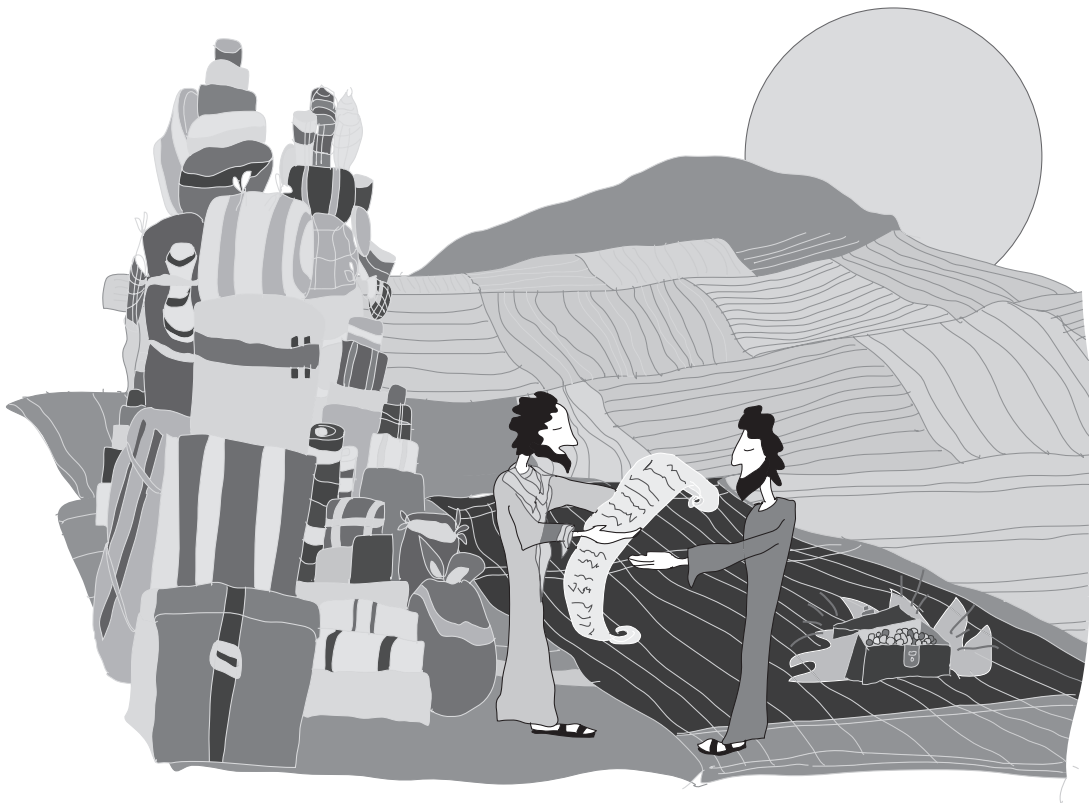


LESSON 19

The Hidden Treasure

MATTHEW 13:31-46



— BIBLE TRUTH —

CHRIST, OUR TREASURE, IS WORTH EVERYTHING WE OWN

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 13:31–46 from the Scriptures or read story 97, “The Hidden Treasure,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

3. OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Of Greater Worth Than Gold

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ ten objects with different values; e.g., a rock, a penny, a stick of gum, a quarter, a candy bar, a dollar coin, a pack of sports cards, a silver spoon, a gold earring, a gold ring with a precious stone

4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The Pearl of Great Price

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ six ping-pong balls
- ✓ a dollar coin (a folded up dollar bill will do)
- ✓ snack-size chocolate bars (six to eight)
- ✓ clear tape

6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

7. ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Drawing a Treasure

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

LESSON SNAPSHOT

8. CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON **10 MIN**

The Wheat and the Weeds

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ squares of paper—one for each student
- ✓ a container to hold the paper squares

TOTAL 65 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The parables of the mustard seed and the leaven—Matthew records a series of Jesus' parables that teach us about the kingdom of God. In the parables of the mustard seed and the leaven (yeast), Jesus describes two very small items that multiply and grow into something much larger. Consider how this applies to the story of Jesus. The kingdom of God began with Jesus calling twelve men. Together they spread the message of the kingdom across the land. With that, the kingdom began to grow. Others like the apostle Paul were called to proclaim the gospel, and it spread mightily. Today we also are called to share the gospel with those who have not heard it. We are a part of that mustard tree growing to reach people from every tribe, language, and nation.

The parable of the hidden treasure—Imagine finding treasure in a field. You can't take the treasure because it belongs to the field's owner. But if you sell everything you own to purchase the field, the treasure in the field becomes yours. If you knew that the treasure was worth far more than all you owned, you would not mind selling everything to purchase it. Once we better understand the value of living in and for God's kingdom, we gladly give up the distracting things of the world to follow Jesus. Jesus said we should store up treasure in heaven, not on earth. Jesus told a rich young man that to become his follower and have treasure in heaven he had to sell all that he had and give to the poor (Mark 10:21).

The parable of the pearl—A merchant searched for valuable pearls. When he found a pearl of great value, it so captured his affection that he sold everything he had so he could buy it. Many people are searching for the "pearls" of true happiness or ultimate joy. They might find some happiness and joy in the world—lesser pearls. But it is only in laying hold of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins that we will know eternal joy—the "pearl of great value."

