

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

## Sunday Morning

Study 21

*Mary Anoints Jesus*

# Mary Anoints Jesus

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

**Objective** This lesson will use Mary's example to show that spending time with Jesus and giving Him what we have is the most important thing we can do.

## Key Verses

John 12:1-8—Main Teaching Passage

Matthew 26:6-14; Mark 14:3-9 (Parallel Passage)

Luke 10:38-42

## Memory Verse - Mark 12:30

"And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment."

## Hook

Review last week's memory verse, Romans 10:13.

Have the class make a list of things you do every day/often. It should include necessary things (sleep, eat, go to school) and fun things (play games, watch TV). Choose any two and ask which is more important. Then pick two more tasks and ask. Do this until you have determined what the most important thing you do is. Then ask if that "most important thing" is more important than spending time with Jesus. Today, we are going to meet someone who knew that spending time with Jesus is more important than anything.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

## BOOK

A few weeks ago, we met not only Lazarus, who rose from the dead, but his two sisters, Mary and Martha. Before that, the first time the Bible records Jesus encountering these two sisters is in Luke 10:38-42. In that passage, Martha scolded her sister for sitting at Jesus' feet while she was working to serve Jesus. However, Jesus rebuked Martha and commended Mary for making the better choice of spending time with Him.

In today's story in John 12:1-8, the scene is similar. Martha was serving as Jesus was having a meal with others. Then Mary came out with expensive oil and poured it on Jesus' feet. After that, she used her hair to dry His feet. When Judas saw this, he became indignant. Judas argued that Mary could have sold this expensive oil and used the money to help the poor. John gives us some extra insight by saying that Judas wasn't really concerned for the poor. He was only asking because he was in charge of the money bag and wanted to steal the money for himself. Jesus rebuked Judas and told him to leave her alone. After all, there would always be poor people to help, but this was their opportunity to be with Jesus. He declared that Mary had recognized what was happening and had anointed Jesus in preparation for His burial. Both Matthew and Mark add that Jesus announced that wherever the Gospel is preached, there this story of Mary's generosity would be told and remembered.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

## LOOK

The Gospels record three different stories involving Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha (note that there are several other Marys in the New Testament, such as Jesus' mother and Mary Magdalene, who are not the same as this Mary). We see her sitting at Jesus' feet in Luke 10, mourning her brother in John 11, and here in John 12 (also recorded in Mark 14 and Matthew 26).

In each of these stories, one characteristic of Mary stands out: she wanted to be with Jesus. Everything else was secondary. When she had a chance to be with Jesus and show that she loved Him, she took advantage. She poured out her expensive oil (worth an entire year's wages) on His feet without thinking twice. No one was more important to her than Jesus. Keep in mind, the things Mary chose Jesus over were not bad things. In fact, they were very good. Serving others and giving to the poor are all things that please the Lord. However, none of those things compare to time spent with Jesus. Mary took what she had, her time, her possessions, her love, and she gave them to Jesus because He alone is worthy of them.

# LOOK (Continued)

Those who looked at Mary's life might have thought that she had misguided priorities. Martha accused her of ignoring her responsibilities. Judas accused her of waste and financial foolishness. But both times, when others criticized her, Jesus commended her for making the better choice. She recognized the value of being with Jesus and knew that He was worthy of all that she had.

Like Mary, we all have been given certain resources. We might not have precious oil, but we have time, energy, and talents. Will we give those things to the Lord like Mary did? Every day, we have a choice of how to use our time. It can be spent on entertaining things (like playing outside or watching TV), good things (like spending quality time with friends and family or doing chores), or the best things, such as spending time with Jesus in His Word and prayer. That does NOT mean skipping your chores to read the Bible or not doing your homework because we want to spend time with Jesus. Instead, try replacing some of the less important things you enjoy doing with time spent with Jesus. Instead of watching a TV show, spend that time praying for others. After dinner, rather than going to play in your room, ask your family to read a Bible story together. Make Jesus the most important thing in your life!

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

# TOOK

As a class, memorize Mark 12:30.

In the lesson, we primarily looked at how to give our *time* to Jesus. Think of other things we can give to Jesus (energy, talents, etc.) and come up with ways to offer them to Him.

**Pray:** Thank the Lord for giving us the gifts of prayer and His Word. Ask Him to be the most important person in our lives.

