



Sermon Notes

Term – Spring 2018

Series – Building to Easter

Gathering & Date – the 5, 4th March 2018

Title – Bethany ... a place of home

Preacher – Mark Parsons

Reading – John 12:1-11

Main message of this talk in one sentence – Why did Jesus choose Bethany as his “home” for his last week on Earth? What was it about Mary and Martha’s home that make it such a place of welcome, care and hospitality? What does this say about our homes ... whether we are a home owner or just passing through?

Main points

Where is your home?

- Could be any number of places from where you live now, to where you grew up, to where you long to be

What do we mean by home?

- Is it an idealised “Grand Design” view or more realistic? Is it a reality or a distant dream? Do we have a home?

Jesus had no home

- “Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” (Matt 8:20)
- But he did visit Bethany several times ... it was his adopted home.

Why Bethany? Looking at all his visits in the NT we see that it was a...

- Place of welcome ... Mary and Martha opened their home to him (Luke 10:38-41)
- Place of crisis ... where Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-44)
- Place of ascension ... where Jesus said goodbye (Luke 24:50-53)
- Place Jesus chose as his lodgings for his final week on Earth (Mat 21:17, Mark 11:1, Luke 19:29, John 12:1 start the last week of Jesus life)

Why did Jesus chose Bethany for that last week?

- It was a place of memories ... where Jesus raised Lazarus from the death (John 12:1)
- It was a place of friends ... he loved them and they loved him (John 11:5, 12:2)
- It was a place of care ... Mary recognised what Jesus was going through and anointed him for his death (John 12:3, 7-8)
- But it was also a place of hurt ... where one of his disciples, Judas, began his betrayal (John 12:4-6)

Home for the Christian

- Our true spiritual home may be in heaven (Phil 3:20, 1 Pet 2:11), but we are still called to make our earthly homes places of welcome, hospitality and care
- This is true if you are a homeowner settled in Bristol
- Or just passing through (see Jer 29:4-7)
- And also true for our spiritual home at Christ Church

For further thought and prayer –

1. Which aspects of the home in Bethany ring true for you?
2. What is stopping you making your home a place of welcome, hospitality and care?
3. How can you help make Christ Church a more welcoming spiritual ‘home’?
4. If some are to be Mary and sit at Jesus feet in adoration, others need to be Martha and do the washing up! Who do you identify with more? Do you need a change or role?
5. Where is “home” for you?