



The Plot to Kill Jesus; Jesus Enters Jerusalem

John 11:45 - 12:19

The Plot to Kill Jesus; Triumphal Entry

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Nothing in this world compares to the new life that Jesus offers.

PPT Key Verse

Key Verse: *Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity.* - John 12:25

Props: Perfume, cologne, or essential oil (with a spicy or musky smell) in a fancy bottle, a small cloth; **Optional:** palm branches (real, or made from construction paper)

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: If you have your Bible with you, hold it up high so I can see it. Awesome! I want you to bring your Bible with you every week. It is God's word. It is powerful (Hebrews 4:12) and I want you to be VERY familiar with it. Open your Bibles to Genesis 1, the very first chapter in the very first book. Leave your Bibles open there for just a minute.

Last week we learned about Jesus raising His dear friend, Lazarus, from the dead. **Ask:** Does anyone remember **how** Jesus did this? *He said Lazarus come forth!* **Say:** Jesus simply **spoke**, and death was shattered! Now, who can stand up and read Genesis 1:3, really loudly? **Choose a volunteer. After they read the verse, ask them to re-read just the first three words.** **Say:** Did you hear that? "And God said." These three words are repeated throughout the creation story. God spoke and all of creation came into being. Then, when Jesus, Who is fully God, spoke, He overcame death. Our God is so POWERFUL! His mere words created the universe and they give life.

With that in mind, it makes it even more amazing that God cares so deeply for each one of us. When Jesus looked into the faces of Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha, He cried. He cried because He loved them and He could feel their suffering. The same is true for every person in this room. Jesus loves you deeply. He knows when you are hurting, He cares, and He will never leave you.

THE PLOT TO KILL JESUS (John 11:45-57)

Say: Jesus performed the miracle of raising Lazarus from the dead out in the open, in front of many people. He did this so that the people watching would believe that He was God's Son, and put their trust in Him (John 11:42). Many people put their faith in Him. But some of the people went to the Pharisees to tell them what Jesus had done.

Remember, the Pharisees were the Jewish religious leaders. They were supposed to teach and model God's love, but they did not have love or mercy in their hearts (Matthew 23:4, 23). Jesus had many things to say against these men (Matthew 23). The Pharisees had become very proud (Matthew 23:5). They thought they were better than other people. They cared more about themselves than other people (Matthew 23:25). The Pharisees knew that God had promised to send the Messiah. But sadly, they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. All they could see was that if people started believing in Jesus, the people would no longer follow them. They were afraid to lose their wealth and power.

The Pharisees and chief priests held a meeting to decide what to do about Jesus.

"What can we do?" they asked. "This man is doing many miraculous signs. If we let Him keep on doing this, everyone will believe in Him. Then the Romans will come. They will take away our temple and our nation." - John 11:47b-48

Did you hear that? The Pharisees and chief priests **admitted** that Jesus was doing miracles and signs! But they still **refused** to put their faith in Him because of their greed. At that time, the Jewish people were being ruled by the Roman government. The Pharisees said that if the Jewish people started following Jesus and calling Him King, the Roman government would get angry and punish the Jewish nation. The Pharisees told themselves that they were only doing what was best for the people. But this was just an excuse to hold on to their own power and money.

One of them spoke up. His name was Caiaphas. He was high priest at that time. He said, "You don't know anything at all! You don't realize what is good for you. It is better if one man dies for the people than if the whole nation is destroyed." - John 11:49

Because He was the chief priest, God allowed Caiaphas to know that Jesus would soon die for the good of the Jews (John 11:51-52). But Caiaphas did not understand that Jesus would WILLINGLY die to take away the sins of all who put their trust in Him.

Note to Teacher: Notice the sovereignty of God shown in John 11:51-52. Because Caiaphas was the high priest, God gave him a prophecy concerning the death of Christ. *"He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one."* NIV (prophesied: propheteuo - to declare what can only be known by divine inspiration, Thayer's Lexicon.) God was faithful to the "position" of high priest that He had created (Leviticus 21:10), even though the man currently holding the position was ungodly. Of course, the self-absorbed Caiaphas could not fathom the truth that crossed his own lips. Jesus had to die - not to keep the political system in tact, but to become the atoning sacrifice for the Jewish nation and for all men.

Next we read these chilling words: *"So from that day on, the Jewish rulers planned to kill Jesus."* (John 11:53) This was a real life murder plot! These men made their plans in secret, because they were afraid that the people would get angry with them for plotting against Jesus (Mark 14:1-2). The sacred feast of Passover was coming soon. They planned to arrest and kill Jesus as soon as the Passover Feast was over (Matthew 26:4-5).

Because of the plot against Him, Jesus and His disciples left and went to stay near the desert. The Pharisees and chief priests gave orders that if anyone found out where Jesus was, he must report it. Tens of thousands of Jewish people came to Jerusalem during the week before the Passover Feast. The people wondered if Jesus would come to the feast.

MARY ANNOINTS JESUS (John 12:1-11)



Say: Six days before the Feast, Jesus went back to Bethany where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha lived. There was a dinner given in Jesus' honor. Imagine how grateful Lazarus and his sisters were to Jesus. Martha served the meal, while Lazarus reclined at the table with Jesus. Back then, in their part of the world, friends and family sat around a low table. They didn't sit in upright chairs, but on pillows or low couches. Doesn't this sound like a fun way to eat? It allowed people to relax and have fun together. Lazarus was sitting and eating with Jesus. Have you ever thought of Lazarus' life after Jesus raised him from the dead? He was given new life and he could walk, talk, eat, and laugh with friends.

