

Last Week's Sermon Summary

『The Wasted Perfume』

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

James 1:16–24, Matthew 26:6–16

❶ **[Mary Who Anointed with Fragrant Oil]** When Jesus was in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume and poured it on his head. According to the Gospel of John, this Simon the leper was Lazarus, and the woman who poured the perfume was his sister Mary. Seeing this, the disciples became indignant and said, “Why this waste? This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor” (verses 8-9), and they severely rebuked her. This was a very rude thing to say. It was Mary's right to use her perfume as she wished, yet the disciples were dictating how others should use their possessions. It was also disrespectful to Jesus. They were essentially saying it was wasteful to use such expensive perfume on him. Here we see the hypocrisy of the disciples. They always lived by “calculation.” They judged people and God by whether they were useful to them, using both people and Jesus to fulfill their own ambitions. In response, Jesus said, “Why are you troubling this woman? She has done a good thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. She poured this perfume on my body to prepare me for burial.” (vv. 10-12) Why did Mary act this way? One reason was gratitude for Jesus saving her brother Lazarus. Another reason, I believe, was that she knew Jesus would soon die. As Jesus said, this became “preparation for Jesus' burial.” There was no time to anoint Him when they laid Him in the

tomb. At the same time, pouring oil on the head is an act of “Messianic inauguration.” Mary's anointing was a confession of accepting Jesus as King. No one else anointed Him.

❷ **[Judas' Sin = Greed (Idolatry)]** After this incident, Judas betrayed Jesus and received thirty pieces of silver (approximately 900,000 yen) from the chief priests. This was the price of a slave. Why did Judas betray him? The Church Fathers unanimously say it was because of greed. An ancient prayer states it this way: Greed is the same as idolatry. It is an insatiable heart that wastes all blessings. Judas stretched out the hand that had received Communion toward the silver coins and ran to the chief priests on the feet that had been washed. Though he was near Jesus, hearing His teachings and receiving abundant grace, he was not satisfied. For he clung to the idol of rebuilding Israel and pursued it.

❸ **[God's Lavish Love]** After this, Jesus said, “Wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her” (verse 13), and praised Mary. For what Mary did was a prototype of the gospel that Christ did for us. That is, Mary broke the alabaster jar and poured out the perfume within it.” (verse 13), praising Mary. What Mary did was a prototype of what Christ did for us in the Gospel. Just as Mary broke the alabaster jar and poured out all the perfume inside, Jesus broke His own body on the cross, pouring out every drop of His love, life, and forgiveness for all people. The Gospel of John states, “the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.” (John 12:3) The world is overflowing with Christ's love, life, and forgiveness. Judas said, “Why this waste?” But it was Christ who truly wasted love.↗

Weekly Report

The United Church of Christ in Japan
Miyakojima Church

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2-6-17Miyuki-cho, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0012

TEL06-6922-1120 FAX06-6922-1120

E-mail address:

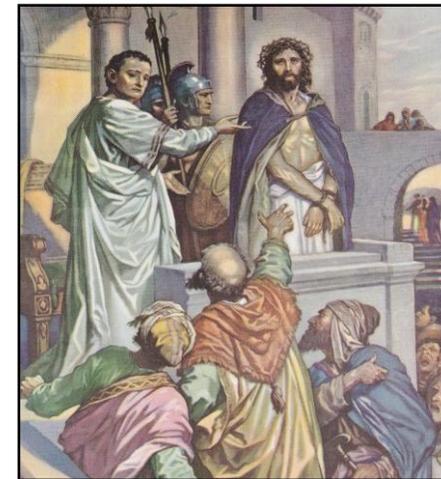
HomepageAddress: <https://miyakojima-church1.com>

Postal transfer 00920-4-1442 Japan Miyakojima

Mission Senior

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

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《Behold, this man!》

Miyakojima Church's 2025 Mission Policy

Motto : "Let's prepare for the construction of the church "

Scripture : " The toil of those who build houses is in vain, unless the Lord Himself builds them " (Psalm 127:1)

Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 27 people to attend services.
- 2 We invite one person to worship in one year.
- 3 We value the fellowship of believers.
- 4 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.