



LET'S BEGIN HERE

After the raising of Lazarus, many more people believed in Jesus. The Pharisees could no longer curb the rising tide of support for this Miracle Worker, so they turned to their rivals, the Sadducees, to help them plot Jesus' death.

Killing Jesus was for the good of the nation, the Sadducees smugly rationalized during the Sanhedrin council, saying,

If we allow him to go on like this, soon everyone will believe in him. Then the Roman army will come and destroy both our Temple and our nation. (John 11:48)

Of course, their interests were entirely self-protective. The Sadducees were comprised of wealthy priests, and the temple was their silk purse. They feared Rome would counter any groundswell of civil unrest from Jesus' followers with a tidal wave of destruction, wiping out their livelihood along with the temple.

In the end, Jesus *would* die for the good of the nation . . . and the world. But He would make His sacrifice in His own time, so He withdrew with His disciples to Ephraim, a remote city north of Jerusalem (John 11:53–54). In seclusion, “Jesus stopped his public ministry” (11:54) and prepared for His final week.



YOUR TURN IN THE SCRIPTURES

Imagine yourself among Jesus' disciples, and in prayer express your desire to draw close to Him. As John leads us through the final days of Jesus' life on earth, ask the Lord to reveal deeper truths about Himself, His plan for His followers, and His love for you.

Quotable

*When Mary
anointed Jesus'
feet, she didn't
care who saw her.
When we're lost
in wonder, love,
and praise, we're
oblivious to our
surroundings.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



Observation: Survey and Study

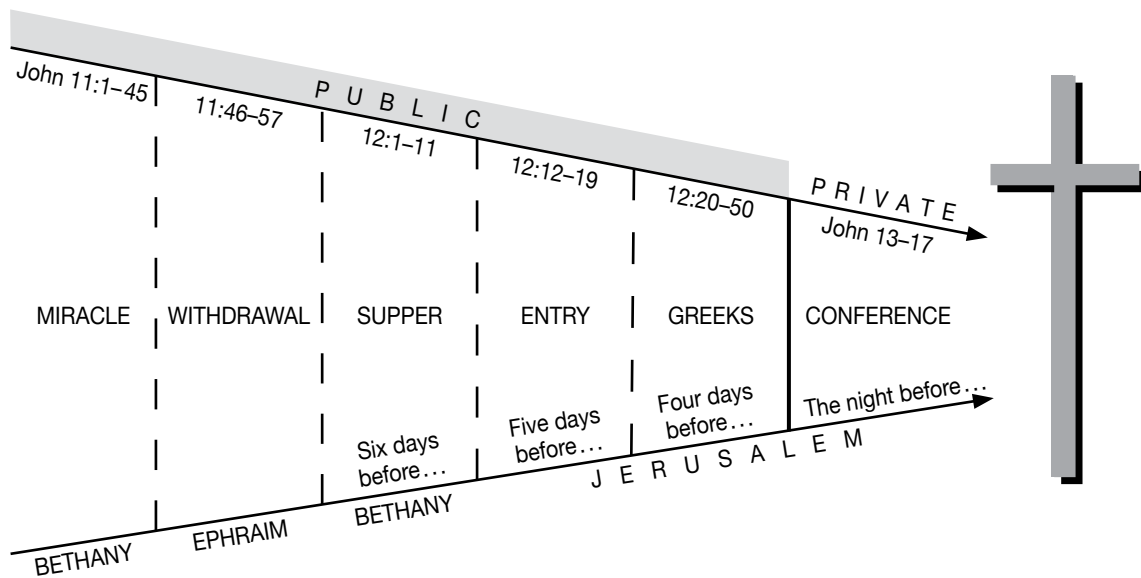
Observation is the *Searching the Scriptures* process of seeing what’s in the text—the flow of thought, contrasts and comparisons, emphases, repetition, and context. In this phase of study, we examine details, but we also step back to survey large sections of Scripture.

A Survey of the Final Week—John 11–17

Chuck Swindoll’s chart of Jesus’ final week according to John illustrates the progression of time, including events from Jesus restoring Lazarus’ life to the night of Jesus’ arrest.

Study this chart, then in the space below write down what you observe.

Final Week: From Public To Private
According to John’s Gospel



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During His three-year ministry, Jesus invited His people to receive Him as their promised Messiah. The Sanhedrin's plot to kill Jesus, however, marked *Israel's official rejection of Jesus*. The religious leaders had crossed the line. Jesus, who was now "the stone that the builders rejected" (Psalm 118:22), became the "cornerstone" of God's plan of redemption through Jesus' death and resurrection.

