

Jesus Was Anointed

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 26:6-13; John 12:1-8

MAIN POINT: Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial.

KEY PASSAGE: Luke 4:18

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do believers share the Lord's Supper?

Believers share the Lord's Supper to remember Jesus' life and death and to proclaim Him until He returns.

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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Three decades had passed since Jesus arrived on earth as a helpless baby. He grew up and began His ministry. People wondered, *Could this be the Messiah?* From the time sin entered the world through Adam, God was working out His rescue plan. Finally, at just the right time, God sent His Son into the world.

John the Baptist announced Jesus' purpose: "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Jesus called disciples to follow Him, and He spent three years teaching people about God and proclaiming the good news.

People began talking about the possible Messiah. If He really was the “Anointed One”—the promised Deliverer—when would He rise up against the Roman government? As Jesus’ ministry came to a close, He made His way toward Jerusalem. But Jesus wasn’t about to overthrow a government; He was about to die.

Jesus was eating supper at Simon’s house in Bethany when Mary (the sister of Lazarus) poured oil over Jesus. Her act angered the disciples, who thought the oil should have been sold and the money used to help people who were poor. But Jesus affirmed Mary for her actions. Mary did not waste the oil; she used it to worship Jesus. Jesus allowed Mary to anoint Him because He deserved to be anointed. Jesus is more valuable than anything.

Help the kids you teach see the bigger picture here. What happened in the days leading to Jesus’ death was part of God’s plan. Jesus said that Mary had prepared Him for burial (Matt. 26:12). Days later, Jesus died on the cross to rescue people from sin. On the third day, He rose from the dead. Jesus is alive!

Jesus is our Lord and Savior. God calls us to treasure Him more than anything or anyone else. We can show our love for Him through the ways we worship. He is worthy of all our praise.



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The BIBLE STORY

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **See and smell:** As you tell the story, pour a bottle of oil into another container to help kids visualize Mary's act of worship. Consider adding fragrance to the oil to reflect the story and pique kids' sense of smell.
- **Emphasize emotions:** Use facial expressions and various tones of voice to contrast the worshipful Mary and accepting Jesus with the disapproving disciples.

Jesus Was Anointed

Matthew 26:6-13; John 12:1-8

The time was coming to celebrate the Passover. Every year, the Jewish people gathered together to remember a special event that happened long ago. When God's people were slaves in Egypt, God did great things to rescue His people. The pharaoh saw God's power and authority, and the pharaoh let God's people go. God had used Moses to lead His people out of Egypt and to the promised land. God did not want the people to forget that time, so every year, the Jews had a feast. Many Jews traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate.

Six days before the Passover feast began, Jesus went to the town of Bethany. Bethany was near Jerusalem, and Jesus' friend Lazarus lived there with his sisters, Mary and Martha.

Jesus went to His friend Simon's house for a meal. Jesus was reclining at the table when Lazarus's sister Mary came to Him. She had a jar of very expensive oil. The oil smelled good, like a perfume. **Mary broke open the jar and poured the oil on Jesus' head and feet.**

Jesus' disciples were very upset! They thought Mary had wasted the expensive oil by pouring it on Jesus. The oil was worth 300 denarii—about a year's pay. **One of the disciples, Judas Iscariot (iss KAR ih aht), said, "She could have sold the oil for a lot of money, and then she could have given the money to the poor!"** Judas did not say this because he cared about the poor; he said it because he loved money. In fact, he was a thief.

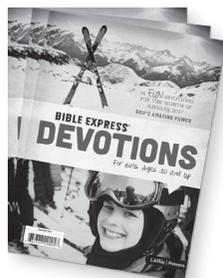
They told Mary that she had done the wrong thing, but Jesus spoke up. "Leave her alone," He said. "She has

done a very good thing for Me.”

Then Jesus explained, “You will always have people around you who are poor, but you will not always have Me. Mary has poured oil on My body to get it ready for burial.”

Jesus said that wherever the gospel was told in the whole world, people would also hear about Mary and what she had done.

