

LESSON 4: THE PARABLE OF THE LOST TREASURE AND PEARL

Leader Guide for Grades 5 & 6

Classroom: Deeply Rooted

 Matthew 13:44-46

03/29/2020

Teachers Dig In

Dig In to the Bible

- Read: Matthew 13:44-46
- In This Passage: Jesus tells two very short stories. In one, a man finds a treasure in a field and sells everything to buy the field and get the treasure. In the other, a man finds a valuable pearl and gives up everything to buy the pearl. Joining the kingdom of God is more valuable than anything because God is a treasure.
- Bible Point: God is a treasure...
- Application: ...so we value him more than anything.
- Summary Verse: "For the word of the Lord holds true, and we can trust everything he does" (Psalm 33:4).

Dig Deeper

- You'll Be Teaching: *God is a treasure.* Kids think concretely, so it's a lot easier for them to value tangible rather than abstract things. Most kids will easily agree that God is a treasure, but it's hard for them to know what that means practically. Help kids treasure God by putting him first and loving him more than anything else.
- Think About: What evidence is there that God is *your* treasure?

Dig In to Prayer

- Pray that God would move in kids' hearts to give them a genuine love for him and an authentic desire to value him more than anything.

Quick Tip

- Resist the temptation to guilt kids into treasuring God. Truly treasuring something or someone is a matter of the heart, and kids can't fake it with religious actions. Encourage kids to get to know God more because the more they know him, the more they will fall in love with him!

This Lesson at a Glance



OPENING

Kids share about a topic related to the lesson.

Supplies

- Bible



CORE BIBLE DISCOVERY

Kids go on a treasure hunt, searching for the most valuable item.

Supplies

- Bible
- “Scavenger Hunt List” handout (1 for every 5-6 kids) (download [here](#))
- paper lunch bags
- classroom supplies including paper, crayons, markers, index cards, and tissues
- permanent markers (1 for about every 4 kids)
- stickers, cut apart but still on the backing (1 for about every 2 kids)
- paper clips (3 for about every 4 kids)
- Hershey’s Kisses (1 per child)
- small cardboard box
- green disposable tablecloth
- paper slips
- pens

Easy Prep

- Set out the classroom supplies kids will need for the scavenger hunt.
- Hide the permanent markers, stickers, and paper clips in different places.
- Put the Hershey’s Kisses in the cardboard box. Seal it so kids can’t reach inside.
- Write “TREASURE” on the cardboard box.
- Drape the box with the green tablecloth to represent a field.



LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP

Kids reflect and pray as they savor their treasure from Core Bible Discovery.

Supplies

- Hershey’s Kisses*



HIGH-ENERGY GAME

Kids transport paper gems.

Supplies

- various colors of construction paper (1 piece for every 2 kids)
- plastic straws (1 per person)
- small disposable cups (1 per person)
- painter’s tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Cut as many 1-inch circles as you can from each piece of construction paper.
- Tape 2 long, parallel lines on the floor about 5 feet apart.
- Spread out the paper circles on the floor behind one of the lines.



CRAFT

Kids make drawstring treasure pouches.

Supplies

- craft felt (various colors, 1 large square per child)
- dinner plates (disposable or not)

Easy Prep

- Make a sample craft to show kids.

- permanent markers
- scissors
- yarn
- pony beads (6-10 per child)
- pennies (1 per child)



LOW-ENERGY GAME

Kids will look for a button as others pass it along a string.

Supplies

- spool of string
- scissors
- shiny or metallic button (make sure the holes are large enough for the string to fit through)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)



OBJECT LESSON

Kids shine pennies.

Supplies

- dull or dirty pennies (at least 1 per child)
- shallow plastic cups (1 per child)
- vinegar (1 tablespoon for every 3 kids)
- salt (¼ teaspoon for every 3 kids)
- plastic spoons (1 for every 3 kids)
- lemons or lemon juice
- ketchup or taco sauce packets (1 for every 3 kids)
- paper towels

Easy Prep

- If using lemons, pre-slice them so each group has several slices to squeeze.



DEEPER BIBLE

Kids discover that when God is our treasure, the other things in our lives fade away.

Supplies

- Bibles
- large clear vase or jar
- ping-pong ball
- bag or container of granulated sugar
- spoon
- thermos of hot water
- stirring spoon

**Marked supplies can be reused from Core Bible Discovery*

Let's keep kids safe! You can help by using supplies as instructed for only ages 3+, purchasing child-safe items, and being aware of allergy concerns.



