

John Chapter 12

Lazarus and his sisters are some of Jesus' best friends. They don't travel around with him like the disciples do, but Jesus visits them on multiple occasions. Some time has passed since Jesus raised his friend from the dead, and they are enjoying a meal together.

As usual, we see Martha doing all the work, and Mary decides to do something a little out of the ordinary. She pours perfume worth almost a full year's income on Jesus' feet, and one of the other guests is not happy about it.

Whenever we hear Judas Iscariot's name, we have been preprogrammed to expect the worst. John helps make sure of that by reminding us that Judas is the one who will soon betray Jesus. So, when Jesus corrects Judas for complaining about this waste of resources, we immediately side with Mary.

But, is that the position we would actually if we were there? Wouldn't you feel a little embarrassed or annoyed that your devotion to Jesus is being outshined by someone who hasn't even committed every waking hour to following him?

It isn't uncommon for Christians to be self-conscious about their own contribution when they see someone else make a grand gesture. It isn't much different than the embarrassment we feel when someone else gives us a better gift than we gave them on Christmas. Nobody likes to be shown up.

Nevertheless, Judas obviously has other motives for wanting to keep the bank account full and it doesn't really have anything to do with the poor. How often do we criticize other Christians for the things they do in Jesus' name because of our own discomfort. Seeing someone go way over the top in the way they show their devotion to Jesus can bring out a need in us to justify ourselves and our lack of expression.

We should be able to celebrate the different ways Christians show their love for Jesus. If that makes us uncomfortable, then it might be a good idea to search our hearts and see if it is the Holy Spirit trying to tell us something.

The next day, Jesus heads into Jerusalem, and a huge audience welcomes him. But, the most surprising group of people looking for him are the Greeks. The disciples are so surprised, they don't even know how to respond.

Even though it seems a bit random for a group of Greeks to travel to Jerusalem and seek out Jesus, it doesn't throw him off at all. We should be so lucky to have people randomly ask us to introduce them to Jesus. This might not happen often, but do you know what you would do if it did? We should all be living our lives in such a way that people want to know more about our faith and our Savior. Notice that Jesus doesn't force himself on those outside his circle of influence. They are drawn to him. What aspects of your life are drawing people closer to Jesus?

Sadly at this point, even the audible voice of God isn't enough to convince those surrounding Jesus about who he is. They have seen his miracles and heard his words. Yet, some are too stuck in their old way of thinking to recognize that God is standing right in front of them. Others decide it is not in their best interest to admit they believe him.

Human approval is a strong motivator. Sometimes we want to look extra spiritual in order to fit in. Other times we don't want to admit we disagree with others because we don't want to lose

our status with them. What about when the majority is wrong? What do we do when our Christian friends are missing things that Jesus clearly tells us?

Jesus tells us he is a light that allows the world to see the Father. And, in other places, he tells us to be the light of the world. Doesn't that mean he wants us to represent him to the world around us? We should never be embarrassed to admit that he has entrusted us to do this. It's part of who we are.

What would it look like for Jesus to spend a day living your life? How would he interact with the people you interact with every day? How different is that picture from the way you are living now? Do people see Jesus in your actions? Or are there some changes that need to be made today?