**Parent Question:** How can I give Jesus my time, energy, and talents?

# FURTHER STUDY

## Commentary on John 12:1-8 by David Guzik

### A. A dinner at Bethany.

#### 1. ([John 12:1-2](#)) Lazarus eats and Martha serves.

**Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.**

a. **Six days before the Passover:** John gave a time marker, telling us that this was the last week before the death and burial of Jesus. Almost one-half of John's Gospel is given to this last week. Matthew used more than 33% of his Gospel to cover that week, Mark nearly 40% and Luke over 25% — to *seven days* of Jesus' entire life.

b. **There they made Him a supper:** Less than a week before His crucifixion, Jesus attended a dinner in **Bethany**, probably to celebrate the raising of Lazarus **from the dead**. With all Jesus had on His mind, knowing His fate as He came to Jerusalem for Passover, it is remarkable that He attended this dinner at all. Most would not feel like socializing.

i. "He would not pain His hosts by self-absorbed aloofness at the table. The reason for the feast is obviously the raising of Lazarus, as is suggested by his being twice mentioned in [verses 1 and 2](#)." (Maclaren)

ii. **There they made Him:** "The 'therefore' (which the A.V. omits) points to the gratitude for Lazarus' restoration, which that household now showed by entertaining Him at supper." (Trench)

c. **Martha served:** It seems that this dinner was at the home of Simon the Leper ([Matthew 26:6](#) and [Mark 14:3](#)). His friends Martha, Lazarus, and Mary were also in attendance. Because **Martha** seems to be the hostess, some think Simon the Leper was related to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus or even that he was Martha's husband. If common customs were followed, this dinner was for the men of the village and Martha and the other women **served**.

i. It's easy to see Martha in our imagination bringing the best dishes first to Jesus, pressing Him to eat more and more. She was so grateful and so happy to serve Jesus. Her service was appreciated and valued.

ii. "John does not state, as do Mark and Matthew, that the host at Bethany was Simon the leper. In the story of [Luke 7](#) the host, Simon the Pharisee, is almost certainly a different Simon from the one mentioned in Mark. Simon was a very common Jewish name." (Tasker)

iii. "The only discrepancy of any consequence being that the Synoptists seem to place the feast only two days before the Passover. But they introduce the feast parenthetically to present the immediate motive of Judas' action, and accordingly disregard strict chronology." (Dods)

#### 2. ([John 12:3](#)) Mary anoints the feet of Jesus.

**Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.**

a. **Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus:** In the midst of the supper, Mary gave a remarkable gift to Jesus. It wasn't unusual to wash the feet of a guest, but it was unusual to do it during the meal itself, to use **very costly oil of spikenard** to do it, and to **wipe the feet with her hair**, using the hair as a kind of towel.

•Mary's gift was remarkably *humble*. When a guest entered the home, usually the guest's feet were washed with water and the guest's head was anointed with a dab of oil or perfume. Here, Mary used this precious ointment and **anointed the feet of Jesus**. She considered her precious ointment only good enough for His feet. "To attend to the feet was the task of the most lowly slave. Thus Mary's action denoted great humility as well as great devotion." (Morris)

Mary's gift was remarkably *extreme*. She used a lot (**a pound**) of a **very costly oil of spikenard**. Spices and ointments were often used as an investment because they were small, portable, and could be easily sold. Judas believed this oil was worth *300 denarii* ([John 12:5](#)), which was worth a year's wages for a workingman.

•Mary's gift was remarkably *unselfconscious*. Not only did she give the gift of the expensive oil, she also **wiped His feet with her hair**. This means that she let down her hair in public, something a Jewish woman would rarely do.

i. **Oil of spikenard**: "Both John and Mark describe it by the adjective *pistikos* ([Mark 14:3](#)). Oddly enough, no one really knows what that word means. There are four possibilities. It may come from the adjective *pistos* which means *faithful* or *reliable*, and so may mean *genuine*. It may come from the verb *pinein* which means *to drink*, and so may mean *liquid*. It may be a kind of trade name, and may have to be translated simply *pistic nard*. It may come from a word meaning the *pistachio nut*, and be a special kind of essence extracted from it. In any event it was a specially valuable kind of perfume." (Barclay)

ii. "It was very costly, but it had not cost a penny too much now that it could be used upon *him*. There was a pound of it, but there was none too much for *him*. It was very sweet, but none too sweet for *him*." (Spurgeon)

iii. "The act is all the more striking in that a Jewish lady never unbound her hair in public. That apparently was a mark of loose morals. But Mary did not stop to calculate public reaction. Her heart went out to her Lord and she gave expression to something of her feelings in this beautiful and touching act." (Morris)

iv. In all of this, Mary is a study of devotion to Jesus. "The life of Mary is painted for us, in three memorable pictures, in each of which she is at the feet of Jesus." (Erdman)

[Luke 10:39](#): Mary sat at Jesus' feet and *learned*.

[John 11:32](#): Mary fell at Jesus' feet and *surrendered*.

