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A Larger Circle

Key References: John 19:25-27; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 78, p. 752; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 9, pp. 118-123; Our Beliefs nos. 23, 4, 9



powertext

"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Romans 12:13).

powerpoint

We show Jesus' love when we include others in our family circle.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 19.

Have you ever known someone who needed to share someone else's home for a while? Have you ever been in that position? Jesus' mother was in that position when He died. Jesus' beloved disciple, John, opened his home and took her in.

Take a trip in your imagination to Nazareth when Jesus was a boy. Often there were people in Jesus' neighborhood who needed help. We can only imagine today how Jesus may have helped to make life better for those around Him.

Picture the boy Jesus walking into His small home in Nazareth. He tells His mother that Widow Abrams may be sick. Mary joins Him and together Jesus and Mary walk to their neighbor's house. It is a small mud-brick house with a flat roof. Mary calls as she enters, "Mother Abrams, it's Mary."

A small voice answers from the bed corner. The elderly woman tries to lift herself up but falls back onto the bed. She is too weak to move.

"Mother Abrams, are you sick?" Mary asks.

"No, I'm just hungry. It's been three days since I last had food."

Jesus looks around the one-room home. The baskets are empty. The clay pots are empty. There is no food in the house. After asking for His mother's consent, Jesus runs home and returns with food for Widow Abrams. Then He carries her water jar to the town well. When He returns, the woman is sitting up. Mary is breaking off small bits of bread and feeding her.

Mary and Jesus walk home, glad that they could be of help to Widow Abrams. Jesus is deep in thought about this widow who has no family members to take care of her. Now she is too feeble to go

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Sunday

READ Read John 19:25 and this week's lesson, "A Larger Circle."

MAKE Create a bookmark and write on it the power text, Romans 12:13. Start to memorize it.

PRAY Pray for people who need to feel God's love.

Monday

READ Read John 19:26, 27.

PLAN Talk to your parents and plan to invite a friend to join you for Friday evening vespers or Sabbath lunch.

TRACE Trace your family tree.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that your home will always welcome Jesus.

Tuesday

READ Read John 14:2.

REFLECT How are you encouraged, knowing that Jesus is inviting you to His home? Are you ready to accept the invitation?

INVITE Invite a friend to your home on Friday or Sabbath for dinner and fellowship.

SURVEY Survey your family and friends. See who has lived in the most places. Ask them what they like best about home.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for people who are away from home and feel lonely, as well as for those who do not have a home of their own.

into the fields and vineyards to collect grain or grapes left by harvesters for the poor. Mary and Jesus agree to take care of Widow Abrams.

Come with me now to Calvary many years later and witness a real dialogue that took place between Jesus, Mary, and John, the beloved disciple.

The sky is dark. Jesus pulls His body up by pushing against the footboard on the rough beam of the cross. He notices the cries of a woman near the foot of the cross.

