

Worship Material
What's your passion
Material from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 6th April

Begin with an opening prayer

Lord, we bring before you the passions of our lives:
the people who matter most to us,
the things that hurt us most,
everything we have lost,
the questions we struggle to answer.
Help us to know how much we matter
and to find our answers in you.

Amen.

Read John 12:1-8

Bible notes

Each Gospel has an account of Jesus being anointed by a woman. In Matthew 26:6-13 and in Mark 14:3-9, an unnamed woman anoints Jesus' head in the house of Simon the leper at Bethany, 'two days before the Passover' (Mark 14:1). In Luke 7:36-50, during Jesus' earlier ministry in Galilee, an unnamed 'woman in the city, who was a sinner' anoints his feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee. In John, the anointing is 'six days before the Passover'. As in Matthew and Mark, the anointing is with very costly ointment and takes place in Bethany, just east of Jerusalem where Jesus is about to be crucified. But uniquely, in John's narrative, the woman is named. She is Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus, and her anointing of his feet happens in their Bethany home. Importantly, it is part of the extended story (11:1–12:11) of Jesus' relationship with the three siblings, all of whom he loved (11:5), and whose invitation to dinner he has accepted. He has said to Martha, 'I am the resurrection and the life', and she has responded, 'Yes, Lord, I believe' (11:25-27). He has raised Lazarus, who has become a living witness to the truth of Jesus' words. Because of this the chief priests plan to put Lazarus to death (11:53, 12:9-11).

Now Mary anoints him in explicit recognition that there is no way to resurrection without the cross. The fabulous cost of the nard suggests that

Mary's passionate commitment to Jesus is total. And John attributes strong emotions to Jesus, too, in his relationship with the siblings: he is 'deeply moved'; he 'began to weep'; and is 'again greatly disturbed' at the tomb of Lazarus (11:33-38). His passionate commitment to all those he loves is about to cost him nothing less than his life. He recognises that Mary has kept the ointment 'for the day of my burial' (v.7). There will be no anointing after his death because he will be raised. By her costly act, Mary proclaims Jesus' death and resurrection and commits herself to him passionately.

Prayer

Lord, we give thanks and praise as we:

Press on in

Anticipation of riches ahead,

Singing with joy as we

Shed the past, realising the

Importance of your grace.

Our old life is dead.

Now our trust is in you.

Lord, we give thanks and praise as we move forward with you.

Amen.

A prayer to conclude

All that makes me happy, I place at your feet, Lord.

All that makes me sad, I place at your feet, Lord.

Everything that matters, I place at your feet, Lord.

Be with me every step of the way in my life.

Amen.