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Yeast or Leaven

Yeast is a minute fungus that feeds off the sugars in bread dough and excretes carbon dioxide, which makes the dough rise (puff up). This causes the holes and pockets that you see sometimes when you slice bread. A little bit of yeast will work through a whole batch of dough. A small portion of the dough was often saved as a starter for the next day's bread. When added to a new batch of flour, the yeast would spread through the entire batch. Just as yeast grows and spreads in a lump of dough, so did Jesus say the kingdom of God would spread, touching the whole world.

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

In Matthew 13:35 Jesus quoted Psalm 78:2 to explain why he was speaking in parables. These parables reveal the secrets of the gospel that lay hidden since the creation of the world. The treasure in the field and the pearl of great price have great value because of the gospel.

The gospel is an invaluable treasure because it makes a way for us to become children of God and enter his kingdom. Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29–30).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read Matthew 13:31–46 from the Scriptures or read story 97, "The Hidden Treasure," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Of Greater Worth Than Gold

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ ten objects with different values; e.g., a rock, a penny, a stick of gum, a quarter, a candy bar, a dollar coin, a pack of sports cards, a silver spoon, a gold earring, a gold ring with a precious stone

Randomly line up the objects on a table and ask the class to tell you which thing has the least value. Move that to the first position. Then have them tell you which thing is next in value. Move that to the second position. Continue until the class is satisfied that the items are placed in the order of their worth from least to most. Some objects will be easy to place; others not so easy. Let the class know if the items are in the correct order. If not, tell them where they went wrong.

Continue by asking them to name objects that would be worth more. See how far they get before someone mentions Jesus. If no one mentions Christ, ask them to name something money cannot buy that is worth more than all the treasure in the world. The only answer, of course, is our Lord. Then read the passage assigned and draw them out about why Jesus is our greatest treasure.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION

Select one of the object lessons to use to cover the teaching points.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

The Pearl of Great Price

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ six ping-pong balls
- ✓ a dollar coin (a folded up dollar bill will do)
- ✓ snack-size chocolate bars (six to eight)
- ✓ clear tape

Before class, carefully cut a slot in one ping-pong ball and insert a dollar coin or bill and tape it securely with clear tape. Hide the balls in the classroom.

Read the parable of the pearl of great price and then tell the class that there are pearls (ping-pong balls) hidden in the classroom and that you are going to pick six volunteers to find them. Tell the treasure hunters that you will exchange any ping-pong ball for a chocolate candy. Allow only one ping-pong ball per person. Then let them know that there is one very special ping-pong ball that has a greater value.

Release them to hunt for the balls and watch their excitement as they look for the more valuable pearl. Read the parable and then ask the following questions:

- How was this exercise like the parable?
(The treasure hunters really wanted to find the pearl with the greater value.)
- Which did you want more, the pearl of great value or the others?
(the pearl of great value)
- What made you want the ping-pong ball with the greater value?
(We knew that it was more valuable so we wanted it more.)
- What does the pearl of great price represent in the parable?
(Jesus is the pearl of great price.)
- What can this parable and our exercise teach us about our love for God compared with other things?
(We should love and seek after God more than anything else in the world.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 10 MIN

Drawing a Treasure

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ paper
- ✓ crayons, markers, or colored pencils

Draw a picture of one of the two treasure parables. Ask the class why they chose the parable they did and use the drawings as a chance to review the stories and talk about what they mean.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's Scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**The Wheat and the Weeds****SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ squares of paper—one for each student
- ✓ a container to hold the paper squares

Before class, write the word “wheat” on one-third of the paper squares and “weed” on two-thirds. Fold them to hide the words and place them in a container.

Give each child a piece of paper and tell them not to open it. Then review the Parable of the Weeds in Matthew 13:24–30.

Without looking at the interpretation in Matthew 13:36–43, ask the children for an interpretation based on what they have already been taught. Then ask them to apply the parable to their lives and the way it should challenge them.

The sobering reality is that the wheat is allowed to grow up with the weeds. There are believers and unbelievers in the church at the same time. It won't be until judgment day that those who have been faking their Christianity will be exposed.

Ask the class to take their papers and stand together in a group. Now explain to the class that you are going to illustrate this parable. Tell them that the papers have either the word “wheat” or “weed” written on them. Have the children unfold their papers and show them to you. Send the kids with papers that say “wheat” to one corner of the room and the children with the word “weed” to another corner of the room. Ask them what would happen to the wheat. (The wheat represents believers going to heaven.) Then ask them what would happen to the weeds. (The weeds represent unbelievers that grow up alongside the believers, but who will be cast into hell for not placing their trust in Jesus Christ.)

Challenge the class not to assume they are followers of Christ if the fruit of being a believer is not present in their lives. Remind them of the lesson from a few weeks ago about the tree and its fruit. Share the gospel with them, emphasizing that those who place their trust in Christ and his sacrificial death on the cross receive the Holy Spirit, who helps them obey God's Word so that good fruit will flow from their lives. In addition, the Holy Spirit living in them gives the assurance that God is with them, has forgiven them their sins, and will gather them in with the wheat when God separates the wheat from the weeds.