Vacation Bible School

Class: Adults

For more information, see http://www.whitewatervalley.org/ministries/hmlt.htm
Disciples Treasure Hunt
Discípulos Buscando Tesoros
Moses and his staff
Day One

THEME: God gives us the tools to serve.
BIBLE PASSAGE: Exodus 4:1-5 (6-17)
MEMORY VERSE: “Take this staff in your hand so you can perform miraculous signs with it” Exodus 4:17 (NIV)

Objective
The believers will dare to trust that God is powerful and wants to use the tools that are present in his or her life that s/he ignores or hides.

Preparation
- Ask the Lord’s direction in the planning process so you understand the class and share the lesson in words that children will understand.
- Read the Bible story and the context of the life of Moses. (Exodus 1-4)

There are three things that should be clear in the student’s mind at the end of the class:
- Our negativity (examples) to see that we have the indispensable tools which God wants to use.
- To recognize all the tools (examples) that we possess within ourselves so that we know how much we can do for God.
- The need to obey God, to experiment with putting all that we have in His hands. He can use it as great tools to complete His plans in us.

Material
- A garbage bag with tools for the introduction and tools that you believe are convenient (hammer, wrench, tweezers, drill, screwdriver, ax, shovel, and other similar items).
- A person wearing a work uniform or according to the work that he/she does (of course with the tools he/she needs to show as an example and explain).
- Magazines, thin cardboard, scissors, glue (optional)

Introduction
It is the first day of VBS and you need to welcome everyone and make a list of all the students who come.

Present the general theme of the week and the name of the first lesson. The teachers need to introduce themselves so that the children know who they are.

Help the students learn the memory verse.
You will present the believers with a series of tools such as a hammer, wrench, tweezers, screwdriver, drill, ax, shovel and other similar objects. You can also invite someone who works with many different tools to be involved in the demonstration. This person can explain to the class what great things he or she can do while working with these tools and how they help him or her.

Individually or as a group, you will ask the believers what each tool is used for. You will ask them what great things they can do with these tools.

You will direct the believers to the lesson saying that just like these tools are able to help them to be used for great things, so also our God has his own tools, and he wants to use us to complete his commands. We have these tools so that we are able to carry out his great plans.

**Studying the Bible passage**

- Moses was afraid because he thinks that he didn't have what it takes to complete God's commands. (v. 1)
- Moses had something in his hand, but he didn't know that God was interested in using it as a powerful tool. (v. 2)
- Moses doesn't know what God was able of doing with the most simple of his possessions if he was willing to offer it to the Lord in obedience.
- Moses obeyed by taking the serpent by the tail (this is the worst way to manage a snake), and learned that it doesn't matter if you are afraid. What matters is that it is necessary to obey God with the tools that we have so that we can be used by God. This is powerful. (v. 4)
- Moses received God's response to his fear so that he could complete His command, telling him that He would use his staff as a powerful tool to display the work of God (v. 5)

**Reflecting on the Bible passage**

- There are believers who think that they don't have the tools to be able to follow the will of God, and they live distressed by the things that they think they're lacking. (v. 1)
- There are believers who don't realize that God is interested in what is in our hands. (v. 2)
- There are believers who do not know that God is able to transform the simplest thing that we own into a powerful tool. (v. 3) Ask the students for examples.
- Believers ought to trust and obey God despite of fear and in doing so will realize all the powerful tools that God has given them.
- Believers ought to know that God wants to use the tools that He has given us to manifest himself and in doing so, complete His will through us. (v. 5)

**Applying the Bible passage to our life**

- The believers ought to make an analysis of all their fears, worries, obstacles and situations that exist and realize that in some way or another, these factors impede what God is trying to show them. They ought to examine themselves, trusting that they have the necessary tools to please God. Today, wherever you are in your life, if your desire is to follow God's commands, you ought to accept that you must begin with what you have, and trust that God will be exalted in your life. (v. 1)
• Ask the students: make a list of all the tools that they personally possess (level of study, academic preparation, material possessions, as well as personal qualities, including abilities (ask the students about these and write down some examples). Think about church activities, new ministries that you can begin when you recognize that we are capable with the tools that God has given us. Thus, knowing that God is interested in converting what we possess into a powerful tool, we ought to see if there is something in our lives that we are hiding or denying God in order to follow His command. (v. 2)

• We ought to surrender all the things that we doubt or think will never happen (ask about their doubts) and obey God. Obeying God will open the door to the marvelous things that the Lord wants to do through us because He is able to convert a staff into a snake. This means that He converts what we have into powerful tools that will bless our lives. This shows us that it is He who has the power to use us. (v. 3)

• The reward for obeying God by using the tools that he has given us is to see that even when we see ourselves as small or lacking what is necessary because we think that we don’t have the tools, He will show us every step of the way that He is able to do anything if we trust in Him. Ask what would happen to the hidden tools, and what new tools would be able to be used to please God or in another way, think about something that you possess with which you could serve God. (v. 4 & 5)

Optional Activity 1: Separate the class in two or three groups. Ask the students to create a story about how they used all the things/talents that God has given them. Every group should take turns acting out their story.

Optional Activity 2: Write a formal letter to the session with ideas of new programs that the church could offer with the tools that God has given the congregation.

Optional Activity 3: Have the students make a poster with pictures from magazines of things that their families or the churches have (“hidden tools”) and write about the ways that God discovers them and how you can use them to help others.

