

The Overlooked Gospel

Part 3: The Nonconformist Gospel

Mark 14:1-11

(Preacher: Dan Slagle)

1. Talk about the difference between a conformist and a non-conformist, and share which term best describes you.
2. From the two stories highlighted in the sermon (Mark 14:1-11 and Luke 10:38-42), talk about what stood out to you most about Mary's life and personality, and how she exemplified the second stanza in Dr. Greear's prayer, *Your presence and approval are all I need for everlasting joy.*
3. One of the ways Mary was a Christian nonconformist was that she proactively thought about Jesus and what would make Him happy.
 - a. When you think about Jesus, do you feel close to Him or do you tend to dehumanize Him and make Him a rather remote deity, devoid of feelings?
 - b. When was the last time you did something just because you thought it would make Jesus happy?
 - c. When in your day do you intentionally spend time "at the feet of Jesus"?
4. In addition to thinking about how to please Jesus, Mary also proactively considered how to serve Him strategically.
 - a. What was her strategic purpose in anointing His body with the perfume (see verse 8)?
 - b. Pastor Dan pointed out that this was the only act of love that Jesus received in the entire Passion narrative. How do you seek to express your love in a meaningful, special way?
5. Another expression of Mary's nonconformist approach is that she was brave for Jesus.
 - a. How was Mary showing bravery in that setting?
 - b. How did Jesus show nonconformity when he affirmed Mary for her actions?
 - c. Do you tend to stay in a "safe zone" when it comes to your faith, or do you intentionally take risk? Explain.
6. Another way Mary lived out her nonconformist credo was through her amazing spirit of generosity.
 - a. Talk about the power and implications behind Jesus statement, "She did what she could."
 - b. What are you doing with what you have?
7. Pastor Dan pointed out, "Our conformity has little, if anything, to do with what the world says, but everything to do with our fear; we're afraid to be generous with our money, because we might run out; we're afraid to be generous with our compassion, because it might not be appreciated; we're stingy with our forgiveness, because we might get hurt again; and perhaps most damaging to the cause of Christ, we withhold our love, because it might not come back!" With which of these statements do you personally identify?
8. Close your small group time discussing and praying over the 2nd stanza of the prayer:

Jesus, Your presence and approval are all I need for everlasting joy.