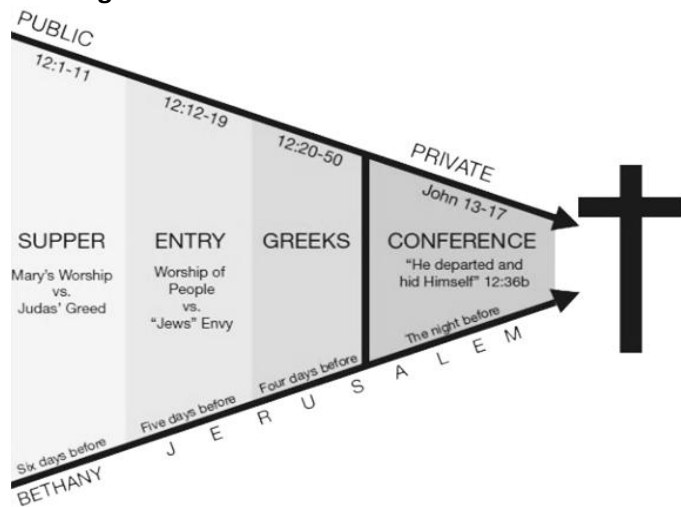




'should have been' – John Chapter 12

1/ Background / Overview



John wrote this gospel after Matthew, Mark, and Luke had already been distributed. John focuses on details including meanings behind selected miracles and parables of Jesus. On aspect is the quantity of recording Jesus speaking to His disciples.

Chapter 12 might be summarised as:

- Verses 1-8: Mary Anoints Jesus
- Verses 9-19: Triumphal Entry
- Verses 20-36: Jesus Foretells His Death, and Glory
- Verses 37-50: Unbelief

Chapter 12 completes Jesus' public ministry. Chapters 13—17 contain private instructions given by Christ in the hours before He is arrested. From Chapter 18 follows His arrest, sentencing, death, and resurrection. Since Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead in front of a crowd of witnesses, religious leaders committed to have Jesus killed – even adding Lazarus to that list (v10,11)

Ch12 starts with Jesus enjoying a kind of celebratory dinner where He is anointed with oil, and then fulfills prophecy by riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, celebrated with shouts of "Hosanna".

The shouts lead a group of curious non-Jews wanting to meet Jesus, which is followed by Jesus teaching to believe in Him and His message. Some of the people referred in Chapter 12 include:

1. Jesus - the Messiah and the Son of God. He is anointed by Mary, enters Jerusalem triumphantly, and speaks about His impending death.
2. Lazarus, Martha and Mary – Siblings, Lazarus' presence at the dinner in Bethany draws many Jews to believe in Jesus. Mary anoints Jesus' feet, demonstrating her devotion and foreshadowing His burial. Martha serves at the dinner in Bethany, showing love and hospitality.
3. Judas Iscariot - Jesus' disciple criticizes Mary for using expensive perfume in her devotion.
4. Chief Priests - Religious leaders who plot to kill Jesus and Lazarus because many are believing in Jesus.
5. Crowd - Gathering for Passover festival, some of whom witness Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and shout "Hosanna!"
6. Greeks - Non-Jewish individuals who seek to see Jesus, indicating the broader reach of His ministry.
7. Isaiah - Jesus explains the unbelief of the people through Isaiah's prophecy about the Messiah's rejection.

2/ 'Hosanna?' (John 12:12-29)

John 12:12-15 recounts Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy from Zechariah 9:9 / Psalm 118:26. This event underscores Jesus' identity as the promised Messiah and King.

The first time He came gently to save as a sacrifice. Jesus entered on a donkey, the sign of humility and gentleness. When Jesus returns, it will be on a white horse, for judgment and to reign.

Hosanna means save, all humanity are invited to believe and obey – we are living in an era of Grace. However the second return, it will be too late to believe. v47-48 says *'I will not judge those who hear me but don't obey me, for I have come to save the world and not to judge it. But all who reject me and my message will be judged on the day of judgment by the truth I have spoken.'*

[Action – How can we be more donkey-ish, ie humble! John 12 speaks much of sacrifice and devotion; that being clothed in Christ might be what people see and hear first, before they see ourselves!]

3/ 'Who has believed?' (John 12:38-40)

John 12 is inspiring as it is jarring. Despite the many signs Jesus performed, many did not believe in Him, fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy. Isaiah 53 and 6 prophetically infer that unbelief was foreseen however we need to fully appreciate that God's sovereignty is never pitted against human responsibility.

The reason they could not believe is not because their freedom of choice had been removed, rather they had purposely rejected God, and in His sovereignty, God relents and gives them to their choice. The heart of the problem is always a problem of the heart! Before God, we get what we choose, and those who push Jesus away will not have to endure eternity with Him.

To believe in Jesus is not passive, it is an active choice of surrender and enter into a mystical union with the divine – such is the nuance of the body of Christ, and being clothed in Christ. The passage discusses spiritual blindness, hardening of hearts and unbelief. For me, the passage shows the great mercy of the Lord, that the love of God is for unrelenting mercy, and that such mercy is only unreceived by our choice to not surrender and believe. Therefore to protect mercy, hardness of heart is obligatory.

(Rom1:28)(Ez12:2)(2Pet2:14)(Is44:18-20)(Ps51:17)(1Sam24:14)

[Action – Pray for softening of hearts of those around us. May we be more aware of people who need the mercy of Jesus today. Pray daily that each of us may be an agent of His mercy, and witness salvation!]

4/ 'Whose Praise?' (John 12:42-43)

Whose praise matters for to us? Peer pressure impacts all ages – its a tool of the enemy: "Bad company corrupts..." (1Cor15:33).

1. 38% of people admit to pressuring their friends into doing something they are not comfortable with
2. 34% of people are more likely to donate when asked to in front of their peers
3. 50% of people have lied to their friends about liking something to avoid negative responses/pressure
4. 40% of teens say they only post things that make them look good in the eyes of others on social media

Are you around people of who serve Jesus with all their heart, passionate worshippers in spirit and truth, and spirit filled proactive kingdom seekers > good company transforms us. The opposite of bad company is so influential...let us be good company for one another, that we might believe, and stand.

(1 Thes 5:11)(Eph 4:29)(Heb 3:13)(Heb 10:24-25)

Gathering together is not a passive action; gathering then implies a proactivity, a bringing of a word of encouragement or gift, that we might enjoy the praise of God, more than the praise of people!

[Action – Wait upon the Lord for an encouragement to bring to someone in prayer or in deed, each and every time we gather as believers.]

