

Anointed

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Date: 09 November 2025

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[0 : 00] All right, if you want to open your Bibles to Matthew, to Mark chapter 14, I haven't shifted Gospels on you, we're staying in Mark chapter 14. Watching the children running around the front this morning, I thought I would, before getting into my official sermon, I thought I'd go back a few chapters to a section that I actually blipped over about Jesus accepting the little children coming to him.

You know, one of the things that we tend to think of is that even as the disciples pushed the children away, that the children who were coming to Jesus were dressed prim and proper, their hair was done just right, the girls in pigtails, the boys with their hair combed very nice, and they stood in a line and they waited patiently for Jesus.

Anybody who thinks that doesn't have children. I think that the corralled chaos over here is probably a lot closer to the scene that triggered the disciples to say, hey, kids, go home.

You're not welcome here. This is a great rabbi. Children are not welcome. But that's not the case. This is a good example of what we saw this morning. And full disclosure, my grandson is the one who gave me a smile and zipped toward the stairs.

Not my grandchild who went to these stairs. That parent can remain unaccused. Or will hide the guilty. But I think that type of thing was what was going on.

[1 : 28] And that's a great picture of how God accepts us. We don't come to God with our life in order. We have to get everything lined up first. And then he says, okay, I guess I can let you in.

That's not how it is. Not at all. It actually says in Romans that while we were dead in trespasses and sins, we were welcomed into God's presence. While we were in enmity, we were his enemies, we were welcomed in.

While we were chaotic and our lives were not in order, we were welcomed in. And so the insanity that we saw going on down here that honestly is funny, if it bothers you, step back and think, this is a picture of my life.

Before I came to Christ. And we want our kids to know that they're loved. Yes, we have to corral them. Yes, we don't want them running up onto the stage. But there's also a place where we want them to know that in this place, they're loved and seen and accepted.

And that's true of everybody who's here. So there's my pre-sermon sermon for the day. No extra charge. So let's do a quick review.

[2 : 38] So I'm going to take you back a few chapters. Jesus was up when the Mount of Transfiguration took place. They were north of the Sea of Galilee. Then he very intentionally took two weeks, two and a half weeks roughly, and they walked all the way down to Jerusalem.

Jesus' path indicated a couple of things. Number one, he didn't want to see people other than his disciples. And he didn't want to have anything to do with Pharisees because they were annoying. And they were a distraction.

That hike was very intentional. Where Jesus knew his days were numbered, and his disciples were still not quite tracking with what they needed to know.

So he used that time to really focus on what do these guys need to know so they're ready for my departure. And a key part of that was Jesus' identity. Do you remember he asked the disciples, who do people say that I am?

Who do you say that I am? And that's when he first said, unequivocally, I'm going to die. And Peter said, unequivocally, oh no, you're not. And Jesus put him in his place.

[3 : 41] And so Jesus is teaching them that, and he's teaching them what it means to be a follower of Jesus. He's teaching them to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him.

That's the core of what was being communicated during that two and a half week trek down to Jerusalem where Jesus would meet his fate.

Of course, then he comes into the city. And on Sunday afternoon of Passion Week is a triumphal entry. Now one of the things that is a thread through these last few weeks is the disciples are confused.

And Jesus does a couple of things. Number one, he lets them wallow in their confusion, and he stirs the pot. For example, he says the Son of Man is going to die.

The Son of Man is a prophetic title for the triumphant king. So the disciples are, wait a minute. If you're the triumphant king, how are you going to die? I'm confused. And he just continues confusing them.

[4 : 41] So the triumphal entry, they're thinking a royal entry, conquering Caesar, the defeated armies behind the victorious king. Oh no, he's humble and riding on the colt.

Wait, what? What are you? They're still confused. But he keeps repeating the message, gentlemen, I'm going to die. This is why I came, to die on your behalf, to die for you.

Then on Monday, so every night he went back to Bethany, which was about a mile outside of the city where Lazarus and his family lived. Monday, he comes in and he cleanses the temple.

Because the Jewish leaders have set up this scam where they're profiting off of the offerings that the people are required to bring to God. Especially at the Passover.