Conclusion

Today we learned about a treasure that God has put in our lives. This treasure is the vast number of things that we have, which God is powerfully able to use as tools, if we offer them to Him. Above all, we must be willing to trust and to obey His commands that He has given us. What is the Lord telling you to do today? What is he showing you? The greatest treasure that we are able to possess is all the tools through which God wants to manifest himself in your life.

Close with prayer.
Disciples Treasure Hunt
Discípulos Buscando Tesoros

Elijah and the widow of Zarephath
Day Two         Adults

**THEME:** God blesses those who act with faith.
**BIBLE PASSAGE:** 1 Kings 17:(1-7) 8-16
**MEMORY VERSE:** "The jar of meal was not emptied neither did the jug of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke by Elijah." 1 Kings 17:16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>The students will learn that the widow of Zarephath, though she saw she had little to share, was blessed by God for her faithful hospitality.</th>
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| Learning Goals | - The students will identify key elements of the story and relate them to their lives  
- The students will ask themselves: How is God asking us to show radical hospitality? |
| Preparation | - Pray for God’s guidance in sharing this lesson, and the remaining lessons of the week.  
- Read 1 Kings chapters 16 – 19 to get an overview of the story of Elijah, and his conflict with King Ahab and Queen Jezebel.  
- Think about times in your life when you have encountered surprising hospitality, and about times when you really stretched yourself to offer hospitality to someone.  
- If you decide to do Optional Activity: Locate a food bank in your congregation or in the community where you can have the class (or all the classes) donate food. |
| Material | - Bible for yourself and extra Bibles for students who may not have one.  
- Paper. Pencils or pens.  
- Poster-making materials (If you decide to do Optional Activity)  
- Name tags for the students  
- Today’s memory verse written on the board or on index cards (one word per index card) |

**Introduction**

*Greet the group. Let the young people know how happy you are to be there with them. Make them feel welcome and happy to be learning about God.*

*Meanwhile hand out nametags to the students and write their names on a list.*

*Open with a brief prayer (or invite one of the students to open with prayer).*

Disciples Treasure Hunt: Elijah and the widow of Zarephath        Adults: 1
Introduce today’s memory verse 1 Kings 17:16. If possible write the verse on a white board or chalkboard and have students begin by reading it. Repeat several times, each time erasing two or three of the words until the students can recite the passage by memory. If no chalkboard is available, write each word on its own index card and display that way, removing a couple of the cards each time you read through the verse.

Studying the Bible passage

Tell the students that the prophet Elijah is an important character in the Bible, and here in today’s passage is the first time he appears in the Bible. Elijah lived in the 9th century before Christ. Here in Elijah’s first documented pronouncement on behalf of God, Elijah tells Ahab king of Israel that a drought was coming over the land as punishment because Ahab had been particularly unfaithful to God, even worshiping Baal, the false god (I Kings 16:29-34). It is interesting to note that today’s story of the interaction between Elijah and the widow of Zarephath takes place in “enemy territory,” because Zarephath is in the kingdom of Sidon, from where King Ahab’s wife Jezebel had come. (Queen Jezebel would eventually seek to kill Elijah after Elijah, with God’s power, defeated the priests of the false god Baal [1 Kings 18-19]).

We do not know much about the other main character in the story, the widow of Zarephath. From 1 Kings 17 we may assume that at one point she had been from a family of means (had household help [v.15] and had a two story house [v.19]), but during this drought she had been affected as everyone else to the point of being one last meal from starvation. As a widow in her society, she would have been “at the bottom of the ladder” and thus particularly vulnerable.

Have the students read the extended passage (1 Kings 17:1-24). Tell them that you’ll focus the lesson today on the second part of the story (1 Kings 17:8-16), but that it will be helpful to see the fuller context of the passage. You may ask that the students take turns reading a verse each, or you may opt to have a reader’s theater, where one person will be assigned to be the narrator, and individual people would read what God, Elijah, and the Widow say in the story.

Reflecting on the Bible passage

Ask the students to focus on 1 Kings 17:8-16, and pose the following questions:

- Can you retell the story in your own words? (Individual students may give it a try; an option would be for a group of the students to choose to be characters and re-enact the story)
- After retelling or re-enacting the story, check again with the story as written in the Bible. Are there some parts that you left off? If so, what were they?
- What do you feel are the key moments in the story? Why?
- Where in the story do you see God at work?
- What do you think God was trying to teach Elijah?
- What do you think God was trying to teach the widow?
- Did you notice that God says that God had already commanded the widow to feed Elijah even before she met him (v.9)? What do you think that means?
- Did you notice how the widow refers to God as “the Lord YOUR God”? What do you think that means?
  - (Looking outside our main passage, read 1 Kings 17:24 and discuss the growth in the widow’s faith)
- What are the key themes of the story? (Among the answers they may offer are: faith, hospitality, obedience, trust, not being afraid, consequences for the King’s sin)
- Let’s focus for a while on the issue of hospitality.
  - What do you think it means that God told Elijah to find hospitality from one of the poorest persons on the land, instead of one of the richest? (Among their answers, they may suggest that it was a way to deepen Elijah’s sense of trust in God being the one providing him sustenance)
  - Hospitality in the time of Elijah (and even today in present-day Middle East) was extremely generous, even to the point of sacrificing for the sake of the visitor’s wellbeing. The widow was ready to go get Elijah water, but then she paused to explain her situation when Elijah actually asked for food. How do you feel for this widow in her predicament? How do you feel that Elijah asks her to feed HIM first and then feed herself and her family?
  - Describe what you think was going through the widow’s mind when she used what she thought would be the last of her oil and flour.
- What do we learn about Elijah’s faith? What do we learn about the widow’s faith?
- Why would this story of God’s power need to take place in “enemy” territory, in Queen Jezebel’s home region?

