



STORY 79

A Woman to Be Remembered

JOHN 12

BEFORE THE LESSON

- *Read John 12.*
- *Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.*
- *Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.*

THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}

As Jesus journeyed to Jerusalem, he stopped in Jericho to save Zacchaeus. Then he rode on a colt into the holy city, as people praised him as King and Savior. Then he did those strange symbolic things in and outside the temple. In the temple, he cleansed it of those who were making money off sacrifices for sin. Outside the temple, he cursed the fruitless fig tree. No faith, no fruit? No good! It was Passover week. But right before and during that week, Jesus stayed about 2 miles away in the home of his close friends—sisters Mary and Martha, as well as Lazarus, their brother. The story of Lazarus is one of the best stories in the Bible. It happens right before the story we will talk about today. Lazarus

1
Read

2
Teach

dies. Jesus arrives in town. He weeps at Lazarus’s tomb. Then, Jesus said, “Take away the stone” (John 11:39) from the tomb. After the stone was moved, Jesus shouted, “Lazarus, come out,” and sure enough, Lazarus “who had died came out” (11:43–44). Mary and Martha now believed without a doubt that Jesus was the Christ and that he had resurrection power. They loved him more than ever. Let’s see now how Mary showed that love.

TELL THE STORY

Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the Bible passage together



Read from *The Biggest Story Bible Storybook*



Play *The Biggest Story* video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth
We cannot love
Jesus too much.

Have you ever been to a fancy dinner? Maybe there were cloth napkins, fine silverware, and fancy plates. A few days before Holy Week started, Jesus and his disciples were having dinner with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in their house. We don’t know if it was a fancy dinner, but it must have been a big one.

For special dinners guests would recline on their stomachs around a low table and the food would be placed in the center. Everyone around the table would lean on one elbow and grab the food from the center, and their feet would stick out the back. Strange, huh? Or kind of cool. Try it some day! As Martha was serving the guests—placing dishes of wonderful food on the middle table—her sister was listening to Jesus teach. This upset Martha because she wanted help. But Jesus was happy that Mary was listening because it was the better choice (see Luke 10:38–42). He was likely teaching about what was about to happen to him in Jerusalem. He would suffer, die, and rise again. Mary was so moved by Jesus’s teaching that she left, went to her room, and grabbed a tall white jar filled with expensive perfume. She returned to the table and opened it by Jesus’s feet. The whole house was now filled with the smell of the sweet perfume. Then

she did something that seemed crazy. She poured the perfume on Jesus's feet, let down her long hair, and wiped his feet clean.

Judas said, "What a waste! She could have sold that for thousands of dollars and given the money to the poor." Jesus replied, "She has done a beautiful thing. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. In pouring this on my body, she is preparing me for burial. Wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her" (see Matt. 26:10–13). Do you know what is beautiful? Do you know what will be remembered, at least by God? When we love Jesus with crazy love—with the best that we have! Such love and worship is never a waste.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

When Mary poured the perfume on Jesus's feet, he was still alive. But his death was coming soon, even if Mary didn't know it. Regardless, Mary loved Jesus so much that she wanted to give him the best she had. Jesus, however, knew he would die in a few days. And he saw her gift as preparing him for burial. He responded to her extravagant gift by saying she had done a beautiful thing. Anytime we worship Jesus, it is beautiful. He is worthy of the most extravagant, costly worship we can give. Her costly gift was given to the one who would give the costliest gift to us—his life. As we remember Mary's gift, may we remember how it points us toward Jesus's burial and death and his great love for us.

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

- 1. QUESTION:** Who are some people that you think of when you think of the Bible? Who is the surprising woman that Jesus said would be remembered wherever the gospel is told? What did she do?

TAKEAWAY: Wherever the gospel goes in the world, Mary will be remembered for her gift.

- 2. QUESTION:** What would people in Jesus's day do to prepare a dead body for burial? What did Mary's perfume prepare Jesus for?

3

Engage

Memory Verse
Keep yourselves
in the love of
God, waiting
for the mercy of
our Lord Jesus
Christ that leads
to eternal life.

JUDE 21

TAKEAWAY: Mary's perfume pointed ahead to the fact that Jesus would soon die and be buried.

3. **QUESTION:** How much did Mary's gift cost? Why was Judas upset that she used it on Jesus? What else did Mary do that was embarrassing? Was Jesus happy with her gift? Why do you think he thought it was beautiful?

TAKEAWAY: Mary's love for Jesus was crazy and costly.

