

**WEEK 1**  
**LESSON GUIDE**

**FULL BLOOM**

**BIG IDEA**

God sent Jesus  
to save us.

**BIBLE**

**Jesus Anointed at Bethany:**  
John 12:1–8

**ABOUT THIS WEEK**

One of the best parts of walking through a garden is smelling all of the flowers as they bloom. This week, we'll hear about how Jesus was anointed with perfume by Mary during a dinner party. Mary's actions show us that she picked up on a really important part of Jesus' mission on earth—**God sent Jesus to save us.**

**WELCOME TIME**

**ACTIVITY | Match And Smell**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, prepare [scratch-and-sniff fruit stickers](#) and matching pieces of colored paper. Place one of each sticker in the middle of each corresponding colored paper. Tape up the papers all around the room. Line up your preschoolers and give each of them a different sticker to smell. Then have them stick it on the colored paper that matches the scent they are smelling. The sample sticker will also help them match.
  - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Toddlers love stickers, but they might want to hold on to theirs. Allow them to stick a few stickers on their clothes or hands. Then, introduce them to something that smells nice, like a mild lotion, hand sanitizer, a spritz of Febreze, or light perfume. Talk about today's Bible story about a woman who gave Jesus something that smells nice like this.
- **What is your favorite smell to find in a garden?** There are beautiful flowers, fruits, and vegetables that grow, and some that smell so good.
- Today we'll learn about a very special bottle of perfume. Perfume has a fancy smell, and we will learn how it was used for Jesus.

**ACTIVITY | Dinner Party Scavenger Hunt**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, spread out a plastic tablecloth on the floor. Throughout your space, hide different play food items, plastic or paper plates, eating utensils, cups, and cloth napkins in napkin rings. Ask your preschoolers to hunt for the items around the room to set the table for their dinner party. It may help to have a sample of each item so they know what to look for.
- Let's pretend we are at a dinner party—just like Jesus was in our Bible story today.

## STORY TIME

**SCRIPTURE | Jesus Anointed at Bethany (John 12:1–8)**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Teach this Scripture passage by reading from a preschool-friendly Bible translation, Bible storybook, or using the talking points provided below. Set up a mini garden of real or artificial potted plants in your teaching area to match the theme.
  - ✦ **TODDLER HACK:** Even when it's not part of your scheduled programming, feel free to work in spontaneous sing-along or dance breaks—especially when you feel like the energy is low or toddlers are becoming disinterested. Play upbeat music or show fun videos (similar to [this one](#)) for kids to get up and get their wiggles out before you continue with the teaching.
- Let's close our eyes and imagine we are in a beautiful garden. It's covered with the most colorful flowers. There are butterflies and hummingbirds fluttering around. The sun is shining, and the air smells wonderful!
- Today's Bible story is about someone who also gave Jesus something that smelled wonderful.
  - Jesus often visited Bethany because he had some really good friends there—Lazarus, Mary, and Martha, brothers and sisters.
  - In fact, they were such good friends that when Lazarus got very sick—so sick he died—Jesus then did something amazing. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead! Lazarus was dead, but he was alive again because of Jesus.
- The next time Jesus came to Bethany, Mary, Martha, and Lazarus threw him a dinner party. Martha was serving everyone, making sure everyone had plenty to eat. Lazarus was sitting at the table with Jesus ... but where was Mary?
  - Mary was about to do something unexpected.
  - Mary poured some expensive perfume on Jesus' feet. Mary gave Jesus the very best gift she had to offer to him. She wanted to show how thankful she was for him and how much she loved him.
  - Mary didn't just pour out this perfume, though. She then started to wipe it with her hair!
- Mary understood that Jesus wasn't just anyone. Jesus was the one who would save the whole world. Jesus would help everyone know and love God.
- Jesus would free everyone from the power of sin that separated people from God. He came to help us all and to save us all!

**BIG IDEA | God sent Jesus to save us.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For the Big Idea reveal each week, write each word of the Big Idea on flower cutouts ([like these](#) or make your own out of colored paper). Hide these words, along with a few blank flowers, in a bin filled with dirt, sand, or uncooked beans and topped with plastic flowers and bugs. Give kids plastic shovels to dig through the "soil" to uncover the flowers. Once they find a flower that has a word, have them bring it to you to read. Once all the words are found, practice the Big Idea together using the hand motions below.
- Let's see what Big Idea we dug up today!
  - **God** (Both pointer fingers pointed up.)
  - **sent Jesus** (Right pointer finger on left palm to left pointer finger on right palm.)
  - **to save us.** (Both hands on heart.)