You know, for retailers in America, there's no more profitable season than Black Friday to Christmas Day. Well, for the Pharisees, their big window of opportunity to make a windfall was Passover week.

[5 : 43] Because the requirements of the sacrifice were so stringent. And they set up a system whereby they got money to guarantee that the sacrifices were acceptable.

It was a scam. And Jesus was deeply angered, cleansed the temple, throwing over tables, yelling at people, calling them out for their hypocrisy. Not allowing them to even carry things through what was supposed to be a place to worship God, but had become a marketplace.

Jesus demonstrated his wrath. He also demonstrated his character. That was a look at not the suffering servant, but the triumphant king who would rule. And he exercised his authority there in the temple on Monday.

Goes back to Bethany. Tuesday he comes in, and the topic of the day is Jesus' authority. First, it's the Jewish leaders as a group.

Who do you think you are? And Jesus doesn't answer. Then he has several more conversations. If you want to explore those conversations, go back a few weeks in the sermon log on our website.

[6 : 49] I don't want to rehash that for you, but he has four different conversations that are typical of conversations that we will probably encounter in the course of living out our Christian life in the world.

The last of which was somebody who was genuinely seeking the kingdom of God. And you see in Jesus' response a very tender, a very open, and inviting discourse about what are the greatest commandments?

And what does it look like to approach God? Then on Tuesday, we talked about a fifth bonus question where Jesus shut down the leaders.

He was tired of them. The analogy I gave you was of a lion who's got his cubs crawling all over him, and one of them bites his lip. And he said, oh, that's it. That's enough. And he smacks down the cubs and says, knock it off, kids.

And that's what Jesus was doing. Knock it off, kids. I'm done. I've entertained your foolishness enough. Stop. And he does it by asking them a hard question that they can't answer.

[7 : 53] Then he exposes their hypocrisy again. Yesterday, he cleansed the temple. Today, he goes after them for devouring widows' houses and misleading even the poorest among them to get money.

It's horrible. And then Jesus, of course, points out the widow who gives everything she has because that's what she thought God required of her. And Jesus commends her for that.

So that's Tuesday. The last thing on Tuesday was a sermon that Jim Munson did last week. And this is the place where Jesus unequivocally, without question, declares to his disciples, I am going to be the king.

For the last three weeks or so, he's been saying I'm the suffering servant. The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.

This time, it's I'm coming back. And I'm coming to reign. I'm coming to establish my authority.

[9 : 04] And he says four times a very important message. Be on the alert. Be on the alert. Be on the alert. Be on the alert. And he was talking to his disciples.

But brothers and sisters, make no mistake. He was talking to us. Because the things that he reveals, as Jim so capably said last week, the things that Jesus reveals in Mark 13, we're looking at today.

We see the literal fulfillment of what Jesus was warning us about. Moral decay and loss. Our culture has lost its way. We don't know even what absolute truth is.

We believe that, well, your truth is good for you. Just leave me alone and my truth is good for me. That way leads to death. Be on the alert. Don't be fooled. Don't be pulled aside because it's very seductive.

It's very confusing. I'll tell you one area where it's become confusing is we have watched an erosion of morality. That's pretty obvious.

[10 : 09] But one of the ways that that erosion has taken place is things that used to be conversation on moral grounds have been transformed into conversations on political grounds.

And we don't talk about politics. Because, you know, some of us are blue and some of us are red and we don't want to get in a fight. See what happens? Moral issues, moral issues, which are set by God, become political issues, which are determined by man.

We're allowing it to be eroded. Do not be fooled. Be on the alert. Be aware and watch for the signs. Jesus is coming. That's the message of Mark 13.

So that brings us to the end of Tuesday. And now we're coming into Wednesday of Passion Week. So you've got your Bibles. You're open to Mark chapter 14.

There should be a pew Bible in front of you if you don't have a Bible with you. And read along with me. This is a long passage. I have to tell you. Sometimes older me looks back to younger me and says, what were you thinking?

