

The logo for 'CLOSE ENCOUNTERS' features the text in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a dark background with vertical streaks of light in shades of red, orange, and blue, creating a sense of depth and movement.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS

Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ²So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and

Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. ³Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. ⁴But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, ⁵“Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. ⁷Jesus said, “Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.”

Series Lessons

John includes the STORIES of five people who ENCOUNTERED Jesus and their response.

- The RELIGIOUS Jn. 3
- The BROKEN Jn. 4
- The GUILTY Jn. 8
- The FORGIVEN Jn. 12

John includes these encounters to show that SALVATION is for EVERYONE.

The Setting & The Sisters

This begins the LAST week of Jesus' EARTHLY ministry.

Their house which was in the town of BETHANY (*house of the poor*), was where JESUS stayed when he was in Jerusalem.

Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany,

The name MARY (Miriam) was a popular Jewish name so there are SIX Mary's recorded in the New Testament, while John only mentions THREE.

She is always seen with her sister MARTHA and her brother Lazarus and is often in CONTRAST to her sister.

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, ⁴² but one thing is necessary Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

The Supper

The party took place at the beginning of the LAST week of Jesus' life. Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. ² So they gave a dinner for him there.

The party took place in the house of SIMON THE LEPER. And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. Matthew 26:6

The party was to HONOR and thank Jesus, for raising Lazarus from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

There was a small GUEST LIST for the dinner. ⁹ When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Guests would RECLINE around a low standing table.

² So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

The Sacrifice

Mary anoints Jesus as a sign of WORSHIP/LOVE.

³ Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair.

The BEAUTY of her worship filled the HOUSE.

The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. v3

I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what s he has done will also be told in memory of her. Matthew 26:13

Judas considered Mary's WORSHIP as reckless and WASTEFUL.

But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor."

Matthew 26:8

⁴ But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, ⁵ "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.

Many WORSHIP out of a sense of CONVENIENCE.

⁷ Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. ⁸ For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

TRUE worship comes out of a HEART that has been FORGIVEN.

*"Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." **Luke 7:47 (ESV)***

Worship that doesn't COST us anything is CHEAP worship.

24 But the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will buy it from you for a price. I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. 2 Samuel 6:24

Application:

What must I do to become a better Worshiper?

What might it cost me?

14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. **15** So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

David and Michal

16 As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart. **17** And they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. **18** And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts **19** and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed, each to his house.

20 And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" **21** And David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD—and I will celebrate before the LORD. **22** I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes. But by the female servants of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." **23** And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.