

GOOD ENOUGH: We Are Fragile

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John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them* with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one who was about to betray him), said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii* and the money given to the poor?' (He said this not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief; he kept the common purse and used to steal what was put into it.) Jesus said, 'Leave her alone. She bought it* so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have

the poor with you, but you do not always have me.'

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. What do you make of Jesus' response, "you will always have the poor with you"?

Jesus is actually quoting scripture. Read Deuteronomy 15:11 and see how that context might give what Jesus is saying a fresh meaning. Does this change anything for you?

3. Whether Mary realized it or not, she was symbolizing Jesus' forthcoming death. And Jesus was not afraid to talk about death. Still, talking about death with the living can be hard and uncomfortable. Reflect on any experiences – meaningful and/or awkward – in which you've talked with someone living about their death?
4. How have you prepared for the reality of death in your life or the lives of others?
5. With whom do you still need to have a conversation about their death or yours?

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