[11 : 17] I wrote the sermon outline back for the book back in April. And I'm sure what I did made sense at the time. But today we have 25 verses.

And I'm not going to cover them all. Because older me is wiser than younger me. So let's look at Mark chapter 14. Now the Passover and unleavened bread were two days away.

And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to seize him by stealth and kill him. For they were saying, not during the festival. Otherwise there might be a riot of the people. While he was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper.

And reclining at the table there came a woman with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume of pure nard. And she broke the vial and poured it over his head. But some were indignantly remarking to one another, Why has this perfume been wasted?

For this perfume might have been sold for over 300 denarii and the money given to the poor. And they were scolding her. But Jesus said, Let her alone. Why do you bother her?

[12 : 21] She has done a good deed to me. For you always have the poor with you. And whenever you wish, you can do good to them. But you do not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anointed my body beforehand for the burial.

Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her. Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went off to the chief priests in order to betray him to them.

They were glad when they heard this and promised to give him money and began seeking how to betray him at an opportune time. On the first day of unleavened bread, when the Passover lamb was being sacrificed, his disciples said to him, Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?

He sent two of his disciples and said to them, Go into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him. And wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, The teacher says, Where is my guest room in which I may eat the Passover with my disciples?

And he himself will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Prepare for us there. The disciples went out and came to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the

Passover.

[13:33] When it was evening, he came with the twelve. As they were reclining at the table and eating, Jesus said, Truly I say to you that one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.

They began to be grieved and to say to him one by one, Surely not I. And he said to them, It is one of the twelve, one who dips with me in the bowl. For the Son of Man is to go just as it is written of him.

But woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been good for that man if he had not been born. While they were eating, he took some bread, and after a blessing he broke it, and gave it to them and said, Take it, this is my body.

And when he had taken a cup and given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And he said to them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God. Let's pray together. Fathers, we take time to look at the last hours of Jesus' life and what he modeled for us, what he taught his disciples, the things that he commended, as well as the things that he condemned.

[14:46] Lord, I pray that we would learn. I pray that your word would speak into our lives. Help us to appreciate your love for us. Help us to appreciate the length to which you went in order to give us eternal life.

And help us, Lord, as a consequence, out of gratitude to you, out of love for what you have given us, love for you, help us to follow Jesus' example, to follow him, and to be people who are like him in the world and the context you've placed us.

Lord, I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So there's a lot going on in this passage, so I'm going to touch on a few things briefly, and then we're going to focus in on the woman who anointed Jesus' head.

So first of all, in verses 1 and 2, and then in 10 and 11, you see the Jewish leaders have transitioned. They've gone from really not liking Jesus and wanting to undermine him and catch him saying wrong things and trying to be more sneaky about undermining him to, nope, he's got to die. We're going to kill this guy. We don't care about the miracles. We don't care about his teaching. We really don't care. We don't care about his followers anymore. We're not going to do it publicly, but he's got to die.

[15:57] And so they start to look for a way to do it. And then Judas, and we'll see why in a few minutes, Judas decides, yeah, I agree with the Pharisees. This is not what I signed up for. This surely looks like it's leading to death, and I'm not cool with death.

Not for me, not for the guy I'm following. And so they decide, this is it. Jesus' days are officially numbered. This is the beginning of the end. Then Jesus goes back to Bethany, and we get to Thursday.

On Thursday, a couple of the disciples say, where do you want to prepare the Passover? Every group of people has some planners. You know how those people are. I'm one of them. They get really twitchy if they don't know what's coming next, and they're kind of nervous.

But what time do we have to catch the flight, and how soon do we have to be there, and what's going on? How long is it going to be to get through TSA? You know that guy, or that gal. And so they're very concerned about the plan.

I'm sure that was these two. Jesus, what's the plan? The Passover is coming. And so Jesus sends them into town with very explicit instructions, which leads us to believe Jesus is in control.

[17:10] What a shock. And he has got it all laid out. He's got it planned. And he tells them what they must do in order to find the upper room where they're going to celebrate the Passover, and Jesus is going to have his final conversation with them.