[John 12:3](#): Mary anointed Jesus' feet and *honored* Jesus.

v. "You must sit at his feet, or you will never anoint them; he must pour his divine teaching into you, or you will never pour out a precious ointment upon him." (Spurgeon)

b. **The house was filled with the fragrance of the oil**: The sense of smell makes for long-lasting memories and John remembered how Mary's essential oils made the whole house smell good.

3. ([John 12:4-6](#)) Judas objects to Mary's rich gift.

**Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.**

a. **Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him**: In a short time Judas would betray Jesus. His betrayal was so much darker when contrasted with the brightness of Mary's devotion to Jesus. Judas probably objected to Mary's gift because he was shamed by her simple and powerful display of love.

i. This is the only place in the New Testament where Judas is mentioned as doing something evil *other* than his betrayal of Jesus, and even this was done in secret. Judas successfully hid the darkness of his heart from everyone except Jesus. Outward appearances often deceive. Many people have a religious facade that hides secret sin.

ii. "He would sell his very Saviour. And a fair match he made: for, as Austin saith, Judas sold his salvation, and



the Pharisees bought their damnation.” (Trapp)

b. **Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred, denarii:** This was an awkward scene. Then Judas broke the embarrassed silence with his sharp sense of financial values — but no appreciation of what God valued. He thought this was *too much* love and devotion to show to Jesus.

i. “Judas, blinded in self-interest, criticized her action, and so revealed himself as utterly opposed to the very spirit of the Lord Himself.” (Morgan)

ii. The *isn't this all a little much* attitude of Judas was contagious. [Matthew 26:8](#) shows Judas was not alone in this objection. Others seem to have felt that Judas made some sense. “The shock of what they had seen must have caused a brief embarrassed silence, which was broken by one voice giving expression to the sentiments of many.” (Bruce)

iii. Sometimes this thinking is twisted into a justification for all kinds of opulence and luxury, claiming that nothing is too good for Jesus — and in the twisting, for those who claim to serve Him. We notice that this was done *directly* for Jesus, not for any of the disciples. We also notice that it was *poured out in a single act*, and not something like a work of art that could be sold for the benefit of the poor or the extension of the kingdom of Jesus.

c. **This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it:** We rightly suppose that John did not know at that time that Judas was a **thief**; this was hidden to the disciples. Yet we also rightly suppose that Jesus did know that Judas was a **thief** yet He still appointed Him to be treasurer.

i. [Luke 8:2-3](#) tells us that generous women provided some of the financial needs of Jesus and His disciples. That money would be kept and managed by Judas.

ii. “When a man has gone so far in selfish greed that he has left common honesty behind him, no wonder if the sight of utterly self-surrendering love looks to him folly.” (Maclaren)

iii. “The Greek word translated *bare* [**take**] (*bastazo*) means both ‘carry’ and ‘carry off’. Judas did both!” (Tasker) “That *ἄρστα?* can bear the sense of ‘take away’ or ‘make away with’ is beyond dispute.” (Dods)

iv. “The verb ‘bare’ [**take**] is in the imperfect tense, showing that he habitually carried it”, and habitually carried from it. (Trench)

v. It was probably through greed and discontent the devil gained a foothold in Judas’ life. “Take heed of discontent. It was the devil’s sin that threw him out of heaven. Ever since which this restless spirit loves to fish in troubled waters.” (Trapp)

vi. By some chronologies Judas went out *the next day* and made his bargain with the religious leaders to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver ([Matthew 26:14-16](#), [Mark 14:10-11](#)). “The impression left is that Judas, seeing one source of personal enrichment lost, hastened to create another.” (Morris)

#### 4. ([John 12:7-8](#)) Jesus defends Mary and explains what she did.

**But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.”**

a. **Let her alone:** If we are extreme in our love for Jesus, *He* will not criticize us; that was what Judas did. It is much better to be like Mary (extreme in our love for Jesus) than to be like Judas (criticizing others who show such great love for Jesus).

b. **She has done this for the day of My burial:** In the same way that it would be rude to loudly object to funeral expenses at the service for the deceased, so it was inappropriate for Judas or anyone else to put a price on Mary’s love and devotion to Jesus while He was still alive.

i. "Unusual expense at a funeral was not regarded as unseemly; why should anyone object if the ointment which would otherwise have been used to anoint his dead body in due course was poured over him while he was still alive and able to appreciate the love which prompted the action?" (Bruce)

ii. [Mark 14:9](#) says, *Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.* "The Evangelist who records that promise does not mention Mary's name; John, who does mention the name, does not record the promise. It matters little whether our names are remembered, so long as Jesus bears them graven on His heart." (Maclaren)

iii. What John wrote about the fragrance of the oil filling the house may have been his way of saying what [Mark 14:9](#) said. "There is a rabbinic saying '(The scent of) good oil is diffused from the bed-chamber to the dining-hall while a good name is diffused from one end of the world to the other.'" (Morris)