

## **Family Devotion for March 15**

Mark 14:1-9

By Rev. Allison Benfield

### **Parent Background**

During the season of Lent (in the children's classes) we are looking at the stories traditionally associated with Holy Week. Because these are some of the most important stories for us as Christians, we have been taking our time learning them and walking through them. Now, because of COVID-19, we find that it is best for us not to gather on Sundays, but that doesn't mean we can't keep learning. Thank you for taking the time to invest in your child's spiritual growth by doing this devotion at home.

Our third story this season is about the woman who anoints Jesus. In some gospels, the perfume is poured on Jesus' feet, but in Mark, it's poured over Jesus' head. It's interesting to note that it is only the women that seem to care for Jesus' physical body in the gospels. They are the ones that feed him (Mary and Martha), give him water (the woman at the well), anoint him (the woman in this story), and tend to his burial (the women who stayed with Jesus as he was crucified). By anointing Jesus in this way, it's like this woman truly understands who Jesus is and what is getting ready to happen to him. He's been dropping hints all along that he will die, but the men don't seem to understand what he is trying to tell them.

In response to who she understands Jesus to be, this woman offers Jesus what she can, and she offers it earnestly. She shows her love for Jesus in a very visible way. I wonder what we can offer to Jesus? I wonder how we can show our love for Jesus?

### **Materials Needed**

- Candle and lighter
- Bible
- Art supplies (markers, paper, crayons, etc)

### **Beginning the Devotion**

Gather your family together. Light a candle if you have one available. As you light it say these words (if you don't have a candle, skip the sentence about the candle, but still remind your family that God is present):

We light this candle to help us remember that God is here. Even though we can't be together with our church family, God is still with us. Remember that all of God is everywhere.

Take some time to pray together as a family. Let each person have a turn to talk to God. You might make a list together of the things you want to pray about or thank God for. Find a way to pray that feels right for your family.

### **Finding the Story**

Younger Children: Before you get started with the story, take the Bible and open it to the passage for the story. Talk about where the book of the Bible is located (Old or New Testament), and talk about what books come directly before and after. Talk about how the big numbers are chapter numbers and the little numbers are verse numbers. If children have their own Bibles, let them practice looking up the passage. These things will help them learn to use their Bibles.

Older Children: Before you get started with the story, have/help the children find the story in their Bibles. Guide them to think about Old vs. New Testament and what books come before and after the book they are trying to find. Talk about how big numbers are chapters and little numbers are verses. This will help them get comfortable using their Bibles.

### **Story Time**

You can read from the summarized version below and/or you can read the story directly from the Bible.

### ***Jesus Visits Bethany***

Even after he entered Jerusalem for the last time, Jesus still did his work of coming close to people no one wanted to come close to.

He went out to a village called Bethany which was just outside of Jerusalem. He was visiting Simon's house; and Simon had a skin disease. In that time, people did not want to come close to those with skin diseases, but Jesus came close.

While they were having dinner at Simon's house, a woman came up to Jesus. She had a jar made of alabaster that was filled with very expensive perfume. The woman broke the jar open and poured it on Jesus' head.

The Disciples watched all of this happen, and they were very upset. "This is so wasteful!" they shouted. "She could have sold this perfume for a lot of money and then used the money to care for the poor!"

Jesus wasn't upset with the woman at all. He said, "Why are you being so mean to this woman? She has done a beautiful thing for me. You will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me with you. By pouring this perfume over me, she has prepared me to be buried. The story of what she has done for me will be told whenever my story is told."

### **Wondering Time**

Ask the following questions. As you wonder together, you may think of other questions to ask.

I wonder what you like best about this story?

I wonder what is most important in this story?

I wonder if there is anything we can leave out of this story and still have all the story we need?

I wonder how the woman was feeling?

I wonder why the disciples were so upset by what the woman did?

The woman gave what she had to Jesus to show her love. I wonder how we can show our love to Jesus? I wonder if we can give more than just things to do that?

### **Response Time**

Choose an activity from the options below:

-Create art based on the story. Maybe it's a picture of Jesus and the woman. Maybe it's a comic strip that tells the whole story. Maybe you make a scene out of playdough. The possibilities are endless! Be creative!

-Create art that shows how you can show your love to Jesus.

Please take a picture of the art your family creates and send it to me! I'll make sure to post it on social media so we can stay connected to each other while we practice social distancing.