

## **At Home with Jesus**

### **John 12:1-3**

The three of them comprised an unusual family, a family of siblings. There was Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary. One week before the crucifixion, this little family played host to Jesus Christ. We can read the story at the level of history. And, the story reminds us of the wonder of Jesus and our great love for him.

Just before the Passover, Jesus arrived in this little home. In beautiful understatement, the Bible says, "...where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead." Lazarus sat with Jesus, reclining with him in Middle Eastern fashion. Others were listening to their conversation. Can you imagine what they must have discussed? Here was one who had just come back from the dead conversing with the One who was about to face death.

We also learn that Martha "served." Her love is expressed in practicality. If you are hungry, Martha knows what to do for you. With a house full of people, Martha was in and out of the kitchen making sure that needs were met, people are comfortable, and playing the part of the perfect hostess. She is our prime example of service.

Then there was Mary. What can one say of Mary? She is the one in the room who sees beyond the confines of their little home. Her heart cannot be contained. Love for Jesus spills out in an extravagant gesture as she pours a full pint of expensive perfume on his feet and wipes it with her hair. Her gesture of love must have followed her for days. Wherever she went, the perfume was carried on the locks of her hair. The home must've carried the scent for weeks, a reminder of extravagant love.

We can also read this story as a **picture of Christian community**. There are some who have the gift of inviting us into conversation with Jesus. They know how to open their own experience, experiences of life and death, joy and sorrow, triumphant failure, hope and despair. In their openness with us and in the presence of the Spirit of Christ, we are drawn into a conversation of prayer. We must praise God and thank God for people who bring us the gift of spiritual communication.

There are also those among us who know how to meet the practical needs of others. If you need a blanket they have just what you're looking for. They can put on a meal, clear the dishes, fix a broken motor, help you move into a new apartment, look after the children in an emergency, and meet the needs of friends and Christian family. We need to rejoice, to be grateful, and to express our appreciation to people who know how to serve.

There are also those in the Christian community who bring the wonder and worship of Jesus into our midst, just like Mary. They are extravagant and wonderful. We cannot explain them. But there gracious outpouring of love for Christ leaves a sweet scent in our souls. To those who bring us into worship, we say thank you.

There is one more level at which we can read this story. It is also a **picture of the inner life** of every Christian. Do you know what it is to find your secret place, to go into your own closet, the

inner dwelling of your soul and speak with Jesus? Do you know what it is to have an inner knowledge and follow a spiritual intuition to call a friend, reach out to someone in need, and meet a practical need in the love and at the urging of the spirit of Christ? And, do you know what it is, from time to time, to pour out extravagant love in worship and wonder? I ask God to give me a home in my heart that replicates the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.