

PM John 12:1-7

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Preacher: Rev Kenny Macleod

[0 : 00] It's nice to be with you again this evening as we come to worship God and to give God his place in our worship, at the centre of our worship and the centre of our lives.

So it's lovely to come as a congregation and to be with you today, to be able to spend quite a momentous day in regards to the congregation, where three young men have become elders of the congregation.

It's always encouraging for us, it's certainly encouraging for me as your inter-moderator to have this and looking forward to God's work in the congregation in the future. And obviously for the congregation, please do remember all our elders, including Jack and Norman as well.

It's important to bring our people before the Lord and to support them in prayer. We give a warm welcome to everyone again this evening, especially if anyone's visiting.

And we are, in regards to the dry rot repairs, really impressed with the work that's been done on the stairway and what's been just out in the hall there.

[1 : 04] It's really nice. It seems to be a shame to cover the floor. Norman's telling me it was really well done. So we're thankful for that. So there's going to be the redecoration is planned to start this coming Tuesday.

Also to see how clean the place is. So whoever came in and did the cleaning in the building, you are to be commended in regards to that. Because the place is absolutely spotless.

So thank you very much to those who cleaned the building out. When the builders are in, there's dust everywhere. But it seems the place is spotless. So thank you for that.

And there's going to be access still to the lower hall on Wednesday evenings. And obviously to this area on Sundays. Wednesday at 7pm, the prayer meeting and Bible study is going to be led by William Kenyon.

And next Lord's Day at 11am and 6pm is definitely going to be Reverend Robert Dale. We've worked that one out and we've got it all sorts.

[2 : 03] So we're so thankful for Robert. He stepped in last week and that's why there was a wee bit of confusion with Douglas Cancellant not being able to come now. Being the intermoderator for East Guild Bride and Robert kindly and well appreciated by the congregation.

So thank you very much for your ministry here. Well, we've come to worship God. We're going to sing to his praise in Psalm 96 verses 1 to 5. You'll find this on page 358 in our psalm books.

And we'll listen to the praise of Psalm 96. Who knows that soon in the end of June we might be able to begin singing again in church. So we're certainly looking forward to the day that we can do that.

Even if it's behind masks. At least to be able to sing. So we're going to sing verses 1 to 5. Oh, sing a new song to the Lord. Sing all the earth to God. To God sing.

Bless his name. Show still his saving health abroad. Verses 1 to 5. To God's praise. Oh, sing a new song to the Lord.

[3 : 16] Sing all the earth to God. To God sing. Bless his name. Show still his saving health abroad.

Among the heathen nations. His glory to declare.

And unto all the people show. His works at wondrous heart.

For grace the Lord and greatly he is to be magnified.

Yea, worthy to be feared is he. Above all gods beside.

[4 : 19] For all the gods are idols. Those of which blinded nations fear.

But our God is the Lord. By whom the heavens created were.

Well, let us say, come together before the Lord in prayer. Let us pray. Lord, in the evening hour as we come, and in the enjoyment of knowing that we can come into your presence to worship you.

And it is our desire, Lord, to be here Sunday evening. It is our want to be in the place of worship with your people. And as we come before you, we know that in our situation where we cannot sing, but yet, Lord, your word tells us that your word is not bound in any way.

And in our situation that the Lord leads the praise. And we're so thankful of that very thought. As we listen to the words of that psalm, knowing that God is leading us in the worship.

[5 : 33] We thank you for that. We pray, Lord, by your guiding grace, by your spirit, that you would draw us near to you tonight as we come to give ourselves to you.

And that, as always, we would do so, giving all of ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. We surrender all. And, Lord, as we do, we know that as we come with our hands open to receive what Christ gives, you are willing, by your grace and mercy, to pour out your blessing upon your people.

And, Lord, we pray that this would be true of our time of fellowship tonight. We thank you for this morning. And we thank you for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. What it means to you.

And, Lord, how you've set about giving us worship. How to worship you. How to praise you. And how, Lord, to go through in looking at the word of God to teach us.

We thank you for the power of the gospel that is able to save to the uttermost. And tonight, Lord, we know that the spirit is active. And that God has lost none of your ancient powers.

[6 : 42] You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. And we're so grateful for that. We thank you, Lord, as the gospel message goes out today throughout the whole world.

We pray for your spirit to come and to bless your people first. And that they then, in turn, would be a blessing to others. We, Lord, need to be fed.

And we pray with the feeding that we do receive. That this would be the means of strengthening us. And to go into the world with the gospel message. And to be a shining light for Jesus as long as we live.

Give us opportunity to witness for you. Give us, Lord, the light of the gospel in our own hearts. So as to be able to tell others about the great treasure that we have.

A treasure that we're willing to share. Not to keep to ourselves. But to tell a lost world about the hope that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for this lovely evening.

[7 : 40] As even now, we experience the sun coming through. And the warmth of the day, although with showers. But yet, Lord, so beautiful. And to see this beautiful place with this river running through it.

And to see the weird and all that is there of the splendor. Seeing houses, seeing homes, and so many lives. And, Lord, we pray that as churches we would be able to reach out to them with a gospel message.