We're not going to touch it at all, but the upper room discourse in John chapter 13, 14, and 15, 16, and 17, you should read it. What we're going to touch in a flash is Jesus' conversation on Thursday night with the disciples in great detail.

So Jesus has a plan, and this is a takeaway that I want you to put in your mind. God has a plan. Now I believe, and this is a conversation that would take much longer and be better face-to-face, but I believe actually that a lot of what goes on in our lives is actually random chance.

God allows our lives to go as they go. He doesn't plan for us to get sick. He doesn't plan necessarily for cancer to strike. Or us to be robbed.

Or for the other tragedies that hit in life. Life happens. And when Paul said that all things work together for good for those who love God according to his purpose, the good that God works is as he partners with us through the circumstances of our life, good and bad, we walk with him, and in partnership with him, we learn how to dredge up the good out of whatever we're facing.

[18 : 34] It's exactly like what the mandate was to Adam in the Garden of Eden. You've got this garden, Adam. It needs a manager. God said, I'm putting you in charge. Let's work together to make it work.

That's true of our lives. But there's also times in life where God sets us up, where he's got a plan, and he needs us to be in a certain place in a conversation with somebody to move the ball forward in that person's life or in our life or because God is amazingly efficient in their life and in our lives. He's always working on multiple layers. I'll give you an example. When we moved to Seattle in 2014, Kara and I decided that we wanted to be there as missionaries.

And I was very intentional. I'm going to look for divine appointments. I'm going to look for opportunities to talk to people about the gospel, but I'm not going to initiate them. I want to watch and see what opens up and what comes.

And it didn't take long. And day after day after day, I would run into people on the bus, in coffee shops, that were just primed and ready. I used to be afraid to share the gospel.

[19 : 43] Well, it's a lot easier when people are asking you. Tell me what you've got. Why are you reading your Bible? One of my divine appointments, Kayla worked at a coffee shop called The Jewel Box, and there was a very conservative Muslim family that was there all the time.

The wife, all I ever saw of her was her eyes. And the husband was there with her most of the time, and their little boy would have fit in with this crowd because he would go and look for the things that were most dangerous at The Jewel Box.

He would go shooting into the kitchen, which was about the size of that closet, and grab the microwave and the hot stuff, and I'd go fish him out. Well, that went on, and I never had a conversation with them.

But I would do my Bible study, in The Jewel Box, and they frequently saw that. Well, one day, the husband comes up to me and says, are you a spiritual man? I said, yes, I am. I'm a Christian.

He goes, my wife is taking English, and she needs somebody to critique her paper. Would you be willing to meet with us, review her papers, and help her with the language barrier?

[20 : 49] Absolutely. Part of the reason I didn't talk to them is because I didn't want to give offense, and I didn't know it was appropriate. I have no problem approaching people, men or women, who have cute kids. But I didn't know what was appropriate in their culture, and I didn't want to offend.

Well, problem solved. And we had a nice conversation. I'm not going to tell you that it became this glorious thing where Muslims came to Christ and the mosques shut down and things were changed. Nope, we talked about a couple English papers.

But a bridge was built between a super conservative Muslim and a pretty conservative Christian man. The other thing I learned, it's really hard to talk to somebody whose mouth is covered in a dark room.

I could not understand her a lot of times and her English was actually pretty good. But we need to look for those divine appointments. We need to be willing to be where God is calling us to be and speak up when God gives us the opportunity.

Does that make sense? And we see that in the prep for the Passover. Jesus had it all prepared. They didn't have to worry. So then they get to the upper room.

[21 : 54] They're celebrating Passover. Jesus delivers the somber news. Somebody's going to betray me and it's one of the twelve. And they all say, surely not me. One of them is lying.

We all know who that was. Surely not me, Lord. And Jesus tells them, yep, one of you. Tim is going to go into that. Pastor Tim is going to go into that in greater depth next week.

When he talks about Peter's denial and comparing Judas the betrayer and Peter the denier.

Because it's an interesting contrast. Kind of like the difference between Saul and David.

