



APRIL 2014 FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

My Name is Worshiper

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Beginning thoughts...

"Lazarus, come forth!" And, he did!

Jesus had arrived. He was grieving as were the others, yet, the grief was about to change to excitement and joy. What an amazing, extraordinary event. Can you just imagine the reaction of the people gathered around the grave site? It must have been a very chaotic scene. I wonder who unwrapped the grave-clothes and took the linen from his face. We know he was wrapped because Jesus said to "loose him, and let him go." It might have been one of the disciples. Or, maybe it was Martha. Maybe it was Mary. She loved her brother very much.

However, Mary loved Jesus more. She took every opportunity to learn about Him and from Him. As a woman in that culture, she probably would have found it very difficult to gain access to Him at all times. We're told about the multitudes who followed Him everywhere He went. Yet, nearly every time we read of her, she is sitting at His feet soaking in all the teaching and inspiration she can. She isn't concerned with household tasks or anything else when Jesus is around. Her first priority is focusing on the spiritual truths Jesus imparts.

How great would our lives be if we could focus on the truths of Christ instead of being so self-absorbed? We see no hint of self-absorption in Mary. If she had any doubt Jesus was who He said He was, it vanished when Lazarus walked out of that cave. She would pour out all the spices she had, no matter the cost, to honor the one she loved, the one who loved her, the one who came to redeem her. She wanted to perfume His head, His feet with her richest gift. In return, Jesus made sure we would always remember His anointing. His words ensured that Mary's act of worship would be memorialized for all times.

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A GOOD WORK

Key Verses: “When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me” (Matthew 26:10).

Key Thought: Good work for God requires a deep love for the Savior.

✝ Write the key verse and the key thought in your journal.

✝ Go over the questions and answers on p. 23 in *Treasure*.

✝ Who was this Mary? (***She was one of six women in the Bible named Mary;*** [Others include Mary, mother of Jesus—Matthew 1:18; Mary Magdalene—Mark 16:9; Mary, wife of Cleophas and mother of James—John 19:25, Mark 15:40; Mary, mother of John Mark—Acts 12:12; and Mary, a Christian woman in Rome—Romans 16:6.] ***she was from the town of Bethany; she was the sister of Lazarus—John 11:1-2; 4; she was the sister of Martha—Luke 10:38-39; and she was a spiritual scholar—Luke 10:39.***)

✝ Why do we know her as a spiritual scholar? (***She loved to sit quietly and peacefully at Jesus’ feet.***)

✝ What character qualities are recognizable in Mary from these Scripture passages? (***Humility, reverence, hunger for spiritual knowledge.***)

✝ What do Scriptures about Mary reveal concerning how she saw Jesus? (***Sitting at His feet, Mary saw Him as a Prophet. In her grief, she saw Him as a sympathizing High Priest. Anointing Him, she saw Jesus as King.***)

✝ Where was Jesus in Luke 2:46? (***Sitting in the midst of doctors of the Law.***)

✝ Where did Paul say he was brought up in Acts 22:3? (***At the feet of Gamaliel, a celebrated doctor of Jewish law.***)

✝ Read 1 Chronicles 17:16. David’s act of sitting before the Lord became a prayer of thanksgiving.

✝ What can be accomplished or gained by sitting at Jesus’ feet? (***Peace, comfort, strength, joy, self-worth, fulfillment, true mature worship, joy.***)

✝ Mary made sitting at Jesus’ feet her top priority. Can you say it is yours?

✝ Write the name *El Elyon*: God Most High, in your journal.

Reflection: Dismiss in a prayer of love and Thanksgiving for the one true God.

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DOING WHAT SHE COULD

Key Verse: “She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying” (Mark 14:8).

Key Thought: Devotion to Christ should propel us to do all we can, giving honor and service to God, who loved and gave us the gift of His Son.

✝ Read John 3:16 aloud.

✝ What was the great truth Mary of Bethany knew? (*That Jesus was the Son of God—John 12:7*)

✝ When Mary poured the oil on Jesus, did the others gathered there understand what she was doing? (*No, they were indignant that the ointment was wasted—Mark 14:4.*)

✝ Do you think the world considers a life wholly consecrated to God as a life wasted?

✝ What was Judas’ reaction at the use of the spikenard? (*He questioned the use of it—John 12:4-5.*) What did Judas say it should be used for? (*To give to the poor.*) Was this his real intent? (*No, he was a thief—John 12:6.*)

✝ Why did Jesus say they would always have the poor with them, but that they wouldn’t have Him? (*John 12:8; Deuteronomy 15:11*)

✝ Here, then, we find Jesus’ defense of Mary’s actions as stated in our key verse. What did Jesus tell the ones gathered there? (*“Let her alone; why trouble her”—Mark 14:6.*)

✝ Did the disciples realize the truth Jesus had spoken to them about His own death? (*No—Mark 9:31-32.*)

✝ Why, then, do you think Mary understood what was to happen? (*Her brother Lazarus, had been raised from the dead; Jesus had been teaching and telling them about it; Mary had been listening; and Mary believed Him.*)

✝ Isn’t this what we should all be doing? (*Paying attention to Jesus?*)

✝ Read John 12:7. Do you think Mary could have received a revelation from God?