Hospitality is an important theme in the Bible. The Bible says “Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.” (Romans 12:13) [here “saints” refers to those who are part of the church community]. “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)

Have a student read how Ruth, another widow, experiences unexpected hospitality: Ruth 2:1-13. Who is offering and receiving hospitality here? What themes does this story have in common with the widow of Zarephath?

Optional additional passages to consider:
- Have a student read about the hospitality Abraham offered three mysterious strangers: Genesis 18:1-15. Who is offering and receiving hospitality here? What themes does this story have in common with the widow of Zarephath? (Hebrews 13:2 probably refers to this Abraham story)
- Have a student read about the hospitality Jesus requested of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. Who is offering and receiving hospitality here? What themes does this story have in common with the widow of Zarephath?

Here are a couple of questions to go deeper in the study:
- This story of Elijah and the widow is mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. Have one of the students read Luke 4:16-30.
  - Ask them what they think Jesus was trying to teach his hometown synagogue in verses 24-26.
  - Why was the reaction of the crowd so extreme?

Applying the Bible passage to our life

*Disciples Treasure Hunt: Elijah and the widow of Zarephath*  
*Adults: 3*
Tell the students that one of the lessons of the story of Elijah and the widow of Zarephath is about the radical hospitality that the widow offered Elijah. God had spoken to the widow and commanded her to care for this stranger who would come to her house. While it is not clear how God spoke to her or how much faith the widow had in God, she would appear to be ready to follow that command. But by the time Elijah showed up at her doorstep, the situation the widow was facing had gotten harder than it had been. She now was literally one meal away from having nothing left to eat. And yet, with the words of Elijah asking her not to be afraid, and to trust that God would provide, she took what little she had left and fed the stranger and then her family. Only then, when her faith was on the line, when her trust was on the line that God would do something unexpected with her dire situation, only then does she realize that God would indeed provide the resources for her to continue to feed her son, Elijah and her household.

Remind the students that this week we are exploring what we might consider “our treasure” thinking about the passage: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Luke 12:34). Certainly the widow was risking losing her dwindling treasure by giving food to Elijah, but in so doing, she discovered that a bigger treasure was her faith and trust in God. And since that was her bigger treasure, since she did not cling to the food but instead she clung to trust in God, then God rewarded her for her faithfulness to God’s command.

Ask the students to share:
- When was a time when you experienced someone offering you hospitality that surprised you? Why was it surprising?
- When was a time when you offered someone hospitality (which can mean more than just feeding someone: it can mean sharing your home, your possessions)?
- Have you ever offered someone hospitality that really wasn’t easy to offer? What made it difficult to offer?
- Should there be a sacrificial element to offering hospitality?

You may share with the students your own stories of hospitality. Help them consider how God may be asking them to offer hospitality in ways they have never done so before. Help them to focus not on clinging to their possessions, but rather to cling to trust in God as they share with others who are in need around them. Ask them:
- Who are people in need around us that we feel God is calling us to show hospitality?
- What are some ways to show hospitality to them? What would be an example of radical hospitality where our faith is stretched, like the widow offered Elijah?
- What are some concrete steps we can take to show that hospitality (as a VBS class, as a congregation, as a family)?

Consider now how your families and the congregation teach one another about hospitality
- How do you teach hospitality to your children?
- How does the church teach / show hospitality?
- What are some things the church could do to deepen our desire to show the kind of hospitality that the widow showed?

Optional Activity: Canned food drive
Help the students plan and organize a canned food drive to benefit a local community or church food bank (as a teacher you should identify one or two options for them). The class may decide to do a food drive just within their class, or they may want to invite other classes (or the whole church) to participate. They can make posters to invite the other classes or the church to participate. Help them set a date for collecting the items and a date to deliver them.

Alternatives to this activity could be a new clothing drive for a women’s shelter, new toy drive for a children’s hospital, new items for a community near or far that has been hurt by a disaster (hurricane, floods, war, etc).

You may want to coordinate with the youth and their teacher, since their class may be doing a food drive as well.

Conclusion

As you close the session, tell the students that God calls us to offer radical hospitality to people in need all around us. That hospitality may involve literally offering shelter and food, or it may involve opening our hearts to someone who is unloved and destitute. God challenges us to look past our limited resources and focus instead on God’s unlimited love and grace, and on the fact that God can use us to be instruments of that divine bounty.

Encourage the students to return for tomorrow’s class. Offer a closing prayer.
Disciples Treasure Hunt
Discípulos Buscando Tesoros

Jesus feeds the five thousand
Day Three  Adult

**THEME:** God’s abundance surprises us

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** Matthew 14:13-21

**MEMORY VERSE:** “Jesus said to them ‘They need not go away: you give them something to eat.’ “ Matthew 14:16

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**Objective**
The students will discover and praise this God of authority, power and abundance, and also will see Jesus as that source of eternal life and abundance. John 10:10 “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” When we put what we are and have in the God’s hands, even the least of our resources, God turns them into abundance and uses us as instruments of blessings to many people (Matthew 14:16)

**Preparation**
- Look for the direction of God in prayer so that he will give you wisdom and the proper words so that everyone can understand the objective of this class. Also pray for the kids that you will have in your class and that the Holy Spirit would move in the hearts of the children that have needs.
- Dedicate an appropriate amount of time to prepare the class, read the passage.
- Read the biblical passage several times to get into the story of Jesus’ surprising miracles.
- If there is enough time you can spice up the story by allowing the students to participate spontaneously.
- Prepare the verse to memorize in a visual way (on poster board). Learn it well so the student sees your example and if it’s possible keep the verse in the room every day.
- Prepare and have your material in order as you’re going to be using it.