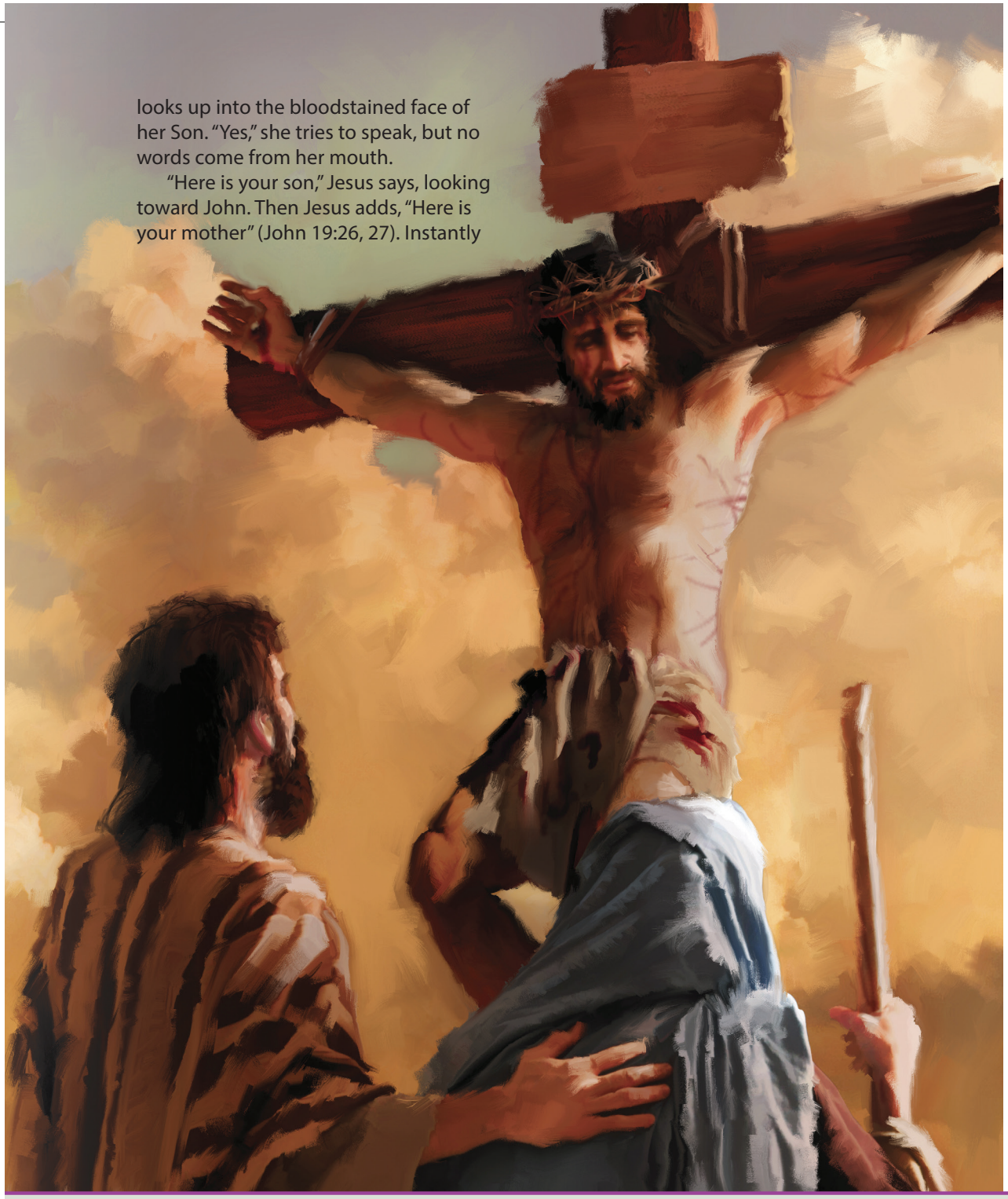
Priests taunt the dying man. "He saved others; let him save himself if he is God's Messiah, the Chosen One" (Luke 23:35). This man has caused the people to question their priestly lifestyle, their priestly authority. These religious leaders had plenty of evidence and countless opportunities to recognize in Jesus the Son of God, who came to save His people. Yet they failed to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. Even now, during Jesus' final hours on the cross, they give voice to their unbelief and hatred.

Mary stands at the foot of the cross. Tears stain her face. She doesn't even try to wipe them away.

On the cross, Jesus looks at His mother. He remembers the times that she comforted Him in His childhood. Jesus knows how hard all of this is on her.

Joseph has been dead for some time now. Mary is a widow. When Jesus dies, Mary will be alone. Jesus worries. Who will take care of her? In spite of the terrible pain in His body, in spite of the terrible pressure from the weight of the sins of all humanity, Jesus thinks of His mother. "Woman," He says tenderly.

At the sound of this familiar endearing name, Mary lifts her shoulders and



looks up into the bloodstained face of her Son. "Yes," she tries to speak, but no words come from her mouth.

"Here is your son," Jesus says, looking toward John. Then Jesus adds, "Here is your mother" (John 19:26, 27). Instantly

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Wednesday

READ Read Revelation 21 to discover a description of our new heavenly home.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about what would bring you joy and happiness in heaven.

THINK How could you welcome people in your home?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you be hospitable.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 10:38-42.

THINK How would you feel if Jesus came to your home? What are you doing to prepare for His coming?

SHARE Tell someone about the joy found in Jesus and about the home He is preparing for those who love Him.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you prepare for Jesus' return.

