

John 11:45-12:8

“Jesus: For Him or Against Him”

Scripture: John 11:45-12:8

Memory Verse: Luke 11:23a *“He who is not with Me is against Me.”*

Lesson Focus: The Bible, and the gospel of John especially, sorts all people into two groups. Those who are for Jesus and those who are against Him. We’ve now seen the last of Jesus’ seven public miracles recorded in the gospel of John and in this section we will study how each character shows whether they are for Him or against Him.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Mary and Jesus, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Anointed Feet

Starter Activity: Taking Sides

To introduce the idea of taking sides, create some sort of boundary in your teaching area. For 3rd-5th grade teaching on the Summit Room stage, we will have a piece of tape on the floor to divide the stage into two halves. For 1st-2nd graders, use something in your room to divide the room into two halves. Then ask the kids some questions having them choose which side they are on by moving into that part of the area (assign each section to a side and move along with them!). Below are a few ideas:

- 1) Do you prefer chocolate or vanilla?
- 2) DisneyWorld or Caribbean cruise?
- 3) For or against the Denver Broncos?

There are no wrong answers here as either choice is fine and there are no consequences to either choice. But let’s consider a more serious example.

Q: How many of you know what the American Civil War was about?

A: Slavery! People had to choose a side (either for it or against it). Their choices had serious consequences on people’s lives! Some sides you have to take DO matter!

Jesus Christ presents us with a choice that matters as well. As our memory verse says, all people are either for Him or against Him. There is no middle ground! If you aren’t with Him, then you are against Him! *

In the first eleven chapters of John, we have seen Jesus claim that He is God and back it up with various miracles. We have also seen two responses to His signs and claims: belief and unbelief. All are either with Him or against Him. In our text today, we will encounter many characters. Let’s see what side they choose to be on!

Bible Study:

John 11:45: This verse talks about Mary's visitors who saw the things Jesus did.

Q: Who remembers what happened in the first part of John 11 that they saw?

A: Jesus' grand finale of miracles when He raised Lazarus from the dead before lots of people! *

Q: What does it say the people did after they saw? Believed! They said "WHOA" and they responded with faith and trust.

Teachers: Using the white board, draw a vertical dividing line and title one side with "FOR JESUS" and the other side with "AGAINST JESUS". Throughout the study we are going to add to each group those whom we encounter in our text. At this point add, "Mary's visitors" on the "FOR" side.

John 11:46: But not everyone believed in Him. Notice the reaction of this group of people was to "tattle" on Jesus. *

These people probably wanted to win the favor of the religious leaders more than they wanted the favor of Jesus Christ so they reported what Jesus did to them. We will call this group the "Jewish tattle-talers" (**Teachers:** Add them to the "AGAINST" list).

John 11:47-48: We get to overhear the internal conversation of all of these religious leaders after they are told about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

Q: Did you catch what it was they were freaking out about?

A: Their precious power and position! This is what is most dear to them! Not whether God's promised Savior has come. It doesn't matter what miracles Jesus does, because their hearts fixed on retaining their comfort and power! * (**Teachers:** Add "Pharisees" to the "AGAINST" list)

John 11:49-53: Now the big boss of the bad guys speaks up!

Q: Which side does he belong on? A: Against Jesus! (**Teachers:** Add "high priest" to "AGAINST" list)

His statement now puts in motion the plan of these guys to kill Jesus (v. 53). But what John brings out here is that this was God's plan all along! Jesus came to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the WHOLE world! That is only accomplished by His death on the cross!

John 11:54-57: So Jesus is now on the run and in hiding!

John 12:1-2: Some time passes and Jesus makes His way back to the town where He raised Lazarus from the dead and they are having a meal. Imagine yourself at the dinner table eating with a guy who was dead for four days! *

The last two weeks we have stressed how Jesus as the good Shepherd loves His sheep. There isn't a much more intimate way of being in relationship with others than in sharing a meal. In **John 10:14**, it says that Jesus knows His sheep and they know Him. That is exactly what we see happening right here at this meal!

Those who are "for Jesus" are in real **RELATIONSHIP** with Him! What that means for us is that you spend time with Jesus (prayer, studying the word, etc.) throughout your day! (**Teachers:** Add "**Lazarus**" to the "FOR" list)

John 12:3: Which side does Mary belong on? "For Jesus" of course! (**Teachers:** Add "**Mary**" to "FOR" list).