Just as we thought this morning to go out, first of all, to those who are not like us. To bring them in from the city. But then, Lord, there was still room to go out to the highways.

And to the byways. And to bring them also. We are so thankful, Lord, for your great invitation to us. To the banquet of the King. And this invitation is good tonight.

Knowing that it is still good. And will be as long as there is time. Your mercy, Lord, reach us out to the hopeless. And to those who are the untouchables of life.

[8 : 41] And, Lord, how often we see ourselves as sinners. That you would even care for us. It's just amazing to think of the grace of God. That you would even consider us at all.

But this is the gospel. This is what's so amazing. And in whatever state or whichever way we feel tonight. You are, Lord, willing to save us. You are willing to keep us.

And you are willing to keep us until the day of Jesus Christ. That is the day when he returns the second time. To be kept in Christ. We are so thankful for that.

We know that it is not the grip that we hold on to you. But it is Christ's grip on us. That I, you promise that I will never leave nor forsake you.

We are so thankful, too, for your practical help. As we see our building here. With its repairs. And it looks done so well. We are thankful for that.

[9 : 37] We are thankful for those, again, as we spoke. Of those who cleaned up afterwards. And all these things get done. So that when we come to church like this. The place is clean.

The place is nice for us to come and be comfortable. We are thankful for that. These things don't happen just by themselves. People are active. People are busy.

And Lord, these are the things that you notice. And you notice. And you, Lord, delight in those who are busy for you. Bless the children who are with us again this evening. We are thankful for the children of the congregation.

And as we think of them. We also think of the children in this town. And the surrounding areas. Lord, in days where the darkness of our nation.

Is blinding the gospel. Our hearts are blinded to it. But Lord, as we pray. And as we see yet another term of office. For our first minister and her government.

[10 : 35] We pray for those who are Christians. Those who have been elected to that place. That you would protect them and keep them. Help them to stand up for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And not be quiet.

But speak their mind and speak the gospel. Speak the scriptures. So that they will be heard. And again our nation return to you. We think of our queen in these days of sadness.

Losing her husband in old age. It can't be easy for her. But we thank you, Lord, for her faith. How she's showed herself. And how she has kept herself in life.

We pray that she would be a witness for good in our nation. We pray for our Prime Minister and his government. We think of the rollout of vaccine. We're so thankful for it.

And all that took place over these last few months. We pray for your protection. And as tonight we think of India. We think of Nepal. Think of Suraj. Where he spoke to Thompson the other day.

[11:32] Saying how, Lord, they are affected in Nepal. But yet this is not reported. But we are thankful that he has told us. So that we may remember him. Remember his people, congregation.

And we remember that nation as well before you. So, Lord, all of these things we bring to you. At the beginning of a new week. But it's lovely that we can spend this time.

On a Sunday evening together. Worshipping you. And we pray, Lord, that you would be in our midst. If not, our worship is void. So, Lord, we crave your spirit to be with us.

Bless us, Lord, we ask. In Jesus' name. Amen. Our second item of praise. Tonight is sing Psalms 23. And we're going to sing the whole psalm.

Psalm 23. And it's on page 28 in our psalm books. The Lord is my shepherd. No one shall I know. He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow.

[12:32] And we listen to this to God's praise. The Lord is my shepherd. No one shall I know.

He makes me lie down where the green pastures grow. He needs easy to rest where the calm waters flow.

My water is my shepherd. My water is my shepherd. My water is my shepherd. He brings back to his way.

His strength has all righteousness making me stay. And this is he has come, his great name to display.

He has come, his great name to display. He has come, his great name to display. The Lord is my shepherd. He has come, his way down where the green pastures grow. The Lord is my shepherd. Where darkness is near Because you are willing No evil I fear Your rod and your staff Bring me comfort and cheer In the sight of my enemies That table you spread The oil of rejoicing You pour on my head My cup overflows And I'm graciously fed So surely your covenant

[14:38] Mercy and grace Will follow me closely In all of my ways I will dwell in the house Of the Lord Almighty I will dwell in the house Well, we're going to read in a couple of places this evening We're going to read in the Old Testament in the book of Micah And a few verses in chapter 6 So if you've got the Pew Bibles, it is on page...

Chapter 6 on page 942 and 943 And then we're going to look at the Gospel of John Gospel of John and chapter 12 But first of all, our reading in Micah And this passage, it has the heading from verse 6 What does the Lord require?

And the verses are self-explanatory really When we read them We read in chapter 6 and verse 6 With what shall I come before the Lord And bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings With calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams And ten thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good?

[16:18] And what does the Lord require of you? But to do justice and to love kindness And to walk humbly with your God And again, if you turn to John chapter 12 And we read from the beginning of the chapter John chapter 12 at the beginning There we read Six days before the Passover Jesus therefore came to Bethany Where Lazarus was Whom Jesus had raised from the dead So they gave a dinner for Him there Martha served And Lazarus was one of those Reclining with Him at the table Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment Made from pure nard And anointed the feet of Jesus And wiped His feet with her hair The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume

But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples He was the one about to betray Him Said, Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii And given to the poor?