Friday

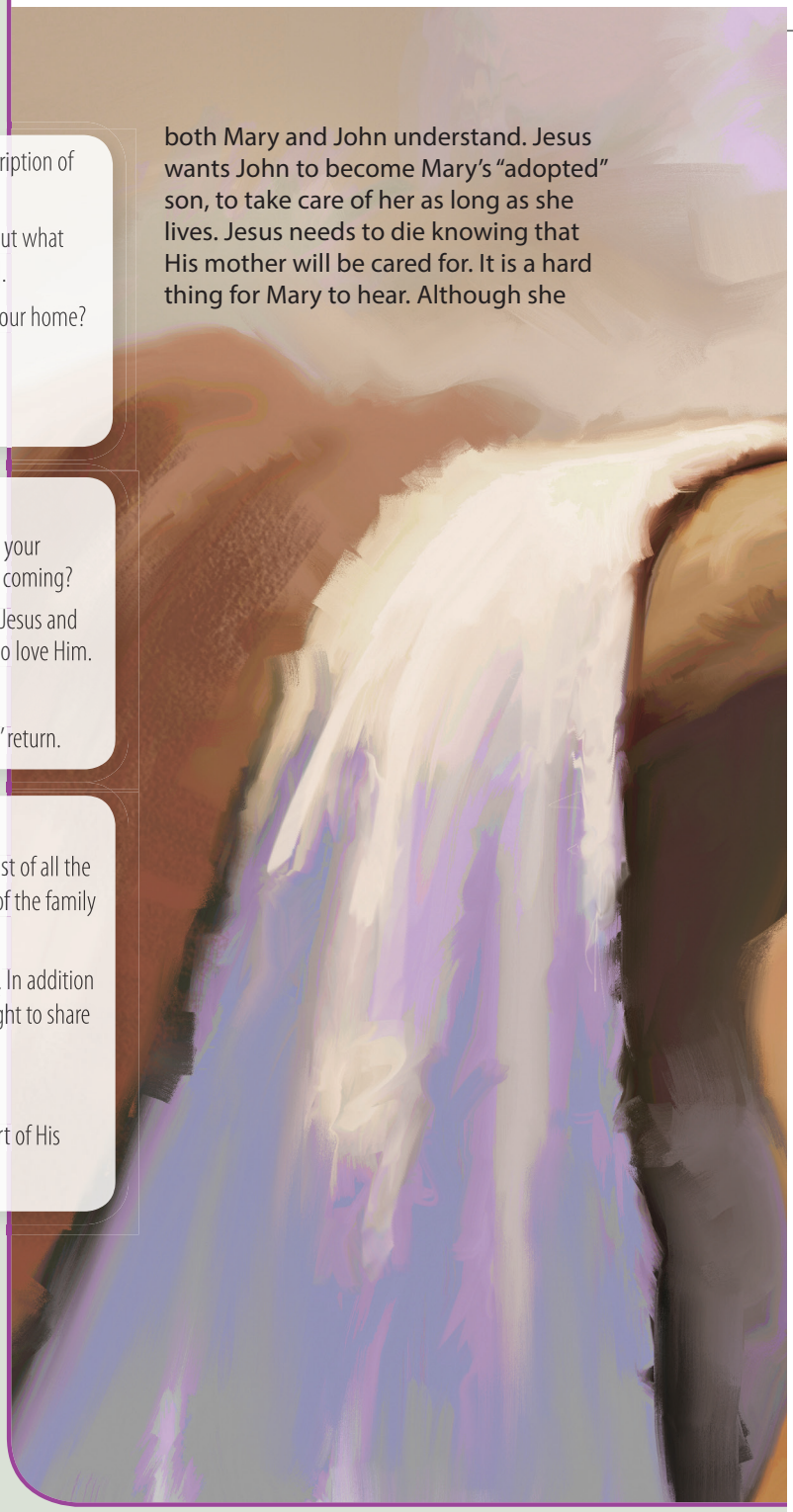
READ Read Luke 19:1-10.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, make a list of all the people Jesus visited in their homes. The rest of the family may be able to help you at family worship.