**Material**
- A large piece of paper with the alphabet, the numbers 0 to 9, the three basic colors and the seven musical notes of the musical scale, all that wrote on the large piece of paper.
- Poster board
- Crayons or color pencils

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**Introduction**

*Ask the students.*

Do you know how many letters there are in the alphabet?
There are 26; the dictionary and every word in every book in English are all made from only these letters. Amazing!

Do you know how many single digits there are?

Only 10: 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9. With them we can make any kind of mathematical equations. Amazing!

Do you know how many notes are in the musical scale?

Only 7 (plus 5 flats / sharps in between them) A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and that covers all music ever written all the musical compositions of the world.

You know what are the basic colors?

There are only three: red, yellow and blue and with them we can make many combinations and create the great variety of colors that surrounds us. Amazing!

Each one of these things mentioned here seem like little things, but together they are marvelous and if this surprises you, then God’s abundance will surprise us even more.

**Studying the Bible passage**

*As a teacher you can use your creativity. Read the biblical passage with passion transporting the student’s mind to the scene, emphasizing the main character of JESUS showing the interest of the people to hear the amazing words of JESUS. Let the students talk discovering that the people needed food. Identify the attitude of the disciples in this situation, and if it’s possible prepare a picture or illustration of 3 loaves of bread and 2 fish, to help the students feel connected to the Bible story.*

*You can also have the students take turns reading the passage, or having individuals choose to be narrator or a character in the story and then presenting the passage as readers’ theater.*

**Reflecting on the Bible passage**

*Keeping your Bible open, you can highlight some of the scenes or important moments in the story. For example*

**A. The people’s willingness to hear Jesus teaching, giving themselves the time to listen to him, without concern for their physical needs (they needed to eat). We have two lessons**

- **a.** We should have an attitude like the crowd, being willing to hear and dedicate time to the things related to God.
- **b.** The disciples’ attitude is an example of loving our neighbor, asking us to consider the needs of others. Hopefully we are not comfortable at church enjoying God’s abundance without then sharing it. We should be sensitive to the needs of those outside our walls.

**B. Think of the 5 loaves and the 2 fish. Whoever had those supplies in hand would not have thought they would have been used to be a blessing to so many people. Brothers and sisters, what you have and what you are amount to very little until you put your whole self in God’s hands. Even when we place our meager possessions in God’s hands, God turns them into abundance. It’s surprising how God’s abundance satisfies the needs of so many people**

**Applying the Bible passage to our life**

Disciples Treasure Hunt: Jesus feeds the five thousand  
Adults: 2
What a beautiful story! The question is: what would change in my life from that point on? We are living in a time similar to Jesus'. There is doubt, sin, confusion. However, there are many people willing to hear the message of love, peace and salvation. Perhaps you identify with the people in the crowd coming to listen to Jesus. If so, great! He is the answer to your needs, not only physical but spiritual. As a church it is time to proclaim this message, it's time to be concerned about those people around us who are in need. God calls us as we face such need around us:

YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING

THEY DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE
THEY DON'T HAVE TO KEEP SUFFERING
THEY DON'T HAVE TO WAIT

Conclusion

Maybe you can invite a volunteer to share a life experience in which he/she experienced God's abundance. If there isn’t a volunteer, the teacher may wish to share something on the subject. Remember that your testimony can be of great benefit to your students, making the lesson something they can trust and believe even deeper.

Offer a closing prayer
Disciples Treasure Hunt
Discípulos Buscando Tesoros

Mary Anoints Jesus
Day Four     Adults

THEME: God welcomes our heart-felt worship
BIBLE PASSAGE: John 12:1-8
MEMORY VERSE: "Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus' feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume." John 12:3

Objective To learn from this passage how Mary and we show our love for God in worship.

Learning Goals To learn from this passage how Mary and we show our love for God in worship.

Preparation
- Prepare for this lesson by first asking God to open the eyes of your understanding of His Word (Ps. 119:18) and to prepare you to teach His message.
- Read John 11 to put the story in context.

Material
- Bible, paper and pencil for each student, and a blackboard or marking board to write on.
- You may want to have a short worship service maybe with some soft music, words to a hymn or song, litany of prayers, candles or scented oil for anointing the class members (See worship materials).
- Balloons, small candy (to liven up the question and discussion time).
- A map could be used to show how close Bethany was to Jerusalem.

Biblical Explanation and Background:

Jesus goes to Bethany, which is only 2 miles from Jerusalem. He has received word that Lazarus, his dear friend is very ill. It is dangerous for Jesus to go near Jerusalem because some of the Jewish officials are looking for him. Jesus takes the risk and goes to Bethany, but once he arrives he finds that Lazarus has been dead for 4 days. He goes to the tomb with Mary and Martha, who are Lazarus sisters and he requests that the stone be rolled away. He tells Lazarus to “Come out” and Lazarus appears. Jesus raises Lazarus from the grave. Word of this gets back to the Pharisees. They have seen over and over the power that Jesus has and they begin to plan to have him arrested and put to death!

