

## Talking Points      *“Attention is the beginning of devotion”* -- Mary Oliver

Jesus said to him, <sup>10</sup> “The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. <sup>11</sup> Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.” John 14:10-11

What do recall from last week’s study with the Samaritan woman at the well?

### Jesus Sees Women – Session 5

Building Cultural/Historical Context:

- Anointing was a prophet’s job to ordain priests, consecrate the temple articles, consecrate Kings, sanctify and set apart as holy.
- Prophets and Disciples can be men or women (Mark 15:41) (See “WomenProphets” handout)

Building Context within Mark’s Gospel:

Messianic Secret in Mark’s Gospel

“Resistant Disciples” -or- “Romans vs. Jews”:

1. Prior to Jesus ministry, living in occupied Judea, would the disciples have sided with their Jewish leaders or the Romans?
2. Do you think the disciples’ view of their Jewish leaders and Rome’s occupation aligned with Jesus’ view of the Jewish leaders and Rome’s occupation?
3. What do you think was the Jewish understanding of Messiah’s mission?
4. Do you think they were willing to fight and kill Roman soldiers, if necessary?

Reflections on the Resistant Disciples (See “Relevant Scriptures” *post Messianic Secret Revelation*)

1. Noting the disciples’ reactions to much of Jesus’ teaching, did the disciples understand Jesus mission?
2. What are some of the hard things we hear Jesus telling us?
3. How do we resist Jesus’ call on our lives?

### Tale of Two Stories

One is male-centered and violent. It begins with the plot to kill Jesus by the male leaders in Jerusalem, joined by Judas Iscariot. While the other disciples were generally opposed to these leaders, they nonetheless agreed with them (and were secretly complicit with them) that killing must happen. This first story ended with Jesus’ abandonment, crucifixion, and burial, all done by men. The center of this story was the shocking, horrifying crucifixion of Jesus, shown to us in gruesome detail.

The other way to see these events is female-centered and nonviolent. It began with the anointing of Jesus by a female prophet, continued with the faithful presence of women at his crucifixion, and ended with the witness to Jesus’ resurrection by the female disciples, who remained present with him. The center of this story, however, is a mystifying event that we don’t see happen at all—his shocking and incredible resurrection.

1. What adjectives describe Story #1? What adjectives describe Story#2?
2. Which way will we see the world?

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*Note: the struggle between Jesus and his male disciples is the context for his anointing in today's story. Keep this in mind as we unpack the Gospel story of the Prophetess and the Anointing.*

Let's "SEE" who is in our story this week - Mark 14:1-10

- A) **14:1** Now the Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. <sup>2</sup> "But not during the festival," they said, "or the people may riot."
- B) <sup>3</sup> While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.
- C) <sup>4</sup> Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, "Why this waste of perfume? <sup>5</sup> It could have been sold for more than a year's wages<sup>[a]</sup> and the money given to the poor."
- D) And they rebuked her harshly. <sup>6</sup> "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me.**
- C1) <sup>7</sup> The poor you will always have with you,<sup>[b]</sup> and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me.
- B1) <sup>8</sup> She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. <sup>9</sup> Truly I tell you, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."
- A1) <sup>10</sup> Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. <sup>11</sup> They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.

"We know that she was a prophet unlike any other. Not just anyone in the Bible could anoint someone on their head, which is to make that person a king, a priest, or a prophet. Only someone who was already anointed could do so. Plus, there is not a single instance in the Hebrew or Greek Jewish Scriptures in which a woman either anointed someone else to be a leader in Israel or was herself anointed for that purpose. [...] this prophetic role could have come to her only directly from God." (*Jesus Sees Women Session 5, page 3*)

Was the prophetess Courageous, or was she Offensive? (*class project*)

1. How do you imagine the disciples felt after hearing Jesus' response to the women's actions?
2. What are some other examples of individuals throughout history whose courageous acts were found to be offensive?
3. Why is it that courage so often offends?
4. In what ways did Jesus see and acknowledge her (vv. 6-9)?

In Conclusion:

1. What surprised you in today's lesson?
2. What do you "see" of God's character from this lesson?