He said this Not because He cared about the poor But because He was a thief And having charge of the money bag He used to help Himself To what was put into it Jesus said Leave her alone So that she may keep it For the day of my burial For the poor you always have with you But you do not always have me Amen May God bless to us The reading of His own holy word We're now going to listen to the hymn Come people of the risen King To God's praise We're designed to pray in praise Come all to do not to sin To the holy star of grace Come let's live in shadows on the earth We will live the eyes to live in

Who has said the arms of mercy Bees to the other children in Rejoice, rejoice Let every song rejoice One heart, one voice O Church of Christ rejoice And those who know His morning sun And are sleeping through the night Come those who tell our battles From the strut in the night For His perfect love will never change, and His mercy never cease.

But follow us through all our days, in the certain hope of peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!

[19 : 50] One heart, one voice, the Church of Christ is His voice. A young and old from every land, in a twinning of the tree.

The ghost with love of empty hands, and the riches of His grace. Oh, and all the world is need to sing, so to show we hear them call.

The truth with Christ through every inch, our Lord is holy for. Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!

One heart, one voice, the Church of Christ is His voice. Rejoice! Rejoice! Let every tongue rejoice!

One heart, one voice, the Church of Christ is His voice. Well, if you could turn back to the portion of Scripture we read in the Gospel of John, and chapter 12.

[21 : 24] And we're going to look at this momentous supper that took place. Today we looked at the great banquet, and this evening we're going to look at a supper that took place in Bethany, where Jesus was invited.

And just as we know, in chapter 12, we know that we're coming into the momentous, the most momentous week of all of history. This is the week where Jesus was to go to the cross of Calvary.

And just before then, what is interesting is that He wants to spend time with His friends, and He certainly had friends in Bethany that He could go to. But Jesus was determined.

We are told earlier on in the Scriptures that Jesus set His face to go to Jerusalem, and this being something that He came to do, to die for sinners like us, so that we tonight could have having the hope that we have in the death and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So the last few days then, as we see, six days before the Passover, before His passing, we see that Jesus came to Bethany. And we notice that a meal was put in place for Him, just for His honour, really.

[22 : 41] And He came to His friends. We find that Martha, Mary, and Lazarus are there. But also from the Gospels of Matthew chapter 26, and Mark chapter 14, we are told that this actually took place in the home of Simon the leper.

Now, when you think about this, that should really trigger something in our minds. How come that Simon the leper has a home?

Because in those days, when you became a leper, and you were claimed to be unclean, you had to leave your home, and you had to live in the outskirts of town, and you had to live with other lepers.

So, the point must be that if Simon the leper is now in a home in Bethany, it must mean that Jesus must have healed him.

That is the only way that Simon could be in a home. So, can you imagine, before Jesus healing, what this man would have been like? We are told of lepers that they had stooped shoulders, maybe fingerless hands, scabby arms because of their infection.

[23:57] They were draped in rags, and they had tattered wraps around their faces, just to stop the infection. Just like we're wearing masks.

They had to wear masks way back then because they had the infection of leprosy. And they say they had screaming white eyes that showed their illness.

But not only that, when they came near people, they had to shout, unclean, unclean, so that people could stand back from them.

But this was before the touch of Jesus on his life. Now, we're told of many that Jesus healed, especially in scriptures in regards to leprosy.

So, we can only assume or wonder, was he the leper that was healed when Jesus came down off the Sermon of the Mount? Was he one of the ten?

[24:56] Was he the one who came? Remember, there were ten lepers healed, and one came back and gave thanks to Jesus. Was this Simon? What about the leper of Bethsaida?

Was it him? Or, obviously, he was one of the nameless myriads which the gospel tells us that Jesus healed. So, it must be someone, he must be one of those that the writers didn't take time to write about.

We don't know. But what we do know about this Simon is that he invited Jesus and the disciples round for dinner. Now, you might say that's a simple act, really, to do so.

But the point is this. It meant so much to Jesus. You know what Jesus says, and that is why we read what we read in Micah in regards to what God requires of us.

Remember, it says there in verse 8, he told you, he has told you, O man, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you, for to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

[26:02] Now, for those of us who are saved, our citizenship is in the kingdom of God. This is the example that Jesus showed us what his kingdom is like.

This is how Christ lived. He lived with justice, and with righteousness. So, he expects his followers to do the same, to live in the kingdom of God by showing justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly before your God.

Remember how Jesus walked before his Father? I came to do the will of my Father. Remember in the Garden of Gethsemane, he said, not my will be done, but yours be done, because he felt the pressure of going to the cross, and felt that he couldn't do it.

But yet, he said, not my will, but the will of the Father. So, if this is what the kingdom is like, the way Jesus lived, that is the way we have to live in society, the way Christ did, to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly before the Lord.