That's all I'm going to say because I don't want to steal Tim's sermon. He'll be mad at me. And then Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper. And I'm not going to talk about that at all because next week we're practicing the Lord's Supper and I get to lead it and I'm going to take that opportunity to give you that part of this passage.

Isn't that convenient? It's one of the nice things about being the guy who plans the calendar. So let's focus now on this anonymous woman who anointed Jesus' head.

[22 : 57] Now before we do, there's a textual problem that I want to cover with you because I don't want to shy away from things that are potential problems in the text of the Bible. And this is one of them.

Because you see in what's called the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, there's one portrayal of this. Actually Luke doesn't talk about it at all.

But in Matthew and Mark it's almost identical and then John talks about it in John chapter 12 and it's very different. Now I'm not going to go into the differences. The differences aren't relevant. What is relevant is they're significantly different.

Well, does that mean that the Bible's not inspired? Does that mean that we cannot actually trust what it says? We have to face these questions.

And I want to tell you that Christians often, I can't tell you the times over the course of my career that I've had somebody say I left XYZ Church because the pastor wouldn't let me ask questions like this.

[23 : 59] We have to ask the questions. We have to be courageous because there are answers. There's a problem here.

Two, three different eyewitnesses give different accounts. How do we handle that? Is the Bible the inspired word of God? Is it reliable? You know what I'm going to say. Absolutely it's reliable.

Well then how do we reconcile this? A couple of things. I'll bet if you'd cornered Ben and asked him about interrogation of people who have committed a crime, if it's a group, one of the things that's actually suspicious is if their story lines up.

If the whole story is exactly the same, you know what the police assume? They got together, they got all their details right to make sure it was all lined up. Parents may have had that experience if they have more than one child.

Collusion, that similarity in the story actually undermines credibility. Keep in mind, John wrote his gospel last. All the eyewitnesses were probably dead.

[25 : 01] And so he was going from memory. And he was giving his best recollection of what had happened. So that difference is to build the credibility of what's going on in the story.

And it doesn't make any difference whatsoever in what I'm going to tell you next. I think John was blurring two events. Two women anointed Jesus. In Luke, a woman comes and anoints his feet. At a Pharisee's house and they have a great, the Pharisee and Jesus have a great conversation about the importance of forgiveness. The one who's forgiven much loves much. John was confusing that story with the story of the woman we're going to talk about in Mark who anointed Jesus' head.

And there's a significant difference in the fact that Jesus' head was anointed. So are you with me there? I want you to leave this morning absolutely confident that you can base your life on what the Bible says.

And when we see little subtle differences like this, it actually serves a purpose. If you're still uncomfortable, ask me. I'm not the guy who's going to say, we don't ask those types of questions around here.

[26 : 09] Quite the contrary. We want to be people who are asking hard questions. So let's go back and reread these verses in Mark 14. We're going to start at verse 3.

While he was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper and reclining at the table, there came a woman with an alabaster vial, a very costly perfume of pure nard. And she broke the vial and poured it over his head.

Important thing to note is that Jesus is alive at this point. I'll explain why in a minute. But some were indignantly remarking to one another, why has this perfume been wasted? For this perfume might have been sold for over 300 denarii and the money given to the poor.

And they were scolding her. Isn't it ironic? That these guys are scolding Jesus? Are scolding the girl? The woman? They got a lot wrong.

People in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. That proverb hadn't been invented yet. And they were scolding her. But Jesus said, let her alone. Why do you bother her? She has done a good deed for me.

[27 : 12] For you always have the poor with you and whenever you wish you can do good to them. But you do not always have me. She has done what she could. She has anointed my body beforehand for the burial. By the way, that never happened.

Bodies were anointed, but it was after the person's death. Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her. And we're going to camp on that at the end. So the objections of the disciples. Why do they object? The first one is made a lot clearer in Matthew's gospel because in the conversation, and we've talked about this before, Matthew gives a lot more of the conversation details than Mark does. And in Matthew's account, Jesus is talking about prophecy. It's a parallel to what Jim shared last week. And then he talks about the final judgment.

And you know what the number one test for people who pass or fail at the judgment is? How'd you treat the poor? The sheep, you fed me when I was hungry.