- He changed his public outreach to a private one (John 12:36).
- He shifted His emphasis away from signs and concentrated on quiet, intimate conversation with His disciples (John 13–17).
- He reduced His travels, returning to Jerusalem (12:12). He was not out evangelizing. He was preparing to leave and preparing the disciples for His departure.

A Study of the First Part of the Week—John 12

John 12 includes three time-stamps that mark the progression of events. Note how the apostle recorded passing time, and write a one-sentence summary of the events in each passage below.

John 12:1–11, note John 12:1.

John 12:12–19, note John 12:12.

John 12:20–50, note John 12:36.



Six Days Before—John 12:1–11

Counting back six days from Passover puts Jesus’ meal in Bethany on Saturday. The gospel of John contrasts Mary’s devotion with Judas’ disapproval and the people’s fascination over Lazarus with the priests’ treachery. Write down what you observe about each person’s or group’s actions that reflect characteristics of belief in or rejection of Jesus.

Characteristics of Belief	Characteristics of Rejection
Mary’s Devotion (John 12:1–3)	Judas’ Disapproval (John 12:4–8)
The People’s Fascination (John 12:9)	The Priests’ Treachery (John 12:10–11)

Mary performed her extravagant act of worship without reserve, unloosing her hair in public and interrupting the men at their meal. Mark’s gospel adds that she anointed Jesus’ head as well (Mark 14:3). With the anointing scent lingering in the air—along with the hint of Judas’ coming betrayal—Jesus was ready to enter Jerusalem and face His destiny.



Five Days Before—John 12:12–19

As you reread John 12:12–19, look for answers to the following questions.

What heightened the anticipation of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (John 11:56–57; 12:12, 17–18)?

What did Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on a young donkey communicate to the nation about the nature of His messianic rule (12:12–15)?



Correlation: The Peaceful Entry of the King

Although known as Jesus' triumphal entry, Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem could be considered His peaceful entry. He did not come as an emperor on a stallion intent on conquest through war but as a humble king intent on salvation through sacrificial love. This is the true prophetic image of the Messiah. Read Zechariah 9:9–13, and write down what you discover about the Messiah's reign.

The people got it right when they shouted, *Hosanna!* The word means, “save now,” which was exactly what Jesus came to do.



Four Days Before—John 12:20–50

According to Matthew's account, after His entrance into Jerusalem in fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus cleared the money changers from the temple and "returned to Bethany, where he stayed overnight" (Matthew 21:12–17).

The next day, some Greeks Philip and Andrew attended came to Jesus, and Jesus delivered His final public teaching on four themes. Write down what He said about each theme.

The cross is imminent (John 12:23–26, 32–33).

The pain will be great and so will be God's glory (12:27–29).

The need is urgent (12:35–36).



The response will be varied—some will reject Him, while others will accept Him (John 12:37–50).



Interpretation: Salvation and Worship

As we interpret this passage, let's look for meaning regarding two central ideas: salvation and worship.

What was required of Jesus to save the world from sin (John 12:23–24, 31–33)? And how does Jesus expect us to acquire salvation (12:36)?

Martha worshiped Jesus by serving (12:2); Lazarus, by sharing his restored life with others (12:2, 9); Mary, by blessing Jesus (12:3); and Philip and Andrew, by leading seekers to Him (12:20–22). What do these worshipers teach you?



Application: A Summary of the Truth

Draw from our study three points of application that hit home with you as you reflect on Mary’s worship, the Lord’s peaceful entrance into Jerusalem, and His teaching on salvation through faith.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

What deeper truth about Jesus did you discover in John 12 that you can carry with you this week?

Let’s close in prayer with the assurance of the Lord’s promise of eternal life and the anticipation of His return.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, what a faithful and trusting Father You are. Thank You for accepting me and for loving me just as I am. At the same time, thank You for calling me to a life of obedience and providing Jesus as my Savior and the Spirit as my guide. I give my all, like Mary, to worship You and honor Your Son who gave His all for me. Amen.



FOLLOWING CHRIST . . . THE MAN OF GOD

Seeking before Hiding

John 12

SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



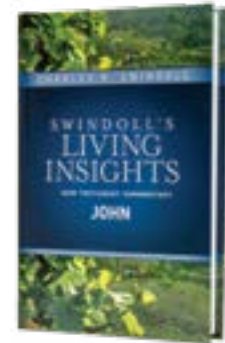
Tools for Digging Deeper



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For the 2018 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, executive vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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