



07.25.10/ Mark 14:1-11

Opening Activity

Ask the children about a time when they gave something to someone else. Why did they give something? *Answers may be because the person needed it, because the child wanted to care for or show love, out of respect, or others.*

Tell them that we'll see an example in Mark 14 of a woman who gave something to Jesus because He deserved it, and because she loved and respected Him.

Read Mark 14:1-11

It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, for they said, "Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people." And while he was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he was reclining at the table, a woman came with an alabaster flask of ointment of pure nard, very costly, and she broke the flask and poured it over his head. There were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment wasted like that? For this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor." And they scolded her. But Jesus said, "Leave her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them. But you will not always have me. She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." Then Judas Iscariot, who was one of the twelve, went to the chief priests in order to betray him to them. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised to give him money. And he sought an opportunity to betray him.

Discussion

While Jesus was having dinner at Simon's house, a lady came in with an expensive box of oil, or ointment. She used the entire box of ointment on Jesus and anointed him. Some people thought this was silly or wasteful, because the Bible tells us the box of ointment she used was worth a year's pay! They scolded her and told her she shouldn't have wasted it. They thought it should have been used for other purposes, or that the ointment could have been sold and the money could have helped the needy. But Jesus knew in the woman's heart, she chose to anoint him because she was showing her faith in Him and her deep love and respect for Him.

Question One

Does anybody know what it means to anoint something or someone? *Let the children answer.*

Literally, it means to smear or cover (usually with oil). We don't do this a lot today, but in Biblical times, people used to anoint things for all sorts of reasons. To anoint someone or something was a sign of goodness, and it often had practical purposes as well. You also see examples of people anointing others with oil for hospitality—it was like a special kind of blessing. People used oil to anoint priests and kings, and oil was also used to prepare someone for burial.

Question Two

Why did the woman anoint Jesus? *Let the children answer.*

She wanted to honor him and show him her faith and respect. The ceremony where a king would be anointed was a sign to anyone who saw it that the king was meant to serve on his throne. The woman had great faith and knew that Jesus was King. She wanted to show others and show Jesus that she believed He was King. Many of the people who would have been at the dinner knew the Old Testament foretold the coming of the Messiah. Messiah is a Hebrew word meaning "covered in oil, anointed." Jesus uses the woman's gracious act of anointing him as a way to teach the people that He is the Son of God; He is the Messiah. He reminds them that He came to die for us. Also, Jesus knew that this anointing was a preparation for His burial because He knew He was about to be killed.

**Question Three**

The woman used a box of ointment that cost a year's wages! Why would she use it all on Jesus? *Let the children answer.* Because He is worthy of all that we have, even our entire lives! The woman was most likely poor, and the box of ointment was worth a year's work. She didn't question using it all on Jesus because she knew He was worthy of everything she had. The Bible gives us many examples, like this one, where people give—not because they have to give, but because they want to give. 2 Corinthians 9:7 tells us "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." No one told her she had to use her ointment on Jesus. She wanted to because she loved and respected Him, and she believed that He was worthy of all she had. When we love Jesus, we don't care about our things. We don't mind giving up our things to bring Him glory and honor.

Wrap Up

While He was having dinner that night with His friends, Jesus knew that He would soon be hung on a cross to die for the sins of the world, your sins and mine, and He knew that He would come back to life so that sin would be destroyed. When we believe that Jesus did this for us and that He is God, we're saved from our sins! Let's close our time thanking God for sending Jesus as our Anointed King, the Messiah. Ask God to help make us willing to love, respect and honor Jesus in the way He deserves – giving up everything we have to serve Him – even if it seems costly or silly to the rest of the world.