Christ Connection: Pouring the expensive oil on Jesus was not a waste, it was worship. By allowing Mary to anoint Him, Jesus showed that He is more valuable than anything. Jesus knew He would soon die for sinners, be buried, and rise from the dead on the third day.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD'S WORD?
GET
BIBLE EXPRESS!**

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover how God's Word can help them grow in the gospel. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Introduce the STORY

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why do believers share the Lord's Supper?

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Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to imagine they had \$100. What would they do with it? If they spent it, what would they buy?

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "The Oil Jar" on the activity page. Kids should use the code to color the design on the jar and reveal a special word. (*anoint*)

SAY • The word *anoint* means "to pour oil or perfume on someone to show he is being set apart for a special purpose." In the Old Testament, David was anointed to be king over Israel. In today's Bible story, a woman anointed someone. We will find out why.

- "The Oil Jar" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers



- index cards
- paper
- pencils
- household or grocery items (optional)

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: What's it worth?

Write the names of several grocery items on separate index cards. On the back of the cards, write the retail value of the items. You may choose to display the actual items.

Give kids paper and pencils. Instruct them to number their papers and estimate the price of each item. After about two minutes, call for volunteers to guess the value of the first item. Then reveal the actual value.

Applaud the player whose guess was closest to the actual value. Continue with the remaining items, allowing kids to guess the value and then revealing the actual value.

SAY • Did any of the prices surprise you? Did you guess correctly? Today we are going to hear about how one woman showed how valuable she thought Jesus was. What she did surprised everyone else in the room.

OPTION 2: What's that smell?

Post an allergy alert. Before the session, prepare several containers of scents. Put a few drops of oils on cotton balls. Consider using extracts or spices such as vanilla, cinnamon, and peppermint. Drop cotton balls into separate opaque containers, and seal each container with a lid. Number each lid and arrange the containers at the front of the room.

Form two groups of kids. Instruct the groups to send one player at a time to smell a scent. The player should report to his group what he smelled. Groups should identify the scents and list their guesses on a piece of paper.

Groups may choose to send additional players to confirm a scent. Call on the groups to share their guesses. Then reveal the actual scents.

SAY • Which of these scents did you like? Were there any scents you didn't like? Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about a woman who poured sweet-smelling oil on Jesus. Let's find out why.

- Suggested items: spiral notebook, bag of flour, electric toothbrush, lip balm, box of crackers

- cotton balls
- fragrance oils
- opaque containers with lids
- Allergy Alert download
- paper
- pencils

Transition to teach the story

Teach the STORY

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- room decorations
- Theme Background Slide (optional)

Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Simulate packing up the room. Stack empty cardboard boxes at the front of the room. Position a dolly or hand truck to one side. Stack rolls of tape, packing paper, and other moving supplies on a table. Each session, pack away more things in the room. Consider projecting the theme background slide.

Countdown

- countdown video
- "The Big Story" video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as the session begins. Then introduce the quarter by showing "The Big Story" video.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

- leader attire
- boxes
- Bible

[Leader enters wearing a solid-colored T-shirt and cap. Leader peeks into some boxes, scratching his or her head.]

LEADER • Whoa, look at all these boxes ... and all this stuff! I don't even know where to begin. *[Turn to address kids.]* Well, I sure am glad you are here. Do any of you like moving? *[Allow responses.]* Because that's what's going on here. I'm in charge of getting this stuff moved out in a few weeks. Now raise your hand if you like cleaning your room. *[Pause for responses.]*

I am definitely going to have to clean up this place. But hey, that's not any fun. I'm sure you didn't come here to do manual labor. [*Open a box and pull out a Bible.*] Ah ha! This is just what I need. I know just the story to share with you today.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • One of the things we are going to do the next few weeks is answer a question. Our question is, ***Why do believers share the Lord's Supper?*** Another name for the Lord's Supper is *communion*. Believers eat the bread and drink from the cup together. Do you know why? ***Believers share the Lord's Supper to remember Jesus' life and death and to proclaim Him until He returns.***

The Bible stories we will hear the next few weeks are going to help us understand the bigger picture behind the Lord's Supper.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline or big story circle.

