creation, to the beginning of Jesus' public ministry through the culmination of His public ministry. The remaining 10 chapters all record events of the last week leading up to Christ's crucifixion on Passover. As He neared the cross, He spent time with His dedicated followers and disciples. Chapter 12 begins just six days before the Passover. Christ's public ministry is said to have lasted for about 3 years according to the record of the Passover feasts. The first was in the beginning of His ministry, there were two in the middle, and Jesus was crucified on the 4th Passover. (John 2:13; 5:1;6:4; 13:1;19:14)

The beauty of having 4 gospels is that they appeal to different audiences and emphasize different attributes of Jesus Christ. In Matthew, Jesus is the descendant of David, the fulfillment of messianic prophecies. In Mark Jesus is the faithful Servant Son of God. Luke depicts Jesus as the perfect man, full of wisdom, worthy to be our Savior. While the synoptic gospels present Jesus as the man who is God, John's emphasis is on the fact that God became man. The Divine became human. Each author wrote from a different perspective, some presented events in the last week before the crucifixion in chronological order, while others did not, but all 4 gospels spend a lot of time on this last week, beginning with the anointing of Jesus by Mary and the Triumphal Entry, known today as Palm Sunday.

All four of the gospels record an event where a woman anointed Jesus while onlookers criticized her actions. While some of the details between the accounts are not clear, what is clear is that Mary, and whoever else anointed Jesus, did so with great humility from a place of gratitude, insight, devotion, love, understanding and personal sacrifice. The act of anointing was all about Jesus- His life, His mission and His upcoming sacrifice. It was completely selfless. In contrast, the criticism

from men was selfish, all about themselves- their righteousness, prejudices, reasoning and judgment. Like Martha, Mary and Lazarus, we each express our love for Jesus differently and we can learn from each of them. We must do everything in humility, with gratitude, being careful not to judge others who celebrate or serve Jesus differently than ourselves. Jesus was heading to His death...and resurrection. He was born to die, and actually, so are we. The only way to bear fruit is to die as does a grain of wheat. "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life." (v.25) The only way to truly live is to die to self.

WALK IN TRUTH



When we encounter truth in God's Word, we must believe it, whether we fully understand it or not. One day we will understand all that we don't now, but in the mean time, we must trust and believe because time is short. "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:6,7 Many saw all Jesus had done but they would not, and so they could not, believe. God blesses those who believe Him, in spite of their limited understanding. We all have a choice- either to rejoice God's truth, or to harden our hearts and resist Him. When one chooses blindness, God gives them blind eyes and hard hearts, but He always forgives the one who believes and obeys. God honors the one who humbly serves Him, the one who loves the glory that comes from God rather than the glory that comes from man.

Notes