Six days before the Passover festival is to begin, Jesus and his disciples are honored at the home of Lazarus and his sisters. Martha has prepared a wonderful dinner for their guests. Then Mary, who says not a word in this entire passage, does this extraordinary act. She brings out a
pound of costly perfume. This perfume cost 300 denarii, which is a full year's salary. Mary takes the perfume, washes Jesus' feet and then dries them with her hair. There is no doubt that this act does not go unnoticed because the sweet fragrance from the perfume fills the house. Mary takes on a big risk by doing this. She has used a year's wages to buy this perfume. One wonders what she had to sacrifice to afford such an extravagant gift. Also, she is a woman and it was not customary for a woman to touch a man in this way.

Judas Iscariot is the first to speak about this act by asking, "Why was this perfume not sold for 300 denarii and the money given to the poor? (12:5) This passage also comments that Judas was about to betray Jesus. In the week following this event, Jesus will make his grand entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He will then celebrate the Last Supper with his Disciples, where he will also be arrested due to Judas disclosing Jesus' location to the guards. It was clear that Judas was not concerned about the poor. He was the one who kept the shared funds of Jesus and the disciples. The Gospel of John states that Judas was a thief and stole from this purse. It is clear that if the perfume had been sold to aid the poor, it would only be Judas who would benefit from it.

Jesus comes to Mary's defense by saying, "Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." (12:7-8) Some commentators are unclear why the reference is made of the perfume being purchased for Jesus' burial. Some think it reflects the future action of Jesus washing his disciple's feet (John 13:1-20). Some think that this anointing foreshadows his impending death. Jewish burial customs included anointing the body with perfumed oil. (Texts for Preaching - A Lectionary Commentary Based on the NRSV - Year C; by Charles Cousar; Westminster John Knox Press; 1994) Jesus makes an odd reference to the poor. It almost sounds like he is disregarding them. But, the Gospel of John wants to emphasize that Jesus will only be with them a very short time. His arrest, trial and crucifixion will happen during the Passover. The end of Jesus' time here on earth is drawing near and John takes this moment to remind us of this.

Introduction

- Greet the group. Offer an opening prayer asking God's Spirit be present in your discussion and worship as you study his Word.

- Briefly go over the lesson yesterday regarding how God showed the disciples that God's abundance can be surprising.

Studying the Bible passage

John 11 gives us background into the story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. It also informs us of the Pharisees beginning to plot to have Jesus arrested and killed. It is clearly dangerous for Jesus to remain in Bethany, which is near Jerusalem. It is important to know that this story takes place only a week before Jesus is arrested and crucified.

Read John 12:1-8 (Maybe have the kids take turns reading a verse - make sure they can read loud enough for everyone to hear.) Teacher may want to retell the story in their own words. To liven up the class, during the question time, the question can be typed on pieces of paper and inserted in empty balloons. Then blow up each balloon. Each student takes a balloon, pops it, reads the question and answers it.
Discuss the following questions with the students:

- What part of the story stands out to you and why?
- What kind of risk did Mary take? Why?
- Mary does not utter a word in this story, but many commentators claim she is the prophet in this story. Why?
- Why does Judas question Mary's actions?
- Why do you think Jesus defends Mary?
- How does Jesus respond to Mary's actions?
- Does it appear to you that Jesus disregards the poor?
- Why do you think Jesus emphasizes the fact that they will not always have him?
- What do you think about Mary's extravagance?
- If "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34), then where is Mary's heart?
- What would that mean in the way she lived her life?

Applying the Bible passage to our life

To liven up the class time, you may have each question typed on separate pieces of paper (tape it to a piece of candy), have the students pick one, read it and answer it. Once they complete the task have them eat their candy. To encourage further discussion, the teacher can ask if there are any others that would like to comment on any of the questions.

Mary's anointing, though criticized by some, was an act of worship which Jesus welcomed. What are some ways we can express our love for God in worship?

- Define worship
- List elements of worship and participants in worship
- Are there extravagant moments in devotion (like Mary's actions) during a worship service at your church? If not, should there be?
- What can you imagine could one such act of extravagant devotion?
- Soren Kierkegard view of worship was that the pastor, the choir and the entire congregation are on the stage, participating during worship, and God is seated in the audience enjoying it.
- In worshiping Jesus in church, what is the favorite part of the worship service for you? Why? (Have everyone go around and share their favorite part.)
- Are you moved by the music? What is your favorite praise song or hymn? Why?
- What parts of worship do you find moving?
- How many of you find the prayers most meaningful? What types of prayers are there? (confession, opening, illumination, prayers of the people or thanksgiving?)
• What do enjoy about the celebration of the sacraments - communion and baptism? What do you enjoy about each of these?

• How do the reading of scripture and the sermon glorify God and inspire you?

• How do you feel when you miss a Sunday worship service?

• How do you express your love for God in daily worship?

• What role can daily devotional and a weekly Bible Study with yourself or with others have in your worship life?

If time permits, you may want to have a short worship service with the class. There are suggested worship materials following the lesson or feel free to use your own.

Conclusion

Mary took a huge risk in anointing Jesus with the perfume. But she did it because she loved and honored him. She wanted to show this by worshiping him. God gave us his only Son, who died on the cross for the forgiveness for our sins. May we realize the importance for us to show our love to God by participating in worship daily with our creator, redeemer and sustainer.