Welcome

Supplies

- Bible

Welcome

- Thank kids for coming.
- Just for fun, have kids give a fist bump to four friends.
- Make announcements.
- Introduce new kids.
- Celebrate birthdays by having kids say “happy birthday” with an extra “happy” as many times as the child is old. If the child is turning 10, they’d say, “Happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy birthday!”
- Collect the offering.

Introduce the Lesson

Say: **Today we’re going to learn that God is a treasure, so we value him more than anything. Can you imagine how exciting it would be to find buried treasure? Maybe you haven’t found *that*, but you’ve probably found something else outside that’s fun.**

Share

- Tell kids about the coolest thing *you’ve* ever found outside.
- Have kids form pairs. Ask kids to share about the coolest thing *they’ve* ever found outside.
- After partners have discussed, ask two or three kids to share with the whole group what they talked about with their partners.

Summarize

Open a Bible to Matthew 13, and say: **Sounds like you’ve found fun treasures outside! Let’s look in the Bible to see what treasures people found. The Bible is a treasure from God! God uses the Bible to talk with us and help us see his heart. The more we see his heart, the more we’ll treasure him... because he’s amazing! Let’s listen and talk with him.**

Pray, praising God for being our treasure.



Supplies

- Bible
- “Scavenger Hunt List” handout (1 for every 5-6 kids) (download [here](#))
- paper lunch bags
- classroom supplies including paper, crayons, markers, index cards, and tissues
- permanent markers (1 for about every 4 kids)
- stickers, cut apart but still on the backing (1 for about every 2 kids)
- paper clips (3 for about every 4 kids)
- Hershey’s Kisses (1 per child)
- small cardboard box
- green disposable tablecloth
- paper slips
- pens

Easy Prep

- Set out the classroom supplies kids will need for the scavenger hunt.
- Hide the permanent markers, stickers, and paper clips in different places.
- Put the Hershey’s Kisses in the cardboard box. Seal it so kids can’t reach inside.
- Write “TREASURE” on the cardboard box.
- Drape the box with the green tablecloth to represent a field.

Find Treasure

Say: **Today we’re learning that God is a treasure, so let’s find some treasure! Some things we’re looking for are worth more points, so use strategy to get the most points you can in the time limit.**

Have kids form pairs. Give each pair a “Scavenger Hunt List” handout, a paper lunch bag, and a pen. Kids will work with their partners to get as many points as possible in six minutes. Explain that some of the items are hidden around the room and others are things they may have with them or that they can create using classroom supplies. Also let kids know not to look under the green tablecloth; that’s for a later experience.

Give kids a 1-minute, a 30-second, and a 10-second warning. When time’s up, they must be sitting with their bags and can’t be preparing any more items.

After six minutes, tally the points.

Ask: • **How did you feel every time you got points in the game?**

• **Why do you think some of the items were worth more points?**

• **What are some things that people consider valuable in our world?**

Say: **Wait a second...no one got over 100 points? Why not? There were enough items that you could get well over 100! Pause for a reaction. Hmm...so you couldn’t find the treasure you really wanted. Let’s see what happened in the Bible when people *did* find the treasure they wanted.**

Discuss Treasure

Gather kids around the green tablecloth.

Read Matthew 13:44.

Say: **Let’s find the treasure in our field.** Have kids remove the green tablecloth to find the treasure. Allow kids to open the box and each take one Hershey’s Kiss, adding 100 points per child (not per pair) to their score from the scavenger hunt.

Say: **In this game, the Hershey’s Kisses were obviously the most valuable item. And I just gave you one with no strings attached! Our Bible story shows us that God is a treasure, and the man in the story gave up everything to buy his treasure. That’s because God is worth more than anything else we could ever treasure!**

Now that we've taken our Hershey's Kisses, our treasure box is empty. Let's fill it with things that are so valuable, money can't buy them. Have kids share their ideas and write them on paper slips to put in the box. Ideas could include love, family, health, or happiness.

Say: **Those are super valuable! But God is a treasure worth even more than those things, because God is the source of them!**

Have kids randomly pull paper slips back out of the treasure box and, as a group, discuss how each treasure written on the papers ultimately came from God.

Write "God" on a slip of paper, and put it in the box. Say: **God is a treasure, so we value him more than anything. We value him more than the things we looked for in the scavenger hunt, more than the things money can buy, and even more than the things money can't buy.**

Consider the Pearl

Read Matthew 13:45-46.

