

Summary

This sermon focuses on the story from Mark 14 where an unnamed woman pours expensive perfume on Jesus' head at Bethany, just before his betrayal by Judas. The pastor emphasizes that we are living in unprecedented times where revival fires are burning worldwide, and God is calling believers to make costly sacrifices for the kingdom. The message challenges the congregation to move beyond comfortable religion to radical surrender, using the woman's sacrificial act as an example of costly praise and worship. The pastor contrasts the unnamed woman's faith and recognition of Jesus as Savior with the religious leaders who plotted against him and Judas who betrayed him, showing that proximity to Jesus doesn't guarantee salvation - only faith and surrender do.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we thank You for bringing us to this moment. We ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You have for us in this time together. Lord, help us to set aside our distractions, our preconceptions, and our comfort zones. We pray that Your Holy Spirit would move among us and speak to each person exactly what they need to hear. Give us ears to hear, hearts to receive, and the courage to respond to whatever You are calling us to do. We surrender this time to You and ask that You would use it to draw us closer to Jesus. In His name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

If you could give someone a gift that represented your most valuable possession (not necessarily monetary value, but something meaningful to you), what would it be and why?

Key Verses

1. Mark 14:3-9
2. Matthew 24:6
3. John 10:18
4. Isaiah 6:8

Questions

1. What strikes you most about the unnamed woman's decision to pour expensive perfume on Jesus? What does this teach us about worship and sacrifice?
2. The religious leaders plotted against Jesus while an unnamed woman recognized Him as Savior. What does this tell us about the difference between religion and relationship with God?
3. Jesus said 'see to it that you are not alarmed' in Matthew 24:6 despite wars and rumors of wars.

How can we practically live without fear in uncertain times?

4. The pastor mentioned that 'proximity does not equal relationship' when talking about Judas. How can we ensure our closeness to church or Christian activities translates into genuine faith?
5. What are some 'costly decisions for the kingdom' that believers might need to make in today's world? What makes these decisions difficult?
6. The woman's act of worship was criticized by those around her, but Jesus defended her. How do we handle criticism when we choose to live radically for Christ?
7. The pastor challenged the congregation to move beyond 'comfortable religion.' What does comfortable religion look like, and how is it different from radical discipleship?
8. Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, showing how greed and sin can corrupt even those close to Jesus. What are some modern-day 'silver pieces' that might tempt us to compromise our faith?

Life Application

This week, identify one area of your life where you've been holding back from fully surrendering to God. It might be your finances, a relationship, a career decision, or a personal habit. Take one concrete step toward 'pouring out your oil' - making a costly but faithful decision that demonstrates your complete trust in Jesus, even if others don't understand or support your choice.

Key Takeaways

1. We are living in unprecedented times where God is moving powerfully around the world, and He is calling believers to be part of this end-time revival
2. True worship and praise are costly - they require sacrifice and may result in criticism from others, but they are precious to God
3. Proximity to Jesus or religious activity doesn't guarantee salvation; only genuine faith and surrender lead to true relationship with God
4. The unnamed woman's recognition of Jesus as Savior, while religious leaders missed it, shows that God values faith over status or position
5. In uncertain times, we should not be alarmed but should stay close to Jesus, trusting that He holds our lives and every moment in His hands

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the example of the unnamed woman who poured out everything for You. We pray that You would give us that same heart of radical surrender and costly worship. Help us to break open our own 'alabaster boxes' - whatever we've been holding back from You - and pour it all out at Your feet. Give us courage to live boldly for You, even when others don't understand. Help us to move beyond comfortable religion into a relationship that transforms our lives and impacts others. We surrender our fears, our possessions, our relationships, and our futures to You. Use us as part of Your end-time revival, and help us to be Your hands and feet in this world. Thank You for Your sacrifice on the cross that makes our freedom possible. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.