Now, when this man put on a dinner, this wasn't an ordinary time, just to say, oh, Jesus is coming, so we'll just put on a dinner for him. No, these were unusual times, and it was a brave thing for Simon to do, because notice, if you've got your Bibles, chapter 11, and verse 57, what it says there.

[27:29] Now, the chief priests, and the Pharisees, had given orders, that if anyone knew, where he was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest him.

This is what, there was a warrant out, for Jesus' arrest. And if you invited this person, to dinner, and you didn't tell the authorities, that he was coming to your house, for dinner, then you're an accessory to his crime.

So, if Jesus was arrested, you could have been arrested as well. But yet, we see, that Simon invited him, openly, to his home.

Simon thought, by doing supper, was nothing compared, to Jesus putting his hand, on a leper, and to heal him. It's nothing compared, to what Jesus has done, for me.

He knew what it was like, to stare death in the face. He had leprosy, remember. He had no place, to call home. And, he was someone, that was misunderstood.

[28 : 34] I don't know, if you've ever seen, there was a book, called the island, and it was one of the, last place, it was the last, leper colony, in the whole of Europe.

An island called, it was off Crete, called Spinalonga. And it was there, that the last lepers, in Europe were, until cure, came in 1957, from America.

And I think it was by 1960s, in the early 60s, the place was cleared. We were in Crete one time, and we went to this place, and these people, set up their own homes, and everything.

And honestly, soon when you go there, there's something about it. And we used to, we crossed the same seas, where they used to take, people who were, discovered to have leprosies, mothers, fathers, people of all ages, and when they found, they had leprosy, they had to be separated, and taken to this place.

And they were there, and they died there. There's, there's graves, grave, graveyards, and everything on the island. Honestly, if it were, that you were ever to go, there is something, you feel in this place, and to think, what life must have been like, for them.

[29 : 48] Well, do you know, that is what it was like, for Simon. And you can imagine, obviously he's been healed, Jesus comes round, and he wants, I want, I don't care, what the authorities say, I want Jesus to come, to my home, and I just want to show him, some of the kindness, that he has shown me.

I'll never repay that, but I want to show him something. But you know, what is so amazing is this, is that by the end of the week, Jesus was going to be in other homes.

He was going to be in the home, of Anna, the Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas. Did he receive the hospitality, that he received at Simon's home, there?

No, he didn't. He was in Herod's home. That must have been awkward, because it was this Herod, that put his cousin, John the Baptist, to death.

That must have been really awkward. Jesus didn't speak, at all. He must have felt, really strange, in that place. He never even spoke, to Herod.

[30 : 57] But he was also, in the governor's home, Pilate. And there was no hospitality, shown to him, there either. What an opportunity, missed, this was, for Pilate.

He was the governor, of Israel. And the son of God, is in his home. And Pilate, absolutely missed it. He had all the opportunities, to show, his love to him, but instead, remember what he did, he simply washed, his hands, of Jesus, and he handed him over, to be crucified.

He had an opportunity, to do the best deed, in the world, but yet, he missed it. The son of God, in his home, but he didn't see it. But Simon, did.

Simon, the leper, saw it. You see, sometimes, we have to take a risk, for the gospel. And that is what Simon did.

Do you know, this could have costed him his life, cost him his life, but he was willing, to have Jesus at home. It didn't matter, what the authority said, I'm going to do this, because I love, my Lord.

[32 : 14] You might say, this is not much, of an offer, it's only a dinner, in your house. But Jesus, never forgets. Do you know, that is why Jesus, on the day of judgment, when he puts the sheep, to the right, and the goats, to the left, and he says, to the sheep, remember the fact, that you fed the poor, you went to the prisoners, you clothed, those who needed to be clothed, you looked after them.

And we're asking, the question, those on the right, are asking the question, when did we, do that? And he said, it's in the fact, that you did it, to the least of these.

Where were the least of these? In our world. And you know, I was saying that, to our own congregation, the other day. Notice what our government's, doing at the very moment.

We're cutting aid, to the world, by what, 9.2 billion. We're cutting aid. And what does Kai say, he said, and as much as you've done it, into the least of these, my brethren, you're doing it to me.

So what we're doing, and the United Kingdom government, are doing, we're cutting that. Because we're saying, we need it ourselves, because of our economic state.

[33 : 32] Do you know, things like that, we will not fare well on. Because it will come back, to bite us. Even United Nations, they had 40 million, they used to get 40 million, from the United Kingdom's government, they are only getting 16 now.

And we think of people, we've got a family, and their son, is working in Yemen. In North Yemen, the world doesn't know anything, that is going on there. The four of them, from the United Nations, they contracted, a COVID.

The four of them were sick. There was no medicine, there's no vaccines, in North Yemen. And what are we doing? We're cutting the aid, to the world.

But what does Christ say, on the day of judgment, in as much, as you've done it, into the least of these. You see, we don't know, where God's people are. They're all over the world.

And we should be giving, to that. And that is what Christ, expects of the church. He's expecting equity, he's expecting all of these, right to be righteous, in what we are doing.

[34 : 42] There was an opportunity here, for Pilate, but he missed it. But Simon, seized the opportunity. Do we seize the opportunity, in our churches?