**VIDEO | Full Bloom, Episode 1**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's episode of [Cali's World](#).

**ACTIVITY | Match The Helpers**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, print out the pages of the [printable](#) and cut each page in half. Shuffle them

around and place them face down on the ground or a table. Invite one kid at a time to flip over two images. If the two images are of a helper and a situation where they help, remove the cards from the pile. Keep going until all the matches are found. Line up the pairs and have kids tell you how each picture shows someone who is helping.

✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Instead of cutting and separating the cards, show each image as a unit. Talk with toddlers about what is happening in each photo and how the person on the top can help.

- When we are in need of rescue, there are certain people who are the best people for the job.
  - **Who can save us from a burning building?** A firefighter.
  - **Who helps us at school when we have an ouchy?** The nurse.
  - **Who saves us when we need help at a swimming pool?** A lifeguard.
  - **Who helps us when we need to cross the street?** A crossing guard.
  - **Who saves us from the trouble of having to clean up a big mess?** A custodian.
  - **Who helps us out when a computer isn't working?** A computer technician.
  - **Who saves our best animal friends when they aren't feeling well?** A vet.
  - **Who saves us and brings us closer to God?** Jesus!
- Jesus saves us by forgiving us when we sin. Sin is when we make a choice to go against God. Jesus is the only one who can save us from that! That's why **God sent Jesus to save us.**

## PRAYER

- Dear God, thank you for loving us. Thank you for your son Jesus, who you sent to save us. Amen.

## SHARING TIME

### SNACK | Fruity Perfume

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have kids wrap fruit leather or Fruit Roll-Ups around small paper cups to make their own "perfume jars." Then they can peel it off to eat and enjoy!
  - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Offer diced fresh or canned fruit for toddlers. Make sure to spend some time smelling it together as you help them remember the Bible story.
- **What is your favorite smell in the whole world?**
- Mary gave her very best-smelling and most expensive perfume as a gift for Jesus. But God gave the whole world the very best gift—Jesus!
- **God sent Jesus to save us.**

### ACTIVITY | Circle Time

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, have kids seated in a circle. Prepare a bucket with artificial flowers, one for each kid (you can have extra). Go around the circle and have each kid take one flower. Have them put their flower in the air if they know the answer to one of the questions you ask. Once all the questions have been reviewed, place the bucket in the middle of the circle and have kids return the flowers.
- **Whose house did Jesus have dinner at?** His friends—Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
- **What did Mary give to Jesus?** Perfume.
- **What did she do with the perfume?** She poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped it with her hair.
- **Who did God send to save us?** Jesus.
- Let's say the Big Idea together: **God sent Jesus to save us.**

### ACTIVITY | Perfume Bottle Craft

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this craft, collect empty bottles (ask around for donations) or purchase bottles [like](#)

[these](#). Give each kid a sanitized bottle and pieces of patterned [washi tape](#). Have kids cover their bottles with the tape in any design to create their own [perfume bottles](#). You may choose to print out the Big Idea on address labels that kids can add to their bottles. For added fun, stick in a few pipe cleaners to make them look like diffuser bottles.

- In today's Bible story, Mary gave her very best to Jesus to show her love for him. Not only was Jesus a dear friend, but he was God's son and the only one who could save the world from sin. God loves us, and that's why **God sent Jesus to save us!**

### MEMORY VERSE | 2 Peter 3:18a (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Help kids learn this month's memory verse by setting the words and Scripture reference to the tune of "It's A Small World." You can also have kids repeat the verse after you in small chunks, say it using silly voices, or create simple hand motions for keywords.
- **"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."**

## PLAY TIME

### ACTIVITY | Coloring Page

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print and distribute [the coloring page](#) along with crayons or markers. You can review today's Bible story, Big Idea, and memory verse as the kids color.

### ACTIVITY | Smelly Flowers

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this free play activity, provide scented playdough (or make your own together using a recipe like [this](#)). Provide playdough tools and flower-shaped cookie cutters for them to play with.
  - ✂ **TODDLER HACK:** Toddlers may not have the dexterity for cookie cutters yet, but they will enjoy squeezing and poking the dough. Be sure to supervise closely as toddlers may want to taste the dough. You could also swap out the dough for an edible option (like [this one](#)).

### ACTIVITY | Gardening Sensory Box

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill a tub with artificial flowers, plastic shovels, garden gloves, and plastic bugs for the preschoolers to dig and discover. You could use real dirt or substitute coffee beans, grounds, dry beans, or sand. Feel free to reuse the bin from the Big Idea reveal.