

# 'On your Marks..'

A whistle-stop tour of Mark's account of the life and ministry of Jesus

*"After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 'The time has come,' He said. 'The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!'" [Mark 1.14f]*

Mark was a man on a mission, and he was writing for people in a hurry. His is the shortest of the four gospel accounts, and a sense of great urgency runs through it all. He puts the spotlight on Jesus, and he wants his readers to see from the start both *that*, and *why*, Jesus is good news: and *how* He becomes good news for each of us.

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## 6.

*".. she has done a beautiful thing to Me .."*

### Mark 14.1-11

As we've seen so often in Mark, there are in this passage two related narratives running alongside one another: two narratives here which stand in contrast to one another and illustrate the simple challenge Jesus presents to us all: how will we respond?

We're either for Him or against Him: we either loathe Him or love Him: we'll seek either to arrest Him or to anoint Him, to crucify Him or magnify Him. Will we get rid of Him .. or get right with Him?

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**1. Read Mark 14.1-11.** The account of the anointing of Jesus is set against the dark backdrop of His impending death, and draws into sharp contrast the full spectrum of responses to Jesus.

Identify the different ways people in this passage respond to Jesus: with whom do you identify most closely?

What is the most extravagant thing you have done for Jesus?

**2. Read Mark 14.1-3.** Mark sets the scene. (a) Jesus is anointed at the time when the Exodus was remembered: and (b) it took place in the home of a man who had been a leper.

What significance do you think Mark sees in this two-fold setting?

Ultimately we're all either for, or against Jesus: what brought you to respond as you've done to Jesus?

**3. Read Mark 14.4-9.** The *indignation* (vv.4f) of at least some who are present is matched by the *affirmation* (vv.6-9) of Jesus.

What is it about the woman's actions which prompts such indignation on the part of some present?

Are you uncomfortable in the face of great and extravagant demonstrations of love for Jesus?

According to Jesus how does the 'beautiful thing' she did point to (1) the significance of His Person, (2) the nature of His work, and (3) the scope of His mission?

**4. Read Mark 14.10-11.** The unashamed generosity of the woman is seen to stand in sharp contrast to the greedy scheming of Judas.

What struggles do you have when it comes to serving God rather than money, or material things (Matt.6.24)?

How can you cultivate a deepening love for Jesus in your heart?