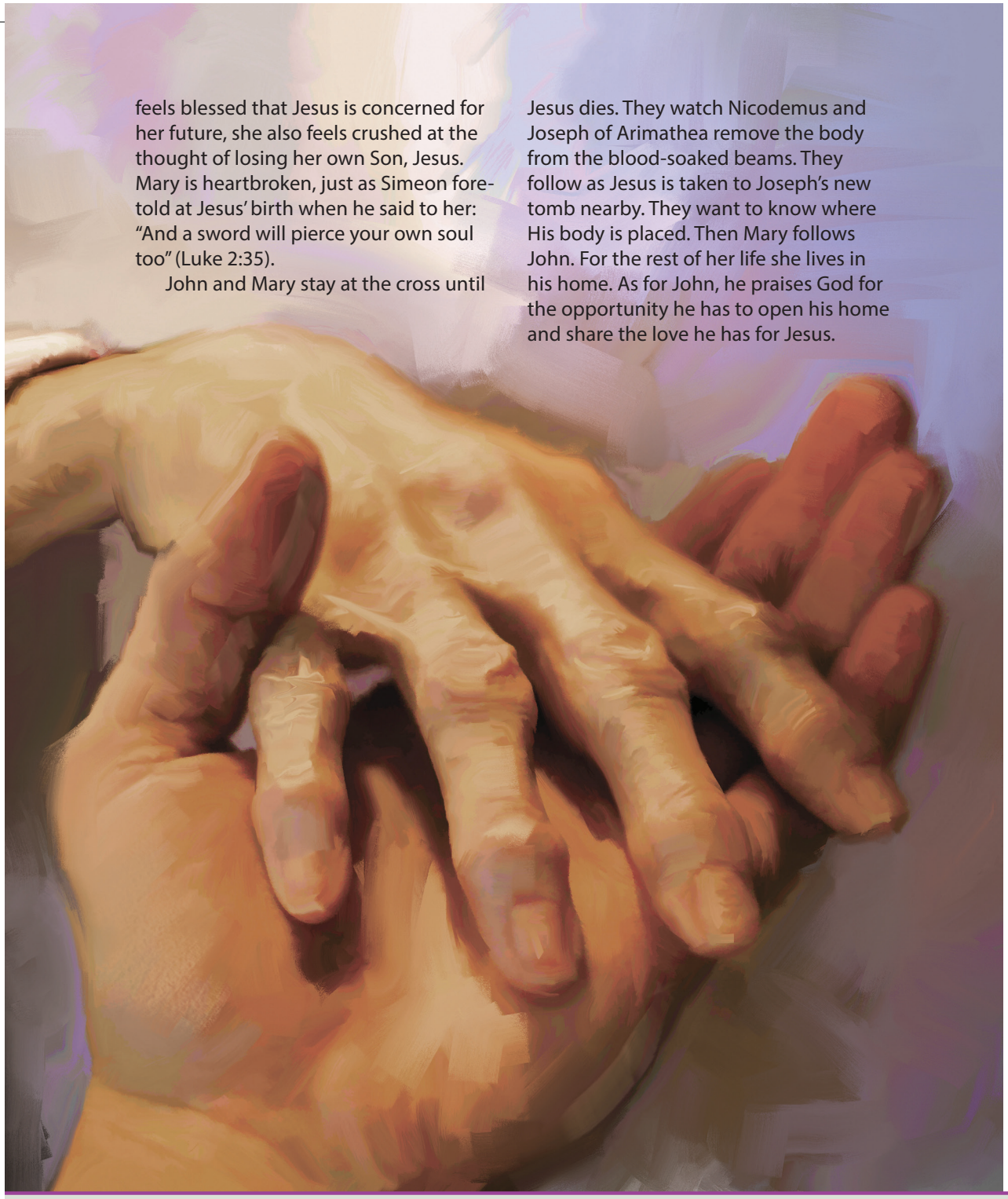
PREPARE Make preparations for your visitor. In addition to the meal, prepare a short devotional thought to share with your friend.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank Jesus for accepting us all as part of His family in spite of our past mistakes.



both Mary and John understand. Jesus wants John to become Mary's "adopted" son, to take care of her as long as she lives. Jesus needs to die knowing that His mother will be cared for. It is a hard thing for Mary to hear. Although she



feels blessed that Jesus is concerned for her future, she also feels crushed at the thought of losing her own Son, Jesus. Mary is heartbroken, just as Simeon foretold at Jesus' birth when he said to her: "And a sword will pierce your own soul too" (Luke 2:35).

John and Mary stay at the cross until Jesus dies. They watch Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea remove the body from the blood-soaked beams. They follow as Jesus is taken to Joseph's new tomb nearby. They want to know where His body is placed. Then Mary follows John. For the rest of her life she lives in his home. As for John, he praises God for the opportunity he has to open his home and share the love he has for Jesus.

PUZZLE 2

SERVING OTHERS

Instructions: Find each word in red in the Bible verse hidden in the puzzle below. The words twist and turn (either forward, backward, upward, downward, or diagonally), and most do not follow a straight line. If the word appears more than once in the verse, then you need to find it more than once in the puzzle. The first letter of each word is next to the last letter of the previous word, so you should be able to draw a line through the whole puzzle without lifting your pencil.

"Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters" (Hebrews 13:1).

P F Q O X Y E W E Q
D B L V R K H T I N
P N K I N S Q E A O
O E E N G O N G T P
R S A N S A E H M D
P E O B D R S U R H
E T H R S I T E M S