When our towns, and villages, that's one thing, we did here today, was drive about, and freeze. This is a big town. There are lots of people, lots of homes, that they need to hear, the gospel, of the Lord Jesus.

Because, we're the church. And if the church, doesn't tell them, how are they going to know, about this? There's all types of houses. Posh ones, not so posh.

But every single one of them, need to hear, about the Lord Jesus Christ. Simon, seized the opportunity, to do, what he wanted to do, for Jesus.

But you know, what really stands out, in this passage, quite often, is what we look at it, and most people, would speak about, is what Mary did. Mary's act, we see in verse 3.

[35 : 44] Mary therefore, took a pound, of expensive ointment, made from pure nard, and anointed, the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet, with her hair. Yes, it's amazing, and we will look at that.

But first of all, I want us to consider, Martha, and Lazarus. First of all, I want us to consider, Martha. Have you ever considered, Martha?

I don't think, Martha was one of these, perfume ladies. I don't think, she would have been the one, that you would find, at the, the Mary Lancome counter.

No, she was more, she would have been, in amongst the vegetables, and the food, and wherever you go, for food. Because, it always seems, that Martha, was always, serving.

And that is what, she loved to do. That is what, she was content, in doing. Notice verse 2, in our passage. So they gave a dinner, for him, Martha, served.

[36 : 42] What is Martha doing? She's doing, what she's always doing. Preparing food, getting ready, for Jesus, to show, and to give Jesus, what she could, what she could do.

And you know, I'm sure you know, scriptures, that before now, the last time, there was a meal like this, and remember, she was complaining, about Mary. Mary was sitting, at the feet of Jesus.

She said to Jesus, will you not tell Mary, Jesus, to give me a hand? I need a hand. But remember, what Jesus said, Mary chose, that good part, that will never, be taken from her.

But here, notice, this is later on. So they gave a dinner, for him, verse 2, who Martha served. Ah, she's not complaining now. What's happening, in Martha's life, is that she's growing, in grace.

And she recognized, what I am doing, I'm doing it, for my Lord. And my Lord, accepts that, of me. She's growing, in grace, I'm not complaining.

[37 : 42] It was a joy, for her, to serve. Do you know when, back in 2004, when we finished, in the Free Church College, we didn't know, where we were going to go, to minister, although we ended up, in Carlyway, but not at that time, we didn't know.

We were asked to go, to Prince Edward Island, in Canada. They were looking, for a minister, at the time. And, do you know, it was the most amazing, nine weeks, of our lives, in the sense, that we learned, so much, of them, by being with, these people.

But there was, one lady, there, she was, had a really, tough, tough life. Her husband, actually died, at the wheel, of his truck, strapped in, his belt, and he couldn't, the truck, went on fire.

He couldn't get out, he was drunk. And this lady, when you saw her, she had a beautiful family, a son, and daughter-in-law, they were so faithful. But whenever you saw, this lady, Johnina, was her name.

When I stood at the door, we used to stand at the door, for people coming in, and people going out. Are you there? It was roasting, in the summer, beautiful weather. And, I would speak to Johnina, you know this, she would hardly lift, her head, to say hello.

[39 : 00] She was so shy. It was incredible. But you know, they were, they used to put on, corn boil, lunches, and things, because, corn in the cob, is really big there, along with potatoes, in Prince Edward Island.

And you know, what was interesting, one day, we were doing the dishes, and what we noticed, that nearly under, every second dish, there was Johnina's name.

She did, what she could, for the Lord. And she could hardly, speak at the door. But she did it, for Jesus. There was an American, director, once, in her city, and two guys, used to see him, every week, crossing the road, to the homeless shelter.

And they wondered, what on earth, does he do? Every Thursday, without fail, on a Thursday afternoon, lunchtime, wondering, what's he doing? So they followed him, one day, and they went in, and he's on his knees, scrubbing the floor, with a brush, and water.

And they said, what are you doing? He said, we'll do that for you. He was the director, of their company. We'll do that. And he said, no, he said, I want to do it, because I'm doing it, for Jesus.

[40 : 12] I'm doing it, for Jesus. That was Martha. So they gave a dinner, for him, there, Martha, served.

It's so simple, isn't it? But she's serving, her Lord Jesus. It is done with a heart, fully surrendered, to Jesus. But then secondly, notice, notice what he goes on, to say here.

Martha served, and Lazarus, was one of those, reclining with him, at the table. I remember, way back, in the 80s, Douglas Macmillan, I'm sure you all know, he was, from Killahoe, on the west coast, and he was a minister, became a professor, in our college, and he was the man, that wrote, the Lord our shepherd.

He was a shepherd, himself. I remember him, preaching in Greyfriars, in Inverness, one evening, and he preached, on this passage, and he spoke, about Lazarus. And he said, about Lazarus, remember, this is the point, this is after, Lazarus rose, from the dead.

And Douglas said this, do you know this? He would have felt, unworthy, of being, at the table, with Jesus, and his friends. Because, they possibly, could still, smell death, of him.