[28 : 23] You visited me when I was sick. You cared for me when I was in prison. And they said, well, what? When do we do that? If you did it to the least of these, you did it unto me. And then of course to the goats, you didn't do those things.

And you're condemned. So that's fresh in the disciples' mind. Then the woman breaks this expensive vial of perfume. And they're saying, wait a minute. Lady, weren't you listening? Jesus just said we need to take care of the poor. That's 300 denarii worth of perfume. That ain't the cheap stuff you bought off the counter at the fake perfume store.

It's the real deal. We could have sold that and given it to the poor. And Jesus just said we need to care for the poor. So that's objection number one. Objection number two, and I think John is remembering correctly, Judas was the one who complained.

And why? Because he was the treasurer and he was stealing. 300 denarii is a good chunk of change. He wanted access to that money, so he objected using the smokescreen of caring for the poor, but he just wanted a pill for the money and put it in his own pocket.

[29 : 34] And so we see those objections, but Jesus' answer is really important. The poor you will always have with you, but I'm leaving.

Jesus clearly establishes a hierarchy. One of the problems in the contemporary church, one of the great schisms since the Protestant Reformation, is between the evangelical church, which focused on people's souls, and the social justice church, if I can put it that way, that focused on people's practical needs.

And the problem became, both are wrong, by the way, but the problem became on the social justice side that we spent so much of our focus, we expended so much of our focus on caring for the poor, that we lost the gospel in the process.

Now those churches have done some amazing things. They started great programs for reaching the poor, feeding the people, and caring for widows and orphans, and doing it all over the world. But that's where they stop.

They've lost Jesus in the process of caring. Jesus is making sure it's clear, look, I'm still number one. You love me first.

[30 : 50] Remember the greatest commandment? The two greatest commandments? The greatest one is love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. All of your being. I'm first. And Jesus is clearly establishing your service to people, as good as it is, cannot eclipse your service to me.

And it's very, very easy to do. We need to guard against that. Then, he says, she did a good deed to me. Let's unpack that.

Because the act of anointing a person with oil is a very rich one in the Old Testament and in Jewish culture. This was a really significant thing.

She recognized Jesus to a degree that his disciples, who had spent all that time with him, did not. So, let's start. First of all, let's talk about the priesthood.

Jesus is a priest after the order of Melchizedek, it says in Hebrews. Now, I could spend a whole sermon series about unpacking that, so you're going to have to look it up.

[32 : 00] But Melchizedek, I believe, was a pre-incarnation appearance of Jesus Christ. Melchizedek actually was Jesus Christ, talking to Abram.

in anointing Jesus' head with oil, this woman was acknowledging Jesus is the priest. He is the great high priest who gives us access to heaven, that allows us into the presence of God, that offers one

sacrifice for all.

This is the one I'm anointing. She got that. It's really significant. In Exodus 40, when Aaron and his sons were anointed, this is a command to Moses, you shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to me.

You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them, and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to me. And listen to this.

Listen carefully. And their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations.

[33 : 17] Their anointing is what qualified them. It set them apart. This woman was declaring, I get you, Jesus. I'm declaring.

I am acknowledging. You are the priest. You are the priest. But he's also the king. When a king was inaugurated and was to be coronated, he was anointed with oil because that was a symbol of his authority, that he had the right to stand, to be obeyed.

Listen to this about David in 1 Samuel 16. Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of the brothers. And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward.

And Samuel arose and went to Ramah. The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David when?

From that day forward.

I should have put this down and I didn't. But let me read to you Isaiah 61. This is actually going to be one of our texts for our Christmas series. By the way, next week's bulletin is going to have a flyer about our Christmas series December 7th, 14th, and 21st.

[34 : 36] It's not for you. You can come. But that flyer is for your friends. Because one thing we know is people are more likely to come to church on Christmas and Easter than any other time of the year.