Ask: • **Why do you think the people in these two stories would value the treasure or the pearl enough to sell everything they had?**

• **If I'd asked you to *trade* all your items and the points you had for the Hershey's Kiss—instead of getting it for free—would you have done it? Explain.**

• **Imagine you're on an empty beach—no other people around—and you find a \$20 bill. How would you react?**

Say: **In our Bible stories, the men were willing to sell everything they had because they found something they valued even more. We can imagine what their excitement would've felt like when we think about finding money.**

But God is a treasure worth way more than pearls, money, or things you'd find in a treasure box. Jesus taught that the Kingdom of Heaven is worth giving up everything for. That means being part of God's family is the most valuable thing. And the best part is, *Jesus* already paid the price. Jesus died on the cross so that we can be part of the Kingdom of Heaven. Just as you got the candy from me for free, Jesus offers you the chance to be in his family for free! That's why we place so much value on God. God is a treasure, so we value him more than anything.

Have kids hold on to their candy for the Life Application Wrap-Up section.



Supplies

- Hershey's Kisses*

Savor the Treasure

Say: **We've been learning that God is a treasure. Let's treasure him as we enjoy our chocolate treasures.**

- Have kids unwrap their Hershey's Kisses as they silently thank God for the treasures he's given them.
- Say: **As this sweet candy melts in our mouths, let's thank God for being the greatest treasure of all.**
- Have kids put the candies in their mouths, close their eyes, and slowly savor the candy while you pray: **Dear God, thank you that you are valuable above anything else we treasure. You are sweeter than chocolate and more precious than pearls or treasure boxes. Help us value you!**

Wrap Up

Pray: **God, we value you more than anything! Thank you for being such a treasure. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



Supplies

- various colors of construction paper (1 piece for every 2 kids)
- plastic straws (1 per person)
- small disposable cups (1 per person)
- painter's tape
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Easy Prep

- Cut as many 1-inch circles as you can from each piece of construction paper.
- Tape 2 long, parallel lines on the floor about 5 feet apart.
- Spread out the paper circles on the floor behind one of the lines.

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Carry Paper Gems Using Straws

Say: **Today we're learning that God is our treasure. Let's play a game where you'll try to gather the most treasure.**

- Give each child a straw and a cup. Have kids place their cups on the tape line opposite the line with the paper circles.
- Then have kids stand on the line directly across from their cups.
- On your cue, each child will use a straw to pick up a paper circle—a treasured “gem”—by inhaling through the straw. Then kids will quickly move to their cups and drop the gems into them.
- The goal is to have the most gems in the cup at the end of the game.
- Any gems that kids drop before they make it to the cups must go back to the “treasure pile” to start over.
- Give a signal to start the game. If you have time, you can reset the gems to play another round.
- If you'd like, play music as kids collect gems.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you do to try to hold on to your treasure?**

• **How did you feel if you lost your treasure in the game?**

Say: **People try to hold on to things they treasure. But there's only one treasure we can hold on to forever: God! God is our treasure, so we value him more than anything.**



Supplies

- craft felt (various colors, 1 large square per child)
- dinner plates (disposable or not)
- permanent markers
- scissors
- yarn
- pony beads (6-10 per child)
- pennies (1 per child)

Easy Prep

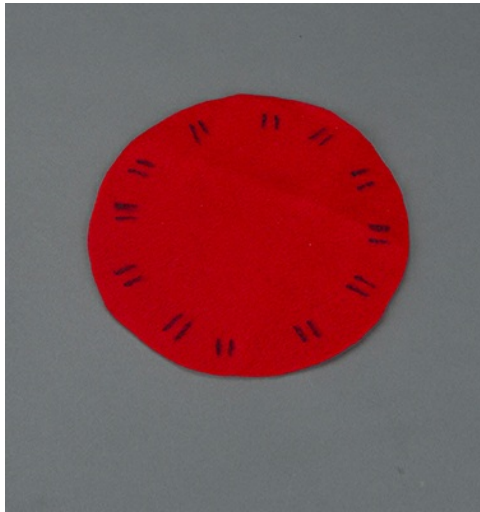
- Make a sample craft to show kids.



Make Treasure Pouches

Show kids the sample craft you made. Set out the supplies to share, and have kids follow these directions to make no-sew treasure pouches.

