

## LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

## 18 MARCH

VISION &amp; GIVING: BEAUTIFUL BREAKING

This study guide should be used the week following the sermon it supplements.

**MAIN TEXTS:** *John 12:1-9*

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. 2 Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honour. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. 3 Then Mary took about half a litre of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, 5 'Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages.' 6 He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

7 'Leave her alone,' Jesus replied. 'It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. 8 You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me.'

9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him.

**COMING UP**

Palm Sunday | 25 March  
Good Friday | 30 March  
Easter Sunday | 1 April  
Getaway | 6-8 April  
Prayer Meeting | 11 April  
Church Family Meeting | 15 April

**GETTING STARTED**

*Discuss:* why shouldn't we be ashamed of talking about money and encouraging generous giving?

**DIGGING DEEPER**

1. In Mark 14 and Matthew 26 Jesus describes Mary's generous act as "beautiful". Why? What was she sacrificing? *Hint:* a year's salary, possibly her life savings, even dowry.

2. In what ways was her sacrifice prophetic? *Hint:* it prepared Jesus for his burial; it spoke of his sacrifice and beautifully broken body on the cross.

3. Why do you think Mary was so grateful to Jesus and wanted to bless him so extravagantly? How much more thankful should we be in light of Jesus' Resurrection?

4. 1 Timothy 6:10 says the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. How was the love of money affecting Judas? How can the love of money trap us?

5. What can we 'smash' (release, sell, give) to serve Jesus with (and break the power of money, reputation, stuff)? How can we be radically generous like Mary? *Hint:* by re-evaluating the value of everything in light of Jesus and eternity.

6. What impact did Mary's giving have in light of verse 3 and Mark 14:9? How has God multiplied your/other's generosity? Share a story. How should this encourage us to give? *Hint:* with joy and expectation of multiplied impact, God can do "immeasurably more..." (Ephesians 3:20).

**NEXT STEPS & PRAYER**

7. Ask people to give an update on how they're getting on putting BLESS and 40Acts into practice. We want to keep coming back to this.

8. Pray into the above – BLESS, 40Acts, becoming an even more generous church – and for our building project, for favour with the authorities and the release of £1-1.5 million for Phase 1.