



Our hope is that you were challenged by Sunday's message and would desire to take the study a little deeper. Whether for personal study, family study, or for a Home Group gathering, use this study to go deeper.

### Open

March 11, 2018

**Preparation** is a lost spiritual practice, and seen by many as a **waste!** I can't fully explain why. Maybe it has to do with our culture's tendency to rush hastily into the next thing. We want whatever comes next to come immediately. No delays. Patience is exchanged for instant gratification, and we forget or fail to appreciate the beauty of anticipation. Preparation is a casualty of all of this. Anticipation breeds preparation, therefore, without anticipation, I don't need to prepare for anything. At one point in my ministry, I decided to dedicate sincere effort toward the art of preparation (which included a greater commitment to prayer). I realized if I wanted to see God bless my ministry, I needed to make my own heart ready, put things in order, and train my spirit to patiently wait. Is waiting the same as wasting? At times we may think so. However, it is in the waiting and in the preparation that we see God's hand more clearly and find that no amount of time, energy, or expense is too much.

### Main Point

Jesus didn't seem to struggle with patience. For obvious reasons, He might have hoped that things would happen quickly. But He trusted God's timeline, and in this first scene of Holy Week (Mark 14:1-11) Jesus allowed "preparations" to be made and a "wasteful" act of faith to be displayed.

### Read

Mark 14:1-11 (see also Matthew 26:1-16; John 12:1-11)

### Discuss

- Bethany is no more than 2 miles from Jerusalem. (Not far!) As He prepared for the events of Holy Week in Jerusalem that were about to happen, why do you think Jesus spent time in Bethany? How do you think it made Him feel?
- What does it mean that Jesus ate dinner at Simon the leper's house?
- John's account of this story says the woman was Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. Why would it be significant that it was Mary doing this?
- Mary may not have known what she was doing, but Jesus said she was preparing His body for burial. His death was still six days away and confusing for all His followers. What does this say about the importance of preparation?
- The disciples (Judas especially) saw this as a waste ("indignant")! Jesus did not. Why such a difference of opinions?
- What does this first scene of Holy Week say about your personal, Easter preparation?