See the closing prayer in the worship materials or go around asking everyone to share one way they will commit to worshipping God in their daily lives, lifting this all up in a prayer to God.
Worship Service Material

Opening responses:
Leader: We have come out of the darkness. We will celebrate this day.
ALL: GOD HAS CREATED THIS DAY FOR US. WE WILL CELEBRATE THIS DAY.
Leader: Rain or shine – it doesn’t matter. We will celebrate this day.
ALL: WE CAN USE THIS DAY TO START AGAIN. WE WILL CELEBRATE THIS DAY.
Leader: We can become new. We will celebrate this day.
ALL: WE WON’T LET IT GO TO WASTE. WE WILL CELEBRATE THIS DAY.
Leader: It is a gift from the creator of the universe. We will celebrate this day.

Song of Praise: “Let It Rise”

http://www.whitewatervalley.org/ministries/vbs/vbs_2008/music/Let_It_Rise.mp3

http://www.whitewatervalley.org/ministries/vbs/vbs_2008/music/Gloria_a_Dios.mp3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Let It Rise</th>
<th>¡Gloria a Dios!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by Holland Davis</td>
<td>// ¡Nuestras voces al Señor levantemos! //</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>//Let the glory of the Lord rise among us //</td>
<td>¡Alabanzas al Señor levantemos!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let the praises of the King rise among us.</td>
<td>¡Gloria_a Dios!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let it rise!</td>
<td>// ¡Nuevos himnos al Señor entonemos! //</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>//Let the songs of the Lord rise among us//</td>
<td>¡Nuestro gozo en el Señor compartamos!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let the joy of the King rise among us. Let it rise!</td>
<td>¡Gloria_a Dios! // ¡Oh, gloria_a Dios! //</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Oh, let it rise! //</td>
<td>// ¡Gloria_a Dios! //</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prayer of Confession:
Leader: Holy God, Maker of all,                                   
ALL: HAVE MERCY ON US.                                             
Leader: Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,                      
ALL: HAVE MERCY ON US.                                             
Leader: Holy Spirit, breath of life,                              
ALL: HAVE MERCY ON US.                                             

Leader: Let us in silence remember our own faults and failings.  
(Pause)                                                        
ALL: IN THE COMMUNITY OF CHRIST’S CHURCH AND IN THE PRESENCE OF MY PEERS, I CONFESS TO GOD THAT I HAVE Sinned IN MY THOUGHTS, WORDS AND ACTIONS. I HAVE NOT LOVED GOD, CARED FOR GOD’S WORLD, OR RESPECTED GOD’S PEOPLE AS I SHOULD. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS AND PRAY FOR GOD’S FORGIVENESS.
Leader: May God forgive us, Christ be a friend to us, and the Spirit renew and change our lives.

ALL: AMEN.

Scripture Reading:
“Six days before Passover, Jesus entered Bethany where Lazarus, so recently raised from the dead, was living. Lazarus and his sisters invited Jesus to dinner at their home. Martha served. Lazarus was one of those sitting at the table with them. Mary came in with a jar of very expensive aromatic oils, anointed and massaged Jesus feet, and then wiped them with her hair. The fragrance of the oils filled the house.

Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, even when getting ready to betray him, said, “Why wasn't this oil sold and the money given to the poor? It would have easily brought three hundred silver pieces.” He said this not because he cared two cents about the poor but because he was a thief. He was in charge of their common funds, but also embezzled them.

Jesus said, “Let her alone. She’s anticipating and honoring the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you. You don’t always have me.”

Reflecting God’s Word (Different Options):
• Have soft music playing and have scented oil poured in a small bowl. Let smell fill the room. Ask:
  o What are some fragrant, extravagant blessings God has given you or your family?
  o How is God inviting you to deeper connections in worship?
• The leader begins by having the person to the right extend their hand, dipping their finger in the oil, marking a cross on the person's hand and saying, “The Lord bless you and keep you, Amen.” The next person would turn to their neighbor and do the same thing to them. The oil would be passed around the circle until everyone was anointed.
• Have soft music playing and have a candle for each person. The leader would begin by coming forward, lighting a candle and saying “I commit myself to ______________________________ in order to give my heartfelt worship to God. OR they could come forward, light a candle and say a prayer for someone. For example, I pray for John Doe, who is suffering from terminal cancer. Everyone would be encouraged to come forward to light a candle.
**Song of Praise:**  “Lord, I Lift You Name on High” (or close with the VBS them song)

http://www.whitewatervalley.org/ministries/vbs/vbs_2008/music/Lord_I_Lift_Your_Name_on_High.mp3

http://www.whitewatervalley.org/ministries/vbs/vbs_2008/music/Senor_Tu_Nombre_Exaltare.mp3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lord I lift your name on high</th>
<th>Señor tu nombre exaltaré</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By Paul Baloche</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord I lift your name on high, Lord I love to sing your praises,</td>
<td>Señor tu nombre exaltaré</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m so glad you’re in my life,</td>
<td>me deleito en adorarte,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m so glad you came to save us,</td>
<td>te agradezco que en mi vida estés,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You came from heaven to earth to show the way</td>
<td>que llegaras a salvarme,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the sky to the cross my debt to pay</td>
<td>Llegaste del trono para mostrarnos la luz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the cross to the grave</td>
<td>de tu trono a la cruz y mi deuda pagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from the grave to the sky,</td>
<td>de la cruz al morir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord I lift your name on high.</td>
<td>Tu nombre exaltaré.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Closing Responsive Prayer:**

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made.  
ALL: WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT.  
Leader: Go in peace and serve the Lord.  
ALL: WILL SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT.  
Leader: Glory be to God who made us and to Christ who save us and to the Holy Spirit who keeps us in faith.  
ALL: AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW AND SHALL BE FOREVER. AMEN.

