

Week of April 29-May 5

POTPOURRI

Scripture Reading: Read John chapter 12

One of my favorite game shows is “Jeopardy.” Although Alex Trebek has hosted the show since 1984 (an amazing 28 years!), I’m old enough to remember the original version starring Art Fleming. I still remember the excitement I felt as a child when the Old Testament or New Testament came up as categories because I knew those answers when some of the contestants didn’t.

One of the regular and more intriguing categories on the show was “Potpourri.” While many folks think of potpourri as a mixture of herbs, flowers and spices used for scent, the word also means a miscellaneous collection. It is this second meaning that finds its use in Jeopardy. The category was filled with miscellaneous topics for which the contestants had to find the questions. Today’s devotional is entitled, “Potpourri” for the same reason. Rather than emphasize one main point, I want to touch upon a number of thoughts based on this chapter.

1) You’ve Got to Be Kidding! – verses 9-10 The chief priests were so frustrated people were believing in Jesus because of Lazarus that they considered putting Lazarus to death. Think about how foolish this line of thought was. He died once. Jesus raised him. Now, they want to kill him. The apostle Paul was certainly correct when he talked about the futile thinking of sinners who suppress the truth because they don’t want to hear it. In other words, they know it to be true but try to shut it up. Remember that the next time you share the faith and are strongly resisted. The one who resists the most may be the closest to the truth.

2) 20/20 Hindsight – verse 16 The events of the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday were prophesied centuries before. It took the resurrection and the anointing of the Holy Spirit to finally see it in retrospect. It’s usually only after the fact that we see much of what the Lord has been doing in our lives. As they say, hindsight is 20/20. That’s why we’re called to trust him by faith even when we don’t get it at first.

3) An Audience of One – verses 42-43 Even though many of the Jewish leaders refused to believe in Jesus in spite of his miraculous signs (verse 37), there were some that did. However, they chose not to publicize it. They wanted to remain secret disciples for two reasons. One, they feared being expelled from the synagogues. Second, “they loved praise from men more than praise from God.” How tragic! They were more concerned about the applause of the crowds than the praise from the audience of One. May we fear God more than man and may we seek God’s eternal “well done” more than the temporary praise from this world.

Action Step: Review the three lessons above and determine which one speaks to you the most today.

Prayer Focus: That you would take to heart God’s lesson to you from this chapter.

Take-away: *Potpourri: more than a scent, more than a Jeopardy category. It’s a reminder to avoid futile thinking, to trust when I can’t see and to pursue praise from God rather than man.*