

# GENEROUS HEART KIDS

## EXPENSIVE PERFUME

This session centres on Mary pouring expensive perfume on Jesus' feet as depicted in John 12:1-8.

Based on Session Five of *The Generous Heart* Bible study.

See the *Expensive Perfume Shopping List* for the resources required for this session.

### Aims:

- To encourage children to think about how they can use their gifts to worship God, even if it comes at a great cost.
- To learn about the beauty of giving selflessly and putting others before themselves.



All-ages



Younger children



Older children

Look for these icons to help select the activities for your age group.

## STARTERS

Select one of the following activities, then do the gift-giving discussion.



### 1. PASS THE PARCEL

Sit the children in a circle and play the *Pass the Parcel* game. Stop the music at different times making sure every child gets to unwrap a layer. When the child who wins the final round opens the final layer, ask them to consider sharing the prize with the other children or with their family at home.



### 2. TODAY, I AM THANKFUL FOR ...

Ask the children to finish the sentence 'Today I am thankful for ...' while throwing and catching a ball among themselves. Only the person holding the ball can answer a question.



### CHALLENGE

Make it more challenging by going around in a circle and come up with an A-to-Z list of what they're grateful for in alphabetical order, eg animals, books, chocolate ... It can also be a memory game, listing everyone else's words before adding to the A-to-Z list. Encourage the children to help each other if someone gets stuck.



### 3. GIFT WRAPPING COMPETITION

Divide the children into two teams and ask each team to nominate one child to be the 'present'. (Check that the child is happy to be the 'present'.) Give the teams up to five minutes to wrap their 'presents'. The best-looking wrapped-up gift wins a prize to share out among their team.

#### GIFT-GIVING QUESTIONS

- **What is the best gift you have ever received and why is it the best?**
- **Think of the worst gift you have been given; how did this make you feel?**
- **Can you think of a special gift that you would buy for someone close to you? You can spend as much money on it as you like.**
- **What type of gifts can money not buy?**

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## MAINS

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You may wish to set the scene by adding fragrance to the air, eg by using an air diffuser. Check beforehand for allergies/asthma that may react to perfume / essential oils.

Read John 12:1-8.

Alternatively, let the children watch a video of the Bible story:

- **Mary Anointed Jesus' Feet** by Champion Forest Kids Ministry (1:35)



- **Mary Pours Perfume on Jesus** by LifeKids (1:37)

*When Mary poured expensive perfume on Jesus' feet it showed her deep love and respect for him. The perfume Mary used was very expensive, yet she chose to use it to honour Jesus. She was happy to gift him with the most valuable thing that she owned, even though it cost her so much.*

*In biblical times, anointing or pouring oil or perfume on to feet was a common practice that symbolised hospitality, respect and humility. Feet were considered the dirtiest part of the body because of the dusty and unpaved roads people walked on. When guests arrived, the host would usually provide water so the guests could wash their feet; it was a sign of welcome and care. Anointing the feet with oil or perfume after washing them was a way to soothe and refresh tired feet, as well as to honour and show respect to the welcomed guest.*

*This story is about us pouring our devotion on to God, to give him our love and show our commitment to him. God deserves the best of all we have. He has blessed us with many gifts and skills and talents. But we shouldn't try to keep them all to ourselves,*

*we should dedicate them to God so he can use them to bless others. We can use our gifts, skills and talents to help others in many different and meaningful ways.*

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **How would you** feel taking expensive perfume and pouring it on to Jesus' feet knowing how valuable it is?
- **Do you think** you would be able to do it? If so, why or why not?
- **Can you think** what a modern-day Mary would give to Jesus?

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## SIDES

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(FOR BIGGER APPETITES)

Select one of the following activities, then do the discussion questions.



### 1. WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

Set out the various scents and encourage the children to take turns smelling each card/container which holds the scents. Can they guess the scents?



### 2. USING OUR GIFTS

Give each child a *Using Our Gifts* sheet and ensure they understand each category. Give the children time to independently add their own ideas and thoughts to the sheet. Perhaps play some worship music in the background as they complete the table. After they have finished, ask if anyone would like to share what they have written.

Suggest practical ways they can serve at church or in the local community if they've expressed an interest. Check with their parents/guardians and offer any helpful information to help them take those first steps to use their gifts. The children can take the sheet home to reflect on after the session.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What do you think** of verse 8? (Jesus criticises the disciples as they can always help the poor but have not done so. Although the perfume could indeed be sold to help the poor, the woman has chosen to lavish it on Jesus.)
- **How can we** be generous towards our church as well as to those who are poor?

## DESSERTS

Select one of the following activities.



### 1. DIY GIFT BOX

Show the children the pre-cut *Printable Cube Template* ([firstpalette.com](http://firstpalette.com)) and explain that they are going to make a gift box. Ensure the children know how the template folds and which side not to glue, so the giftbox has a lid that opens.

Ask the children to cut out, colour in and decorate their cube templates. You may wish to play worship music in the background. The children may want to use their boxes to put smaller gifts inside or temporarily fill it with shredded tissue paper. During the activity, ask the children to think about what gifts they can give to others and what gifts they have received from Jesus. Ask them to share some of these ideas at the end of the activity.



### 2. DIY GIFT TAGS OR GREETINGS CARD

Ask the children to make their own unique gift tags. They can personalise each tag for whoever they are planning on giving a gift to, adding a special touch to the gift. Are there any special upcoming key dates, such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, a birthday or Christmas?

Alternatively, you can invite them to create a card and write a special message inside expressing how they feel in a meaningful way.



### 3. GRATITUDE JAR, JOURNAL OR BOX

Explain that they are going to make something that will help them remember the gifts God has given them. Give each child a jar/notebook/box and ask them to decorate it.

When they are finished, encourage them to write a small note describing what they are grateful for and add it to the jar/notebook/box – they can write more if there's lots to be thankful for, and add more at home at the end of each day or week. They should place each note into their jar/box or write it down in their notebooks.

Let them know that they can then open the jar/box (or open up the notebook) in six months' time and remember the gifts God has given them. They can read these notes if they are having a bad day to be reminded of God's love and generosity.

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## WHAT NOW?

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**Recap and remind the children of the moral of the expensive perfume Bible story.**

*The expensive perfume story is about us pouring out our devotion on God because he deserves the best of all we have. As such, we should not keep our possessions and things from him and should instead try to give these over to him so that he can use them.*

### THANKING GOD FOR HIS GENEROUS GIFTS

- Invite everyone to read Psalm 103 together out loud. Explain that this is a psalm of thanksgiving, where the writer is giving praise to God because of all the wonderful things he has done.
- The writer gives thanks for God's love, his compassion, his kindness and so on. What sticks out to you from Psalm 103?

*Let's remember that God's generosity is not limited to material things such as money, new clothes, toys/gadgets etc, but also comes in so many other forms, like forgiveness, grace and love. As Jesus' followers, we are encouraged to reflect God's generosity in our own lives by showing kindness, compassion and generosity to others, following the example set by our generous and loving God.*

### PRAYER

*Thank you, Jesus, for your generosity towards us every day.  
Thank you for the many gifts, talents and skills you have blessed us with.  
We pray that you will keep teaching us how to share these blessings with others.  
May we be encouraged to share them with our family, our church and our community.  
Please help us to remember to give selflessly, even if it might come at a cost.  
Amen.*

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## TAKEAWAY

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- **Kids Activity** sheet



- **Using Our Gifts** sheet
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