[41 : 32] Remember, he was dead, for four days. And they could, he was thinking, that they could still, smell this death. And Douglas said, as if he was saying, I shouldn't be here.

This is not a place, for people, like me. But then, Douglas said this, what happened, in the room, was this. Look at verse 3.

Mary therefore, took a pound, of expensive ointment, made from pure nard, and anointed, the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet, with her hair. She broke, like the old, the authorised, King James version says, she broke, the box of alabaster.

And what would that, have done? It would have, filled the room, with the aroma, of the fragrance. And this is what, Douglas said.

That Lazarus, would have said, oh, maybe they don't, smell death, of me anymore. Do you know the way, you are sometimes, and you're sitting, at the Lord's table, and you're thinking, that other people, are smelling death, of you.

[42 : 42] I shouldn't be here, because of my, sinful heart. But yet, you know, sometimes, a blessing, comes into the room, to fill the room, God blesses the people.

And we then, might say, ah, maybe now, they don't notice me. As long, as Jesus does. He shouldn't, have been there, but the ointment, was broken.

I want you to see, the effect, that this man, Lazarus, had on people. Notice chapter 12, and verses 10, and 11, so the chief priest, made plans, to put Lazarus, to death as well, because, on account, of him, many of the Jews, were going away, and believing, in Jesus.

What a witness, he became. Jesus, brought me, back from the dead, and he, will never, hear the end of it. Oh, I'll go to Simon's house, if Jesus, is going to be there.

I want to be, where Jesus is. I want, everything, to do, with Jesus. I want to be there. But you know, what is interesting, is what Caiaphas said, in John chapter 11, verses 49, and 50.

[44 : 06] Notice what it says there, when they were on about, the plot to kill Jesus. It says, but one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest, that year, said to them, you know nothing at all, nor do you understand, that it is better for you, that one man, should die for the people, not that the whole nation, should perish.

It started off, with Jesus. Then they're going, to put Lazarus, to death. Then it's going, to be, Stephen. Then it's going, to be James.

Then it's going, to be Peter. And then it's going, to be Paul. And there's all, the martyrs, still being put, to death, because of their belief, in Jesus.

I don't know, if you get, the Barnabas prayer notes, but each day, we're reading, about persecution, of people being persecuted, all over the world, and being put to death.

But you know, what is amazing, about this, about them, is this, that way they will, not give up, their faith, in Jesus Christ. You see, when Christ sees, that we're willing servants, he gives us, the strength, and the grace, to go through, whatever life, throws at us.

[45 : 18] He gives us, the grace, to do it. You know, it was risky, for Lazarus, to be in Simon's home, because they were out, to get him, as well.

But why did he go? Why did he go there? Only for one reason, because Jesus, was there. Wouldn't it be amazing, now, for ourselves, here in Dumfries, that people in Dumfries, heard that Jesus, is in that place.

Oh, you need to go, because Jesus, is there. And you, because his people, they gather there. They're so excited, about the gospel. They're so inspired, by the gospel, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

You want to be, among these people, because Jesus, is there. What was the attraction, to Lazarus, do you think? Well, Lazarus was the man, that was brought back, to life.

He was dead. And people wanted, to see this. But you know, what about us? The Christian, has been brought, back to life. We were dead, in our trespasses, and sins.

[46 : 26] As Ephesians 2, 1 tells us. We were dead, without hope. We've got no way, of recovering, our own lives. If you're dead, you're dead. But Christ came, and made us, alive.

Now, to sit, in heavenly places. Like we said today, our place is reserved, no one will sit there, but us. But it is as if, now, we are sitting there.

That is the promise, given to God's people. I belong, into this kingdom, of Christ. Well, Jesus called us, just like he called, Lazarus, from the dead.

And when we heard, that voice, we couldn't, but come, and follow him, and do what he wants us, to do. The other thing, well, the fact that Jesus, was there, that's Lazarus.

And those who spend, time with Jesus, what happens? We become, like Jesus. Lazarus, and that is the true, attraction, that you have, in people.

[47 : 30] There was a man, an Australian guy, called Ralph Kuyper, is a preacher, and a writer. He said this, I discovered, that my first duty, was not to win souls, for Christ.

My primary, obligation, was to live for him, in the daily tasks, which were mine. So that people, with whom I came in contact, might see, God's salvation, in action.

They saw Christ, in his very walk, of life. And this is what he said, after he learned, the secret, of being with Christ, and becoming, like Christ, he said, the job, of witnessing, became the joy, of leading, others, to the Lord.

Lazarus, was there, because Jesus, was there. But then, thirdly, and finally, we come to Mary, don't we? And Mary, therefore, took a pound, of expensive ointment, made from pure nard, and anointed, the feet of Jesus, and wiped, his feet, with her hair.

The house, was filled, with the fragrance, of the perfume. Jesus said, that she did this, for his burial, as we read, in our passage.

[48 : 48] In fact, his burial, was to take place, six days from now, and this, was the moment, that Jesus, was set aside, for his death, and resurrection.