LEADER • When we look back at all the stories in the Old Testament and the stories we have heard so far in the New Testament, we know that they aren't a bunch of unrelated stories. All of these stories fit together to tell a much bigger story—the story of how God sent His Son to save sinners.

Jesus came to earth as a baby. When Jesus got older, He spent time teaching people about God and His kingdom. Now we are coming to the end of Jesus' time on earth.

Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Was Anointed."

• Giant Timeline or
Big Story Circle

- Bibles
- “Jesus Was Anointed” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 26:6-13; John 12:1-8. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Was Anointed.”

LEADER • Jesus was in the city of Bethany with His disciples. Simon had invited Jesus and the disciples to dinner, along with Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Many people went to Simon’s house to see Lazarus because Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead.

While Jesus and the disciples were eating, Mary broke open an alabaster jar of expensive, pure nard and poured it on Jesus. Alabaster jars were made so that when someone wanted to use the perfume inside, she would have to break open the jar and use it all at once. None of the expensive, precious perfume could be saved for later. Can you imagine sitting at a table with Jesus when Mary poured fragrant oil on Him? The Bible says the sweet aroma filled the house.

Judas and some of the other disciples were angry about what Mary did. The perfume that Mary poured on Jesus was worth 300 denarii (dih NEHR igh)—about a year’s wages. Judas said Mary should have sold the perfume and given the money to people who were poor.

What did Jesus say? **Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial.** He said that the disciples would always have the opportunity to help people who were poor, but Jesus was going away. He knew He would die on the cross. Jesus said Mary did what was right.

Christ connection

LEADER • The perfume that Mary poured on Jesus was no doubt precious to her, but she gave it all to Jesus. She believed Jesus was more valuable than her precious perfume. Mary showed that Jesus deserves to be honored and worshiped.

Pouring the expensive oil on Jesus was not a waste, it was worship. By allowing Mary to anoint Him, Jesus showed that He is more valuable than anything. Jesus knew He would soon die for sinners, be buried, and rise from the dead on the third day.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Luke 4:18.

LEADER • Jesus read these words from the prophet Isaiah when He was teaching in the synagogue in Nazareth. Isaiah had written about the Messiah and what the Messiah would do. Jesus was saying, *It's Me. I am the Messiah.* In our Bible story today, **Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial.** Jesus was set apart to be the Savior of the world.

In order to save sinners, Jesus had to die on the cross. Jesus died, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day. Let's sing together.

Lead boys and girls in singing "On Me."

- Key Passage Poster
- "On Me" song

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Think about everything you have. What thing is most important to you? Check out this video. Show the "Unit 25, Session 1" discussion starter video. Then lead kids to discuss the following questions:

- "Unit 25, Session 1" discussion starter video

- How did Benjamin show he cared about his ball?
- Why did Benjamin treasure his ball?
- How can we show that we treasure Jesus?
- What kinds of things might we be tempted to treasure more than Jesus?

LEADER • God gives us good gifts, and it is good for us to enjoy them. But we should never love the gifts God gives us more than we love God Himself. Jesus is better than anything else, and we can show our love for Him through worship.

Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial. She worshiped Jesus by pouring expensive oil on Him. Anything done for Jesus is never a waste. Jesus is worthy of all our worship.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “It Had to Be” song

LEADER • One way we can worship Jesus is by singing to Him! Let’s stand and sing this song together. Lead boys and girls in singing “It Had to Be.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • God, You are so good to us. Thank You for sending Jesus, who poured Himself out through His death on the cross to rescue us from our sin. We confess that we do not treasure Jesus like we should. Help us to not cling to our comforts and possessions in this world. Jesus deserves all of our worship because He truly is our greatest treasure. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

Apply the STORY

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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- index cards
- marker
- watch or timer (optional)

Write the words of the key passage on index cards, one word per card. Mix up the cards and place them facedown on the floor or table.

Instruct kids to turn over the cards and arrange them in order. You may choose to time kids and repeat the activity, challenging them to beat their time. When kids arrange the cards in order, lead them to say the key passage aloud.