*The Book of Uncommon Prayer for Youth Ministry*; by Steven L. Case; Zondervan; 2002
Disciples Treasure Hunt
Discípulos Buscando Tesoros

The Widow offers two coins
Day Five Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME:</th>
<th>God knows our hearts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIBLE PASSAGE:</td>
<td>Mark 12:41-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEMORY VERSE:</td>
<td>“Then he called his disciples and said to them: ‘Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury.’” Mark 12:43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Objective
To help young people give their lives completely to God

- Knowledge: That through the Bible, young people will know how to give their lives completely to God just like the widow did.
- Convictions: That the youth would have a deep conviction that God deserves our total surrender to Him.
- Behavior: That the students will start to surrender different areas of their lives to God.
- The students will learn that when the widow offers her two coins, Jesus knew how much the widow loved God in her heart. In what way can you show your love for God? So that the students understand that the earthy things are fleeting happiness, money, fame, prestige, power, and more that a true son of God and all of who he is should be centered in making eternal treasure. (Above all else, guard you heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Prov. 4:23)

Preparation
- Remember that it is important to ask for the direction of the Holy Spirit, in order that He opens our understanding and gives us the wisest of words.
- Bring your Bible in order that the students see that the class is based on it.
- Study well the lesson in order to have a good flow in your class and so that the teaching will be effective.
- Each student has spiritual needs, and you have to be praying for each one of them in your devotional time.
- Invite them to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- I suggest three objectives for your class: Teach your students to think; Teach the people to learn; Teach your student to work

Material
- Bible
- Use a blackboard depending on the place
- Bring a box with different pieces in side and have them choose which one has the most value
Biblical Background

In Matthew 6:25-34 Jesus teaches the disciples: where is the center of our interest? He advises his disciples to not toil, nor worry about daily life: what we will eat, drink or how to dress. If God cares about the birds of the air, how much more does he care for us? Worrying is not worth it. Toiling about the daily things is surely the mode in how the Gentiles developed their life. The disciples, knowing that they have a Father in the heavens that cares for them, should have another focus: the kingdom of God, recognize Christ as their Lord and live according to his commands. God will care for those in the most special way just as he does with nature. At the very minimum believers should never be worried in respect to their daily lives.

Looking toward the kingdom of God, Jesus has firm promises for us, taking into account the will of his Father, which consists of giving the kingdom to his children. By this promise it is possible to sell your goods and distribute your possessions to the poor. The important thing is not the earthly wealth, rather the heavenly kingdom that is not subject to corruption. Our interest show where our heart is. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Introduction

• Welcome the students, especially those who are attending for the first time.
• Note the names of all the students and take attendance each day of class
• Motivate the student to invite friends.
• Remember the general theme of the class.
• Help the students memorize the passage for today.

• Divide your group into 4 teams. Number the students from 1-4 so that the students are evenly divided and to prevent students from only interacting with their closest friends. Assign each group a section of the room to work in. (2 minutes)
• Pass out a marker and a poster board to each team. Tell them to write the following question on their poster: What would you do with one million dollars? The end of the game is meant to introduce the concept of giving everything to the Lord. Every group will have to justify how they spent one million dollars that wasn’t theirs. They will have 3 minutes to write down as many things as they can. Please start this activity by counting to 3. This way every group will start at the same time. Kids like to work under pressure. It’s more exciting! (5 minutes)
• Afterwards, ask the students to share their lists. Observe, like a teacher would, how many responses are directed at God and ask them the following questions: (5 minutes)
  o Was it difficult to think about how you were going to justify what you had spent?
  o Have you ever spent something that wasn’t yours?
  o How would you feel if you were spending money that was not yours and the owner of this money saw how you were spending it?

• Transition: Today we are going to study about a woman that also spent everything she had and had someone watching her.
Studying the Bible passage

- Now divide the students into pairs and ask them to read Mark 12:41-44. Hand out blank paper and pencils to respond to the following questions: (6 minutes)
  - What was Jesus doing according to verse 41?
  - What surprised Jesus in verses 42-44?

I. God looks at what you do (6 minutes)

Read the first question: What was Jesus doing according to verse 41? Now ask 3 or 4 partners to volunteer to share their answers. After start to explain and show them what the Bible says. For example: “It says in the Bible in verse 41…”

Jesus saw how the people in town gave their money. Jesus was resting (in the previous chapters when Jesus was resting he was not interested in what others were doing,) but this time he began to observe the people and discovered some very important things. We should also remember that Jesus is God and is omniscient. He knows everything, so we can know that he does not only see the person, but the heart.

If Jesus could discover the intentions, the motives for why they offered and how much it was they gave, will he not continue to look at how much we give of our time, strength, and money? YES OF COURSE!!! God is observing what you do, why you do what you do and how you do it. God is watching you...

