

## prayer requests

Share prayer requests with the small group. Ask someone to take notes and share the requests with group members after the meeting.

## study notes



Eastview Christian Church  
1500 North Airport Road  
Normal, IL 61761

# Sermon Study

April 23, 2017

Mary & Gratitude

John 12:1-8

## vision

Eastview  
Christian  
Church is a  
fearless church  
of Christ  
followers whose  
ridiculous love  
and dangerous  
witness are  
irresistible.



*Eastview Christian Church small groups provide the optimal environment for the life change Jesus Christ intends for every person. Our groups typically have 8-14 people who **GATHER** together (Hebrews 10:24-25), **GROW** to be more Christ-like (Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 1:14-16), **GIVE** of themselves in various ways (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:11-16), and **GO** on to impact the world around them (Matthew 28:19).*

**Gather** (your group getting to know each other)

What's the most expensive, valuable item you've ever been around? Describe the circumstances, and also how you acted around it?

**Go**  
(your group on mission)

Consider whether you're holding onto your money and possessions too tightly. And then consider what sort of message that may be sending to the non-believers you encounter. When they look at you and your possessions, do they see a Judas or a Mary?

**Grow** (your group growing as Christ-followers)

**Key Scripture**

"The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume."  
(John 12:3, ESV)

**Key Word Study**

The Greek word *polutimos* used to describe the perfume in v.3 means "extremely valuable, very costly, greatly expensive."

**Discussion**

1. Have someone begin the discussion time by leading the group in prayer, then read John 12:1-8.

2. What does worship mean to you?

3. This story begins just days or weeks after Jesus had dramatically raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11). Now here they are at dinner, with Martha serving as usual, and with Lazarus sitting there as usual. It might have looked like any other dinner, but something had obviously changed. Lazarus had been dead. For days. And yet there he was, in the flesh, eating and drinking. At some point, the reality of that moment must have hit Mary in a fresh way, prompting the radical act of praise we'll discuss tonight. Have you ever been overcome by a moment of pure joy, happiness, or emotion that it caused you to act 'out of character'? If so, describe it.

4. Perhaps Mary had a moment of pause. Maybe she thought to herself, "For some reason, I really feel like praising Jesus right now by dumping my expensive perfume all over his feet, but I can't do that, right? That would cause a scene. And it's really expensive perfume. Maybe I can think of some other way to praise him." Can you relate to that? Do you 'second guess' your praise and worship of Jesus? Are there small (or large) acts of worship you resist doing because they might be 'weird' or 'embarrassing' or outside your comfort zone?

5. If Mary did have those doubts, they didn't win the day. So why do you think she went through with such an extravagant act of praise? What could have caused her to overcome any hesitation and doubt she might have felt?

6. What can we learn from Mary about our own attitude toward praise and gratitude?

7. Could you describe the actions of Martha and Lazarus in this story as 'worship' as well? In what way?

8. The contrast between Mary's behavior and Judas' behavior is remarkable. How can one man's life, teaching, and testimony produce both a Mary and a Judas side by side? (Read Matthew 10:34-36)

9. Judas knew exactly how much the perfume cost; Mary probably did too, but she acted anyway. What did the perfume represent to Judas? What did it represent to Mary?

10. The interesting thing about the characters in this story is that they all still exist today. There are those who believe and serve quietly (Martha), those whose hearts are overcome with praise and thankfulness (Mary), those who have experienced miracles themselves, whose lives are the evidence of Jesus, and who now serve as witnesses (Lazarus), and those who are more concerned about themselves, their possessions, and criticizing the actions of others than about loving Jesus (Judas). Do you resemble any of these characters? In what way?

**Give**  
(your group serving each other)

This week, talk about ways your group can demonstrate more grateful hearts toward each other and the Lord. Pray that your group will become people characterized by an instinct of thanksgiving rather than hesitation.