SAY • Can anyone tell me what the word *anoint* means? (*to pour oil or perfume on someone to show he is being set apart for a special purpose*)

The prophet Isaiah wrote these words about the Messiah hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Jesus read Isaiah's words and said they were about Him. The Holy Spirit came down on Jesus when John baptized Him in the Jordan River. [*See Matt. 3:16-17.*] Jesus said that the Spirit of the Lord had anointed Him, or set Him apart for a special purpose.

Luke 4:18 reminds us that Jesus came into the world to bring good news for sinners and to be our Rescuer by dying on the cross.

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and guide kids to find the Book of Matthew. Ask kids what division of the Bible the Book of Matthew is in. (*Gospels*) Challenge kids to name the five divisions of the New Testament. (*Gospels, New Testament History, Paul's Letters, General Letters, Prophecy*)

Encourage kids to find Matthew 26:6-13. Lead them to refer to the passage as they answer the following review questions:

1. In what city did today's Bible story happen? (*Bethany, Matt. 26:6*)
2. Jesus was at whose house? (*Simon's house, Matt. 26:6*)
3. What did the woman pour on Jesus? (*very expensive, fragrant oil; Matt. 26:7*)
4. Why were Jesus' disciples upset? (*They thought she wasted the oil, Matt. 26:8*)
5. What did Judas say Mary should have done with the oil? (*sold it and given the money to people who are poor, Matt. 26:9*)
6. Why wasn't Jesus upset with Mary? (*Jesus said she had done a good thing, Matt. 26:10*)

Now guide kids to discuss these questions:

- Mary could have sold the oil and used the money to help people who are poor. Why do you think Jesus said Mary had done the right thing by pouring oil on Him instead?
- **Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial.** What was going to happen to Jesus?
- Why should Jesus be our greatest treasure?
- How can we show our love for Jesus?

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

A circular icon with a dark background and a white border containing the text "LOW PREP" in white capital letters.

- large sheet of paper
- crayons or markers
- tape

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Mural scene

Hang a large sheet of paper on a wall or tape it on the floor. Provide crayons or markers for kids to create a life-size scene of the Bible story. Suggest kids trace one another in the positions of the people in the story—Jesus, Mary, and some of Jesus’ disciples.

Encourage boys and girls to illustrate the scene in detail. As they work, talk about how Mary’s actions didn’t make sense to the disciples. Point out that when we give our best to Jesus, other people might think we are being foolish.

SAY • The disciples thought Mary had done the wrong thing, but Jesus said Mary had done what was right.

Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial. Jesus knew He was going away; He knew He would die to save sinners.

OPTION 2: Make oil jars

Give each kid an empty baby food jar and lid. Assist kids in making oil jars:

1. Pour cooking oil into the jar so it is one-third full.
2. Mix food color into water and allow kids to slowly pour the colored water into their jars. Make sure kids leave a little space at the top of the jar.
3. Use a hot glue gun to seal the lids onto the jars.

Invite kids to turn and shake the jars to watch the oil and water move around.

SAY • Today we heard a story from the Bible about how a woman named Mary poured expensive oil on Jesus. Judas said Mary should have sold the oil and used the money to help people who were poor. But **Jesus said Mary anointed Him for burial.**

- food color
- water
- cooking oil
- baby food jars, 1 per kid
- hot glue gun (adult use only)

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Pouring the expensive oil on Jesus was not a waste, it was worship. By allowing Mary to anoint Him, Jesus showed that He is more valuable than anything. Jesus knew He would soon die for sinners, be buried, and rise from the dead on the third day. Keep your oil jars on a windowsill in your home as a reminder that Jesus is more valuable than anything.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for keeping His promise to send the Messiah—His own Son, Jesus—to rescue sinners. Pray that kids would treasure Jesus above all else.

As time allows, lead kids to complete “Waste or Worship?” on the activity page. Guide kids to circle how each situation could be used to worship God. Encourage kids to write a specific way they can worship God this week.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- “Waste or Worship?” activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.