II. God examines what you do (6 min.)

Now read the second question: According to verses 42-44, what was it that surprised Jesus? Select three of four partners to share their answers. Later show them with the Bible the answers. The Bible says in verses 42-44 (NKJV):

> 42. Then a poor widow came and threw in two mites, which makes a quadrans. 43. So he called his disciples to Himself and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; 44. for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”

(Here is the same passage in the NRSV:

> 42 A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. 43 Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury: 44. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”)

Jesus saw that a widow arrived and the Bible says that the widow was POOR. This widow deposited two mites or one quadrans (the money of this time). William Hendriksen gives references to these amounts and says:

The original says two mites. How much was that? Two mites equal one quadrans (Mark 12:42); four quadrans, that is, eight mites equal one as or asario; and sixteen as to arrive at the value of one denarius. Remember that the denarius was the running salary of one day of work for a day laborer (Matthew 20:9-10)
Given that it is estimated that a denarius today in the US would be equivalent to $40 which is roughly the minimum salary of a laborer per day, and an 'asario' would equal $2.50 and a mite 31¢ cents, given that the two mite that the widow offered would be equal to 62¢, or rather not even one peso. These facts are approximate.

But we see here that this attitude surprises Jesus and he calls his disciples over and says to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury", how can Jesus say this? How can he say that the widow gave more than anyone else, when we see that what she gave was not even worth one dollar? But Jesus responds and says, "44. For they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood." How surprising is Jesus response.

- First he says that SHE PUT IN ALL THAT SHE HAD, saying that she had no more to give, there was nothing more in her 'wallet.'
- Second HER WHOLE LIVELIHOOD, this tells us that she didn’t even have any more money to eat that day; she gave everything. We could say, ’Why didn’t she keep one mite for herself? No, she did not do it. She knew that God would not fail her and because of that she sacrificed EVERYTHING.

The commentator William Hendricksen says that this money represented all that this woman had to live. God is examining all that we do, all that we think, all that we say based on what we hand over in total. If you are not giving all of your strength, all of your time and all of your money to God you are discredited for God. Remember, God examines what you do (Could this have been a way in which God was reminding the disciples that they should care for this widow without resources?)

Reflecting on the Bible passage

TREASURE. Matthew 2:11; Mathew 13:52. Utilizing metaphorically the heart in these expressions are virtually equivalent to that of Mathew 6:1, “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them: for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.” The promise does not refer simple to the present life, rather that he looks forward toward eternity. In Second Corinthians 4:7 this treasure does not get lost. All that he has prepared, "Who will it be for?" (4:7) “But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.” What threatens the treasures of this earth, the money, the beautiful clothing and material things, is not able to damage our treasure in heaven. What people do with their time with God is not lost; the life that is lived with its gaze fixed on God will have eternal life.

The person that has their heart close to that has ventured much. He/she that has lived with their gaze fixed on God, their heart set on God; he/she that has worked for the reign of God thinks about the reign of God. He/she that has their treasure and wealth stored up in heaven, is in heaven with their heart and their greatest wishes. For those whose alms reach for the treasure in heaven, the reign of God represents the center of their life.

Consider the birds, the flowers (Mt. 6:26,28). What Jesus says about them does not mean that we don’t have to work to survive; instead, it means that even if these creatures receive God’s care, then certainly more so will God provide for us. We have been blessed with gifts and talents that make us able to work.
We should not set our hearts on things from this world. Where we go wrong is when we make those things the focus of our lives. Our purpose should be to be obedient. 1 Cor. 10:31

When we focus on obedience to God's will our principle joy, God feels so happy.

Applying the Bible passage to our life

a. Remember that you are of great importance to God; he sees what you do and examines what you do. He hopes for us to hand over our lives to him just like the widow did when she gave everything that she had. Are you giving everything over to God or are you only giving him what you have to spare, are you first looking to yourself?

b. Hand out to the students the card with questions and give them three minutes to answer them. Let them individually answer the questions and mention to them that they don't need to hand in the card. Encourage them to be honest with themselves.

c. Tell them to keep the card and that it is a commitment we are making with God, he will be watching and examining what they are writing from this moment on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All or Nothing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Am I handing everything over to God, or am I only doing it halfway?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What areas of my life have I not given to God?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How can I hand these areas over to God?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The treasure that God offers us is eternal life and he has given us the privilege of obtaining that through Jesus Christ.

Your life has much value; God has bought you with the blood of his only son Jesus Christ and he has made you his special treasure.

We exist on this earth to work for God. By doing that we will achieve creating more treasures in heaven and everything should be done for the glory of God.

What type of treasure are you making?
If you desire to secure your life and have treasure all you have to do is accept Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

We should be looking for treasures in this earth, not in silver and gold, but in heavenly treasures. God rewards sincere service in the afterlife, he designates that to make treasures in heaven. The heart of people is where their treasure is.

We should dedicate all of our time, abilities and resources in making eternal treasures. Paul says to "look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but
what cannot be seen is eternal." (2 Cor. 4:18). Concentrate your attention in the things above not in the things of this earth.

Conclude with a prayer.

**Conclusion**

a. Recap: Today we have seen that God sees and examines what we do, he knows our hearts. Do not forget that each time you do something he will be watching you and examining you, I encourage you to keep your commitment with God.

b. Read the text with your students three times to memorize it and afterwards invite a volunteer to say it. Encourage them to memorize the text in their homes.

c. Close the class with a prayer: invite a volunteer to pray that you would have a perspective of what they all just heard.

d. Finish with this phrase: Don't forget he WATCHES YOU AND EXAMINES WHAT YOU DO...