4. **QUESTION:** Can you ever love Jesus too much? Can you praise him too loudly? Can you follow him too closely? Are you willing to follow him even when it costs you a lot? When it's embarrassing? Why?

TAKEAWAY: True worship is never a waste.

ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from TheBiggestStory.com, or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Heel-to-Toe Relay

Supply List: none

Divide children into teams of five or six. Have the first person on each team walk heel-to-toe to the other side of the room and then run back to tag the next player in line, who will repeat the process. The first team to race all team members wins. Remind children that Mary poured perfume on Jesus's feet, and he said she'd be remembered forever.

Option 2: Don't Break the Treasure!

Supply List: balloons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Inflate balloons (one for every two children plus a few extra).

Divide children into pairs. Have the pairs line up on the starting line. Give each pair a balloon, and explain that it represents a special treasure that they must not drop. On "Go" have the pairs walk to the opposite side of the room and back with the balloon held between their backs. If the balloon slips out, they must

let it touch the floor before replacing it and continuing the race. The pair that completes the race first wins. Remind children that Mary took her treasure and broke it to anoint Jesus's feet.

3rd–5th

Option 1: Pick Up Relay

Supply List: plastic cups, water, large clear jars, kitchen tongs (one per team), towels

Before Class: Gather supplies. Fill plastic cups full with water (one per child). Set plastic cups along the starting line. Place jars on the opposite side of the room (one per team).

Divide children into teams of five or six. Give the first person on each team a pair of kitchen tongs. On “Go” have the first player on each team use the tongs to pick up a plastic cup filled with water, to carry it to the other side of the room, and to pour as much water as possible into his team’s jar. Have him return to his team and hand the tongs to the next person, who will repeat the process. The team with the most water in their jar after all players have raced wins. (Note: Have towels on hand to clean up any spills.)

Option 2: Don’t Break the Treasure!

Supply List: balloons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Inflate balloons (one for every two children plus a few extra).

Divide children into pairs. Have the pairs line up on the starting line. Give each pair a balloon, and explain that it represents a special treasure that they must not drop. On “Go” have the pairs walk to the opposite side of the room and back with the balloon held between their backs. If the balloon slips out, they must let it touch the floor before replacing it and continuing the race. The pair that completes the race first wins. Remind children that Mary took her treasure and broke it to anoint Jesus's feet.

CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Perfumed Feet

Supply List: spray bottles (one for each scent blend), water, essential oils, construction paper, pencils, scissors, markers

Before Class: Gather supplies. Prepare spray bottles with a mixture of water and essential oils in different scents. Make a sample craft.

Set supplies on tables. Have each child remove his or her sock and shoe from one foot and trace that foot on construction paper with a pencil. Then they can cut out the footprint and use markers to write the Big Truth on it and decorate it. Have children come to a leader to help them spray their scent of choice lightly on their footprint.

Option 2: Great Love Picture

Supply List: paper, black and brown yarn, scissors, glue, crayons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut black and brown yarn into 4-inch lengths. Print a picture of a woman kneeling at the feet of Jesus with the Big Truth written underneath (one copy per child). Make a sample craft.

Set copies, glue, crayons, and yarn pieces on tables. Have children color the picture with crayons and then glue the yarn pieces to the woman's hair. Remind children that the woman wanted to show Jesus how much she loved him.

Option 1: Perfumed Envelope

Supply List: envelopes, colored pencils, spoon, bowl, rice, essential oil or perfume

Before Class: Gather supplies. Fill a bowl with dry rice and mix in some essential oil or perfume. Make a sample craft.

Give each child an envelope. Set remaining supplies on tables. Have children use colored pencils to decorate the envelope and write the Big Truth on it. Have children bring their envelope to the bowl and fill it with two or three spoonfuls of rice before sealing it shut. Tell children this envelope can be put in a drawer to make it smell beautiful like Jesus's feet after Mary anointed him.

Option 2: Perfumed Feet

Supply List: spray bottles (one for each scent blend), water, essential oils, construction paper, pencils, scissors, markers

Before Class: Gather supplies. Prepare spray bottles with a mixture of water and essential oils in different scents. Make a sample craft.

Set supplies on tables. Have each child remove his or her sock and shoe from one foot and trace that foot on construction paper with a pencil. Then they can cut out the footprint and use markers to write the Big Truth on it and decorate it. Have children come to a leader to help them spray their scent of choice lightly on their footprint.



Visit TheBiggestStory.com for downloadable coloring pages, activity pages, and craft templates for this lesson.