✝ When Jesus said that Mary had “done a good thing”, what was He referring to? (*She had gained spiritual growth—Luke 10:43.*)

✝ Read and discuss the questions and answers on p. 25 in *Treasure*.

✝ Write the name *Anointed One* in your journal.

Reflection: Dismiss with the ideas in this section on p. 25 of *Treasure*.

My Name is Worshiper PREPARED FOR BURIAL

Key Verse: “For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial” (Matthew 26:12).

Key Thought: Our intent in worship should be to glorify God as we honor our living Lord as King of Kings and Savior of the world.

✝ Write the key verse in your journal, then go over the questions and answers on p. 27 of *Treasure*.

✝ Mary and Martha had already participated in a funeral. Whose? (*Their brother, Lazarus’—John 11:17, 34.*) What had happened there? (*John 11:41-44*) BDid people become believers because of this? (*Yes, John 11:45.*) Later, Lazarus was at the supper given for Jesus. Describe, again, what Mary did. (*John 12:1-3*)

✝ What was spikenard? (*A rare, costly, aromatic oil whose chief ingredient is believed to have been derived from the plant of the Valerian family.*) Why were spices and perfumes used for burials at this time? (*This was the Jew’s way of preparing or embalming the dead.*)

✝ Who prepared Jesus’ body for burial? (*Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus—John 19:38-43.*) What do we know of these men? (*They were secret disciples—John 3:2; 19:38; they were rich men—Matthew 27:57; they were members of the political system—Luke 23:50-51; John 3:1; and they acted bravely in asking for Jesus’ body—Luke 23:52.*)

LEADER’S NOTE: Nicodemus brought, for preparing Jesus’ body, enough spices and ointments (about 100 lbs.) for a hundred or more common Jewish burials. Historical records show that the more respected an individual, the larger the quantity of these costly materials would be used in the burial preparation. Spices used for Jesus’ burial included aloes—spices wrapped with strips of linen around Jesus’ body, up to his head—and myrrh (also given to Jesus at His birth and on the cross to quench His thirst. Josephus records that 40 pounds of spices were used at the funeral of Gamaliel, the Jewish teacher.

✝ Had anyone else prepared spices for Jesus’ burial? (*Yes—Luke 23:55-56.*) Did they get to use the spices for the purpose intended? (*No—Luke 24:1-3.*) What great event transpired before they arrived at the grave? (*All four Gospels give record of our Lord’s Resurrection—Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6; John 20:2,17.*)

✝ Mary had anointed Jesus’ body before He died in Mark 14:8. Why? (*Out of her great faith and deep abiding love and because she believed true His teachings about His impending death.*) Do we constantly anoint Him as the chosen of our hearts?

✝ Sing or read the words to “I’d Rather Have Jesus”, page 400, The Free Will Baptist Hymn Book, REJOICE.

✝ Write Victor over Death as the name of God in your journal. (*Revelation 21:4; Isaiah 25:8*)

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer, praising God as our Risen Lord.

My Name is Worshiper ALWAYS REMEMBERED

Key Verse: “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her” (Mark 14:9).

Key Thought: Worship motivated by love for Christ is both valuable and memorable.

✝ Write the key verse in your journal, then go over the questions and answers on p. 29 of *Treasure*.

✝ What is the purpose of a memorial? (*To remember.*)

✝ Name some iconic memorials? (*Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, Pearl Harbor, 9/11 Memorial, Eternal Flame at Kennedy's Grave*) Why were these memorials placed where they are? (*So we never forget the sacrifices made or the people involved.*)

✝ Is there a tangible memorial for Mary of Bethany that we could visit? (*Not that I know of.*)

✝ Why then did Jesus commend her so strongly? (*Mary knew Jesus was a present help in time of trouble—Psalm 46:1; Mary received faith sitting at Jesus' feet—Romans 10:17; Jesus recognized her faith—John 11:32; Mary had learned the words of eternal life—Luke 10:39; and Mary knew God could use her regardless of circumstances—Luke 10:42. In Jesus' time, women were usually classed as second rate in society.*)

✝ Why wasn't there a memorial to Martha, since she also believed in Jesus? (*John 11:21-24, 27.*)

✝ For what do we remember Martha? (*Hospitality—Luke 10:38; energy—John 11:20; anxiety and care—Luke 10:40.*)

✝ Why did Jesus institute the Lord's Supper? (*In remembrance of Him—1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 22:18-20.*)

✝ Does your church observe the Lord's Supper (Communion)? Why is it important to be in a right relationship with God when partaking of His meal? *To properly remember what Jesus did for us, our hearts must be clean with no unforgiven sins.*

✝ For what do you want to be remembered?

✝ Wouldn't it be wonderful when you meet the Lord face to face if He says, “You have done what you could”?

✝ Write the name God Eternal in your journal.

Reflection: Dismiss in prayer. Give thanks and praise to HIm as the everlasting Eternal God.

Closing thoughts...

How do you handle criticism? Do you get angry and lash out, or do you accept it with a quiet, gentle spirit? Are you ever the one doing the criticizing? Mary was criticized for wasting the spikenard, but she didn't say a word. She knew what she was doing was worth more than retaliating with words to those around her. She had found what she needed in Jesus and was not going to let anyone keep her from showing Him the love and adoration He alone deserved. Her quiet love speaks volumes to us if we let it. Yes, Mary chose the good part. Oh, that we would do the same.