Mary came in with a bottle of perfume that was made from a plant called Nard (or Spikenard). It came from very far away, so it was very expensive. **Teacher: Hold up your bottle.** In fact, she had about two cups of the perfume, which was worth a whole year's pay. While everyone else was eating and talking, Mary knelt down beside Jesus and poured out the perfume on Him (John 12:3, Mark 14:3). **Pour some of your perfume on the cloth and walk through your students. Wave the cloth so they can smell the perfume.** Then she leaned over and wiped off the excess perfume from His feet with her long hair. The other guests may not have even noticed Mary until the house was filled with the sweet smell of the perfume. It's clear that Mary knew Jesus was the Messiah. He showed that He had power over death and that He could give new life. Mary gave up the most valuable thing she owned to worship the Savior. Jesus called her actions "beautiful." (Mark 14:6)

Some of Jesus' disciples complained that this was a waste of the expensive perfume (Matthew 26:8). One of them, Judas, complained that the perfume should have been sold and the money given to poor people. But the Bible tells us that Judas didn't really care about the poor. He wanted to keep some of the money for himself (John 12:5-6).

Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "The perfume was meant for the day I am buried. You will always have the poor among you. But you won't always have Me." - John 12:7-8

Jesus spoke of His burial, because within the week He would give up His life to save people from their sin. He told Judas to leave Mary alone. Of course it is a wonderful thing to take care of poor people, but the BEST thing to do is to worship Jesus (Luke 10:41-42). Mary did not neglect the privilege of worshipping Jesus while she was with Him.

Note to Teacher: This was not the first time Mary chose spending time with Jesus over doing good work (Luke 10:38-42). Mary poured out her love offering on Jesus. It was NOT a waste! It was a beautiful expression of her praise.

Application: We were created to know God and praise Him (Isaiah 43:7, Acts 17:27). But, many times we become too busy to spend time with God: too busy to read His word, talk to Him, praise Him, enjoy His creation, and think about Him. We can even become busy doing good things such as helping others. Nothing that we can do is BETTER than abiding with Jesus. Remaining with Jesus is the BEST thing we can do.

Say: While Jesus was having dinner, a large crowd of Jews came to see Him. They also wanted to see Lazarus because he had been raised from the dead. Wouldn't you want to see Jesus and Lazarus?

Because of Lazarus, many of the Jews were starting to follow Jesus. They were putting their faith in Him. - John 12:11

So, the chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too (John 12:11). Notice how one sin leads to another. It was no longer enough for them to kill Jesus, now they wanted to kill Lazarus also. When would they stop? Would they kill everyone He ever healed?

JESUS ENTERS JERUSALEM (John 12:12-19)

The next day the large crowd that had come for the (Passover) Feast heard that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem. So they took branches from palm trees and went out to meet Him. They shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord! "Blessed is the King of Israel!" - John 12:12-13

News that Jesus was on His way spread quickly through the crowded the streets of Jerusalem. The people picked palm branches and covered the dusty road that led into town. Some people even laid their cloaks along the road (Matthew 21:8). **Optional:** Ask for volunteers to come up and lay palm branches down in a path. This was their way of "rolling out the red carpet" to welcome Jesus. The people shouted, "Hosanna," which means, "Save us, now!" Have half of the class shout "Hosanna!" and have the other half shout, "Save us, now!" They also quoted from an Old Testament passage in Psalm 118 that talks about the Messiah (Psalm 118:26). The people called Jesus the King of Israel. It would seem that the crowd finally understood Who Jesus was, and they welcomed Him into Jerusalem.

Jesus sent two of His disciples to get a young donkey for Him to ride on (Matthew 21:1-3). This fulfilled another one of God's promises about the Messiah. Zechariah 9:9 said that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem (Zion) on a donkey's colt.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred (Matthew 21:10a). The crowd was buzzing with talk of Jesus and how He raised Lazarus from the dead. It would have seemed like a big party was thrown in Jesus' honor. The disciples were caught up in the excitement. They didn't realize until later that the events that were happening right in front of their eyes were God's promises being fulfilled.

The Pharisees became even more angry and frustrated because so many people were following Jesus (John 12:19). But very soon the tide would turn.

Application: (See alternate application for older children below.) The foolish Pharisees hated Jesus because they wanted to keep their power and money. Just the opposite, Mary gladly poured out her most valuable possession at the feet of Jesus. Mary knew that the things we have in this life are NOTHING compared to what Jesus offers. The things we have in this life like toys, games, jewelry, clothes, and popularity, will all pass away (Matthew 6:19). But what Jesus offers - forgiveness of our sins, peace with God, true joy, and everlasting life - these things will last forever! (Romans 5:1-11).

What about you? Are you hanging on to things that won't last? Or are you, like Mary, willing to put God first, knowing that nothing compares to abiding with Him?

Application option for older students: A very wise man once said, "He is no fool who gives what He cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose." This is a quote from Jim Elliot, a missionary who was killed while sharing God's truth with a tribe of people who did not know Jesus. It means the things we have in this life are NOTHING compared to what Jesus offers. The things we have in this life - toys, games, clothes, money, popularity - will all pass away (Matthew 6:19). But what Jesus offers - forgiveness of our sins, peace with God, true joy, and everlasting life - these things will last forever! (Romans 5:1-11). The foolish Pharisees hated Jesus because they were afraid they would lose their power and money if they admitted He was the Messiah. Just the opposite, Mary gladly poured out her most valuable possession at the feet of Jesus.

What about you? Are you hanging on to things that won't last? Or are you, like Mary, willing to put God first, knowing that nothing compares to abiding with Him?

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