So just like how the good Shepherd loves His sheep, this is an example of a sheep showing loving **DEVOTION** to her Shepherd!

Q: What does it mean to be devoted to something?

A: It means a loving and enthusiastic loyalty to that thing, whatever it is. And Jesus desires that we would be devoted to Him above all other things. *

Mary shows here loving and enthusiastic devotion to Jesus by anointing Him with this very expensive oil. But she also shows **HUMILITY** by wiping His feet with her hair.

Q: What is humility or being humble mean?

A: It does not mean thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less! It means letting others go first. It means keeping God in His proper place as King and you in your proper place as servant.

Those who are "FOR Jesus" are in **relationship** with Him, but they also are **humbly devoted** to Him in **worship**! (**Teachers:** Add these four characteristics under the "FOR" list)

John 12:4-6: So while Mary is devoted to Jesus in humble worship, we see Judas responding quite the opposite. (**Teachers:** Add "**Judas**" to the "AGAINST" list)

Q: What is the opposite of relationship? Enemy!

Q: What is the opposite of devotion? Betrayal!

Q: What is the opposite of humility? Pride!

Q: What is the opposite of worship? Hatred!

John 12:7-8: Jesus hushes Judas being pleased with Mary's devotion! **Read Mark 14:9.** In the other gospel, Jesus proclaims that what she did is to be remembered and honored as an example of worship and devotion to Jesus!

Key Point: So now we've seen how Jesus divides people. Everyone in our text has chosen which side they are on. We see Mary as the model of those who are FOR Jesus and Judas as the model of those who are AGAINST Jesus. But which side are you on? Are you for Him or against Him? If you are on the fence, you are against Him!

Next week is Easter Sunday.

Q: What do we celebrate on Easter Sunday? Not candy, eggs, and presents. But the FACT that Jesus Christ rose from the dead! He won! This is why you should be on the "FOR JESUS" side, because His side wins!

Q: But what had to happen before He rose from the dead?

A: He died on the cross. Why? So that people on the "FOR JESUS" side would have their sins forgiven and be granted eternal life!

If you are on His side, remember how much it cost Him to purchase your forgiveness! Your sin is great, but God's love is greater! (**Ephesians 2:4-5**)

That is why Mary was so devoted to Him! That is why YOU should be devoted to Him! Be devoted to Him this week.

- Spend time in prayer with Him (relationship).
- Spend time in His word (devotion).
- Show kindness to others (humility).
- Invite someone at school to come to Easter service with you (worship)!

That is how life is lived on the "FOR Jesus" side!

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: With Him or Against Him”

Scripture: John 11:45-12:8

Memory Verse: Luke 11:23a *“He who is not with Me is against Me.”*

Teachers/Parents: As our memory verse very clearly states, Jesus divides all people into two sides. We got our teaching started by asking the kids to choose sides on some inane topics and then moved into more serious topics. What are some difficult life decisions that you have been faced with that required you to choose a side? Share and discuss why it was difficult.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **John 11:45-46**. This is our first example of seeing those for Jesus and against Jesus in this text. In v. 46, what do you think might have been the motivation of those who “tattled” on Jesus? Share a time when you have “tattled” on someone. What was your motivation?
- 2) Read **John 11:47-48**. It is amazing that Jesus’s signs did not persuade the religious leaders to come to Jesus in faith. In v. 48, we see why. What do you see in v. 48 that may explain the unbelievable unbelief of these religious leaders?
- 3) In **John 11:48**, the religious leaders were afraid Jesus was going to cause them to have something taken away from them. What are some things in your life that you may be clinging to that you should either let go of or be careful with? Why is it good to do this self-examination, even as Christians?
- 4) **John 12:3** shows Mary’s utmost devotion to Jesus Christ. We talk a lot about “doing devotions” in Christian circles. Do you think it is more important to “do devotions” or to be “devoted to” Jesus Christ? What is the difference?
- 5) In class we emphasized how Mary is a model for the group who are “with Jesus”. She is in relationship with Him, shows Him devotion, and gives Him humble worship. If you are “with Jesus”, what are some practical ways that you can follow her example this week?
- 6) Review our memory verse at the top of the page (**Luke 11:23**). In our modern day, there are a lot of people who are outwardly for Jesus and outwardly against Jesus. But what does this verse teach about those would rather not make an outward choice for or against Jesus? Pray for those you know who are not outwardly for Jesus as a family!