He was set aside, by Mary. But how did Mary know? How did Mary know, about Jesus, and that he was to die?

It seemed that, she knew, she was doing this. You see, this ointment, was for people, who died. You anointed, the body, and people, had this, in their homes.

It was an heirloom, a family heirloom. This is when, you used it, for people dying. But how did she know? He's about to give, his life, on the cross, and Mary knew it.

How did she understand, this, when the other disciples, missed it? They totally missed it. Because they did, they were in darkness, the whole weekend, after Jesus died, on the cross.

[49 : 51] She got it, because of where she was, every time, she was in Jesus' company. Where was Jesus? Where was Mary, every time Jesus was there?

She was at, his feet. If we don't know much, spiritually, that is really, where we need to spend, our time, at the feet of Jesus. If we're wanting to grow, and to get to know him, we need to spend time, to learn from Jesus.

But how can we do that? We can't physically, go to the feet of Jesus, but we can go to his word, can't we? He said, Christ is the word. The word became flesh.

The flesh dwelt among them, and the glory of the word, was there for them, but is still here for us too, to enjoy, and to grow by it, by the study of the word.

There's a Hebrew idiom, that says, sitting at the feet, at one's feet, meant only, to learn from that person. So, we've got pictures of that, in scripture.

[50 : 54] Remember, when Jesus crossed, the other side of the sea, and he saw legion, legion came to him, and remember, by the time the people, came out, he was there, sitting at Jesus' feet, clothed, and in his right mind.

What was he doing, at Jesus' feet? Jesus had little time, to teach him, the missionary skills, he needed to go to his own people, with the gospel. He was at his feet, learning these things.

Where do children learn? At the feet, of their parents, or at the feet, of their school children, teachers in school.

Jesus himself, learned, the scriptures, at the feet, of his mother. It's mothers, in the Jewish culture, that teach their children. And can you imagine, I often think, of Jesus being taught, who will believe our report, and to whom is the arm, of the Lord revealed.

He will grow up, like a plant, no one to desire. Can you imagine, his mom saying to him, will you repeat this, after me? I wonder how much knowledge, he had that, in his childhood, this is speaking, about you Jesus.

[52 : 08] You will be despised, and rejected of men. A man of sorrows, unacquainted with grief. You wonder, if there were moments, where Mary wondered, what this means.

And it actually meant, that this is, her child, is about him, as she taught him, the scriptures. You see, Jesus learns, just like, he learned, just like our children, learn.

The Bible, is a book, for us to learn, about God. And some people say, some people think, oh I want to know him. But we don't discipline, ourselves, to steep ourselves, in the scriptures.

sisters. So when Jesus spoke, when he spoke, Mary knew, and understood, what he was talking, about. And this is how, she knew, about his death.

But you know, there was something else, about Mary, and it is a characteristic, about Mary, that we should all have, those, who love the Lord Jesus, is this, that she loved him, to the point, of extravagance.

[53 : 15] To the point, of extravagance. Why did she pour, this valuable, ointment, on Jesus? It wasn't just enough, to say, I know what's happening, to you.

I know how you're going, to die, or what's going, why you're dying. There is this, I just want to show you, Jesus, how much, I love you.

That's all. I just want to show you, what you mean to me. And folks said, that this, she did this, on an impulse. It was like, spontaneous. But how could it have been?

Because, she must have taken, I'm sure you can see, Martha coming, with all the goods, for the dinner, and under, under, Mary's arm. There would have been, the box of alabaster.

Or she knew, she knew what she was doing, and she wanted to do it, because of her love, for Jesus. This wasn't impulse, this was carried, to the house.

[54 : 14] It wasn't a spontaneous gesture, but it was an extravagant, gesture. The perfume was worth, one year's wages. And you're thinking, this is not logical.

But when is, love, logical sometimes, when you think of, Christ dying, for his enemies. How is that logical? It's, it's, there's no logic, in that.

That God would save, sinners. But this is what, God has done. She wanted to show, the same love, that Christ, had shown her. And she wanted, to show that, by showing it to him, in front of others.

She understood, his sorrow, and what was coming, his way. She possibly saw, grief in his eyes, just as you see, the eyes, tell you, loads, don't they?

Quite often, you see people coming, when we did, did have people, or seen people, walking out, and, you ask them, how are you doing? And they say, I'm fine. But their eyes, tell you something else.

[55 : 20] They tell you, there's something going on. And, she would have seen, the anguish, in the eyes, a man of sorrows, and acquainted, with grief.

How could she see it? Well, she sat at his feet. She was that close, to see, to see Jesus, and so like us. But she wanted, to identify with him, in his sorrows, even, as he identified, with her, in her sorrows, and in his, in her moments, of joy.

What can I do, to show, how much I love him? I'm going to do this. Can you imagine, at home, and looking at this box, and thinking, well I know, what it's for, but you know what?

I've understood, what Jesus is doing, for me, and I just want, to give it, to him. Don't care, about the consequences. I'm going to give it, to him.

What a contrast, we see here, at this point. Notice verse 4, but Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he, was about to betray him, said, why was this ointment, not sold, for 300 denarii, and given, to the poor?