And we're structuring our sermons in such a way to not be seeker-sensitive, because that makes me break out in hives. I'm not a seeker-sensitive guy. But we want to clearly proclaim the gospel. And so this passage is going to be one of those. So, invite your friends. Share that with them. And that way they'll know what they're going to hear and that we're not weird. Well, that I'm not weird. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.

This kind of sounds like David. Catch this. Because the Lord has anointed me. to bring good news to the afflicted.

He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners. That's the passage that Jesus read in Nazareth.

[35 : 45] Close the scroll and said, today this has been fulfilled in your presence. But why is the Spirit of the Lord upon him? Because he was anointed. Because he was anointed.

This woman who doesn't, we don't even know her name, may have been Mary if John's recollection is correct. We don't know for sure. But she's declaring he is a priest, he is the king.

This is the Jesus we follow. And then she was preparing him for burial. She has done what she could, she has anointed my body beforehand for the burial.

Do not miss this point. Her good deed was recognizing Jesus, she demonstrated a greater understanding in the disciples. Truly I say to you, this is what Jesus said, truly I say to you, wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will be spoken of in memory of her.

I have read that verse many, many times, wondered why, and never bothered to stop to actually dig into the question. Well, I had to this week because I was preaching. So I did.

[36 : 59] Do you know why this woman is included or should be included in our sharing of the gospel? Because she demonstrates what Jesus expects of us if we are followers of Jesus, which we're called to be.

Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. Go and make disciples. She, in that room, is the one who is a disciple that Jesus, she's a prototype of what Jesus wants.

Not Peter, not James, not John, an anonymous woman who sacrifices an enormous amount of money to recognize that he is a priest, he is the king, and he's going to die.

That's the prototypical disciple. That's the call that we are given. That's who we should be. She knew Jesus. In John 17, that's the end of the upper room discourse, is Jesus' high priestly prayer.

In Matthew 6, he's modeling prayer for us. In John 17, we get a sneak peek into how Jesus talks to his father. And one of the things he says in that high priestly prayer is this, and this is eternal life, that they may know you, the one true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

[38 : 24] This isn't knowing facts and figures so you can win at Bible jeopardy. This is knowing Jesus like you know your friend. You can predict what he's going to do next.

You know what ticks him off and what makes him laugh. And yes, Jesus does both. You know him. There's a familiarity. And people who flock together look alike.

I totally butchered that proverb, but you know what I mean. We look alike. When you know Jesus, you're with him, you look like him. People recognize Jesus in you, so she knew Jesus.

She sacrificed for Jesus. We talked about that when we looked at Mark chapter 8. If anyone would come after me, he must what? Deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.

There's no ifs, ands, or buts about it. That's what Jesus said to the disciples. Matthew, or not Matthew, James, John, Peter, Andrew, come with me.

[39 : 26] Leave the nets. Matthew, come and follow me. He closed up his tax records. Follow Jesus. Jesus, that's the call to us. To live our lives completely dedicated within our context to follow Jesus.

She sacrificed for Jesus. She was bold. Do you think it was easy to go into a room full of men in that culture, break open this expensive box of perfume and pour it?

She was bold. We should be bold. She modeled the character that Jesus wants in us as his disciples.

So the question that I want to have you ask as we wrap up this morning is, am I anointing the head of Jesus? Paul talked about the fact that we are the aroma of life and death wherever we go.

Some people are attracted because they see Jesus in us. Assuming they do. Some people are offended because they see Jesus in us.

[40 : 36] Assuming they do. But am I anointing the head of Jesus? Does my life create an aroma that proclaims to the people around me that I serve the great high priest who died on the cross for my sins?

Do I serve the risen king who reigns in my life and will one day reign on this world? Do I acknowledge that he died on the cross for me taking my sins?

That's what we're supposed to proclaim. Is that true of you? And if not, why not? Dig into these things. Look at this woman. Jesus was so impressed that our proclamation of the gospel is not complete if we don't point to her.

Think about that. Let's pray. God, we so want to be like that woman.

We want to be bold. We want to be just completely captivated by your identity. Who you are. That you are our priest. You are our king. You died for us.

[41 : 58] God, totally change us as we recognize how true those things are. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Thanks, John. Good morning.