

April 1, 2021

Read Mark 14

Key verse: Mark 14:9

'Truly I tell you, wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her.'

What's the Point of That?

We often pride ourselves on being pragmatic – we choose a job or a career that offers a high level of security and job satisfaction, we choose a car that is dependable and (often) environmentally friendly, we eat foods that are good for our bodies, we invest our money in ways that yield decent dividends, and we give extravagantly to the church.

Wait a minute; *that's* not practical. We need to give what we can afford after we have paid our bills and put away our savings and put some money aside for vacations and possibly a new car. We need to take care of our own needs first, and then we'll give a portion of whatever is left over to the church maybe. That's more practical, and certainly a more accurate description of our behavior.

In this 14th chapter of Mark's gospel we meet this woman who acts very impractically, "wasting" a jar of expensive ointment on Jesus' head. The very pragmatic disciples see this as a waste of money that could have been used to feed the hungry – they are probably uncomfortable sitting in the home of a leper (That's not a very practical thing to do, is it, Jesus?). And I would guess that since this woman had no qualms about coming to this poor man's house that she's not part of the upper class. *So SHE should probably sell the ointment to improve HER lot.*

But that's not how love works. There have been horrible government campaigns carried out to cleanse the gene pool of any person who is not physically or mentally satisfactory to the people in power. We live in a culture where depression often stems from a feeling of inadequacy, of an inability to produce or contribute to society. Yes, we are a terribly pragmatic people, but love trumps pragmatism, thank God!

And we should thank God. Jesus came to steer us in a direction where we can start to see that that compassion is the key to our success. Love in itself doesn't seem very practical, but it is the reason we were created, and it is where we find true meaning in life.

Prayer: Lord God, thank you for creating us with hearts that recognize the beauty of Jesus and act in ways that seem impractical. Help us to love others as much as we love you. Amen.