[56 : 36] You see, he just totally, he was with Jesus, for three years, and he just didn't get it. And remember, he sold Jesus, for 30 pieces, of silver, and Mary, is given, a year's wage, away, in a winner.

Jesus, Judas, sorry, had the bag, but Mary, broke the box. Remember, he was, dipping his hand, in the bag, but Mary, just lavishes Jesus, with her gift.

What a difference. And isn't it interesting, what Jesus said, in verse 7, leave her alone. Leave her alone.

Can you imagine, the God of heaven, saying, leave them alone. Leave her alone. Leave him alone. Because he's doing, she's doing this, for me.

There is a time, in life, for risky love. A time, for extravagant love, and extravagant gestures, to pour our affections, on the one, that loves us more, than we will ever understand.

[57 : 48] But the point is this, when these times, come round, we should seize the moment. Don't miss it. John adds, as we saw, in verse 3, Mary therefore, took a pound, of expensive ointment, made of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet, with her hair.

And listen, the house, was filled, with the fragrance, of the perfume. It wasn't just Jesus, who benefited, by this. Lazarus benefited, but the whole house, was filled, with the fragrance.

You see, that is what God does, when he comes down, to bless his people. It's not just one, or two. It's when his spirit, comes, it affects everyone.

And we are all, blessed, with the fragrance, of God. The fragrance, was the result, of her gift to Jesus, given with no thought, of herself.

Nevertheless, became the means, by sharing the blessing, to others. And you know, by our extravagance, to Christ, quite often, others, are blessed, by it.

[59:00] In Matthew, it says, that she poured it, on Jesus' head. What would that be like? Well, like just as Psalm 133, speaks about, how the, how the oil of God, flows down, through the priests.

Flows down, through the garments, to his feet. And can you imagine, the scent of that, that oil, it was so expensive, it was, it stuck to you.

And you know, someone said this, can you imagine Jesus, as he was being, whipped. I wonder, if he got a whiff, of the ointment, of his skin, and the thoughts, of that, bringing his mind, to Mary, as he was being, punished.

Between the lashings, did Jesus, relive this moment, as he braced himself, for the next, ripping, of the whip? Did he remember, the oil, that soothed, his skin, and his feet?

Could he see, Mary, through the pain? And as he was suffering, could he see, your face, and mine? As he was going, to Calvary, to the cross?

[60:14] Mary loved, with extravagance. She loved, with extravagance. Do we love, tonight, with extravagance? We have, many opportunities, to be, and to show, extravagance, for Christ's love, for us, to show, and return, that we love him.

We should seize, the opportunities, that come, our way, we shouldn't miss them. We shouldn't say, someday, I'll do it. Because, the enemy, of risky love, is the enemy, the one, who hisses, and says, someday, the serpent, someday, you'll do it.

Someday, I'll take my wife, on holiday. Someday, I'll visit, that old lady, or that old man, down at the end, of the road, and show him, the kindness, of God.

Someday, the children, will understand, why we were so busy, to spend, any time, with them. But you know, the truth, don't you?

That someday, never come. I remember, we've got three boys, and I remember, the very keen, footballers, the three of them, when we lived in M&S;, they were on, on M&S;, Cali's books, you might say, that's nothing.

[61:35] But for them, it was important. And, but I remember, when we moved to Lewis, and you were so busy, and, I remember our youngest, saying to me, one night, Dad, will you come, and watch me, play football?

And I said, oh, Calum, I'm so busy, I'm so busy. And he said, do you know, he said, you never come. And you always went, to see, the other two boys.

See how careful, we have to be, even in little, simple things. But the thing is this, it's what Jesus sees, in as much as you've done it, and to the least, of these, my brothers, you have done it, and to me, you know, fine as I know, that some days never come.

The reward, of risky love, is always greater, than its cost. Always greater. And you see, what Mary did, was never to be forgotten.

This is what Matthew, in this report said, that Jesus said, I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached, throughout the world, what she has done, will also be told, in memory, of her.

[63:00] And you know what, 2021, here in Dumfries, Scotland, we're talking, about her tonight. The extravagance, of her love.

Does Jesus, see, the extravagance, of our love, towards him? Well, may God bless to us, these thoughts.

Our closing psalm, is Psalm 104, and the same psalms version, and we're doing, this is what we could find, in regards to this, and we're happy for that.

We're going to sing, verse 20, we're going to listen to verse 24, verse 31, verse 33 to 36, some pages, 137, and 138.

We'll listen to this, to God's praise. Lord, how many are your wonders, wisely you have made them whole, earth is full upon your creatures, living things will create a song, May the Lord's majestic glory, always lost and never fade, may the Lord rejoice and triumph, in the mercy he has made, to the Lord throughout my life, all I am, to my God I will sing praise, may my meditation be said, as to him my soul I raise, but his sin was before him, and the wickedly no more, praise me to the Lord almighty,

[65 : 24] O my soul, the Lord adore, I will conclude with a benediction, now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and forevermore, Amen.

Amen.