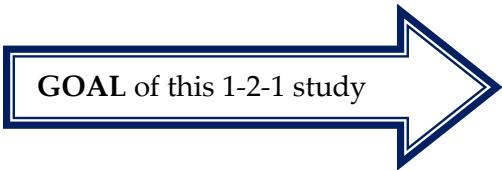


Summary Sheet for John 11v53-12v26

...to accompany Notes 22



GOAL of this 1-2-1 study

Focus on and treasure the death of Jesus – it is what brings life.

Context – how does this chapter fit in?

Ch 12 follows closely on the events of ch 11, with the crowds who witnessed Lazarus' being raised from the dead still telling others about it (12vs9, 17), while the religious leaders are still trying to suppress the story (12vs10-11).

Ch 11 & 12 bookend the section with ch 18-10: resurrection/death – death/resurrection. Ch 11 proved that Jesus really is 'the resurrection and the life'; able to give the concrete, real eternal life that he has been promising to give. But Caiaphas' prophecy in 11v50 also made a link between this life and Jesus' death on behalf of many others.

Ch 12 makes it even clearer that the rich 'life' that Jesus brings can only come through his death – this is the 'hour' that Jesus has been waiting for, the moment of his glory.

Impact on us

How much do we value the death of Jesus and all that it achieves? Mary gladly poured out her costly resources to honour her King, while Judas thought she was making too much fuss...

Will we welcome Jesus' work – death first in order to bring life – and follow him? Or will we continue to prefer a life that suits us, and resist his rule..?

How John writes to make his point

John refers often to the raising of Lazarus (12vs 1, 9, 17), and the effect this had on the people who witnessed it, as proof that Jesus really is the Lord of Life. Equally clear is that Jesus has his forthcoming death in mind, and is deliberately heading towards it (12v7, 23-24), as are the religious leaders who want to kill him (11v53,12v10).

These two themes – life and death – have been constants in John's gospel so far, but it's now made clear how they link. The life Jesus brings can only come through his death. John focuses our attention throughout on Jesus' death as essential to his purpose, kingship, life giving work for all nations and as the pattern for his followers. John also emphasises the two contrasting responses to Jesus' death – the warm, extravagant display of love from Mary, the crowd's welcome in Jerusalem, the Greeks coming to seek Jesus – versus Judas' greedy resentment and the chief priests' murderous hatred. In writing this way, John is forcing us to consider how central and treasured is Jesus' death in our lives.

Structure

- 11:53-12:11 Preparation for Jesus' death
11:53-57 *Passover approaches, Jewish religious leaders give orders to arrest Jesus in order to kill him*
12:1-8 *Jesus is lavishly anointed by Mary – Jesus associates this action with his death*
12: 9-11 *Death spreads – religious leaders want to kill Lazarus as well because so many are believing in Jesus as a result of his being raised from the dead*
- 12: 12-19 Jesus is welcomed into Jerusalem as King, en route to his death – the Pharisees are forced to acknowledge that the 'world' has gone after Jesus
- 12: 20-26 Jesus' hour has finally come –the 'world' (non-Jews) has come to seek Jesus, now he must go to die so that 'much fruit' will follow. Those who want to serve Jesus must follow where he goes.

John's references to the Old Testament and why they matter

- 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord' (12v13)

This line comes from Psalm 118, one of the psalms that look back to the rescue of the Exodus. These psalms were always sung to celebrate the Passover, and Psalm 118 was used to welcome pilgrims arriving in Jerusalem for the Passover feast. The crowds in Jerusalem were using the psalm to welcome the one they perceived to be the Messiah - Jesus - come to rescue his people.

- 'Your king is coming, seated on a donkey' (12v15)

This verse is taken from Zechariah 9:9 and brings to mind Zechariah 9:9-13, which prophesies the arrival of God's rescuing king, who will ride a donkey, not a warhorse - he is a humble servant as well as a warrior King.

In Zechariah, when this king comes, he will bring the end of war, proclaim peace to the nations, and extend his reign to the ends of the earth through the blood of God's covenant. Jesus is this king that Jerusalem has been waiting for but he achieves his mission through his death.

Some questions to help guide someone else through ch 11v53-12v26 -

Opener: What are the five things you treasure most in life?

Considering the text1: At the end of chapter 11 we saw Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin plotting Jesus' death. In this passage (11v53-12v26) how does John draw our attention to the fact that Jesus himself is deliberately moving towards his death? (See 11v53; 12vs1, 7, 23-24)

Considering the text2: In 12 vs 1-11, how do Mary, Judas and the chief priests each respond to the idea of Jesus' death?

Considering the text3: The crowds welcome Jesus into Jerusalem in vs 12-19, calling him 'the King of Israel' - looking at Zechariah 9vs9-11, what kind of king are they expecting?

Considering the text4: From vs 20-26, how will Jesus achieve his glory as the long-awaited King? What are the implications for those who want to follow this King?

One to keep chewing on: How does the attitude of the world around us tempt us not to respond to Jesus' death the way that Mary did? What will it involve for us to treasure Jesus' death and to live a life shaped by Jesus' death.