- Choose your favorite color of craft felt.
- Trace a dinner plate onto the felt.
- Cut out the circle.
- Cut sets of notches around the perimeter of the circle as shown below. Each pair of notches should be roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart and about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the edge of the circle. You'll want 12 sets total. (Tip: To space the notches fairly evenly, imagine a clock face and cut the notches at the 12, 3, 6, and 9 positions. Then fill in the spaces between those positions with more notches.)



- Cut a piece of yarn, at least 3 feet long. Thread it through the notches as shown.



- Pull the yarn tight to shape the felt into a drawstring pouch.
- Tie beads on the ends of the yarn to keep it from slipping back through the notches.
- Put a penny in the pouch as the beginning of your treasure.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What treasures would you like to store in your pouch?**

• **What are some treasures that couldn't fit in a pouch?**

Say: **Treasure pouches can store treasures like coins or candy, but no pouch could contain the best treasure: God! God is a treasure, so we value him more than anything we could fit in a treasure pouch.**

Have kids take their pouches home and use them to store treasure, showing them to their friends and families as a reminder of how God is the best treasure.



LOW-ENERGY GAME

[10 min]

Treasure on a Wire

Supplies

- spool of string
- scissors
- shiny or metallic button (make sure the holes are large enough for the string to fit through)
- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

Tip

- If you used the Music Video block, consider repeating the songs from today's lesson during the game. You can find the downloadable album [here](#).

Pass a Button Along a String

Say: **We read in the Bible today about how being friends with God is so valuable because God is our treasure. Treasures are special and valuable, and knowing God is the most special treasure of all! Let's play a game where we'll try to find a treasure.**

- Have everyone sit in a circle, and give one person the end of the string on the spool. Have kids pass the spool all the way around the circle to create a loop with the string that's large enough for everyone to hold.
- When the spool gets back to the first person, cut the string from the spool and thread the button onto the string. Then tie the ends together to close the loop.
- For each round of the game, one person will be the Treasure Hunter. The Treasure Hunter sits in the center of the circle to try to track the treasure—the button—as it moves around the circle on the string. Kids will pretend to move the button along the string, even if they aren't, to make it more challenging.
- When the Treasure Hunter thinks he or she has spotted the treasure, he or she will call out "Stop!" and can make a guess about who has the button.
- If the Treasure Hunter guesses correctly, the person who has the button will be the new Treasure Hunter.
- If the Treasure Hunter guesses incorrectly, then a new round will start and he or she can try again.
- Allow each Treasure Hunter three guesses before swapping out for a new person who'd like to guess where the treasure is.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play as many rounds as time allows.

Talk About It

Ask: • **What did you have to do to keep track of the treasure?**

- **What are treasures you'd work hard to hunt down in real life, such as a cellphone or a \$50 bill?**

Say: **In our world, a lot of people value treasures that are worth money. But God is a treasure you can't put a price on because he's worth more than anything money could buy.**



Supplies

- dull or dirty pennies (at least 1 per child)
- shallow plastic cups (1 per child)
- vinegar (1 tablespoon for every 3 kids)
- salt ($\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon for every 3 kids)
- plastic spoons (1 for every 3 kids)
- lemons or lemon juice
- ketchup or taco sauce packets (1 for every 3 kids)
- paper towels

Easy Prep

- If using lemons, pre-slice them so each group has several slices to squeeze.

Prepare the Experiment

Hold up a couple of dirty pennies.

Say: **Right now, these pennies look dirty and dull. If we didn't know any better, we'd think they were worthless. But let's do an experiment to find the best way to make these pennies shine!**

- Form groups of three, and give each group three pennies, a spoon, and three cups.
- Have groups pour 1 tablespoon of vinegar into one cup and then use the spoon to stir in $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of salt so it's mixed well.
- Have groups add lemon juice or squeeze lemon juice into another cup. They'll need enough juice to cover the bottom of the cup.
- Have groups squeeze the ketchup or taco sauce into the third cup.

Hold Pennies in Solutions

Say: **Let's see which solution cleans pennies the best.**

Ask: • **Which do you think it will be, and why?**

- Have group members each place a penny in a different cup. Make sure the pennies are completely covered at the bottom of the cups.
- Have kids count to 100 as they observe the pennies in the cups.
- Have kids remove the pennies and rub them with a paper towel to remove extra liquid.
- Invite group members to compare each other's pennies to determine which is the shiniest.
- If you have extra time and pennies, invite groups to repeat the experiment and give the pennies more time to soak in the solutions.
- After the experiment, gather all the shiny pennies in a pile and have kids throw away their cups.

Talk About It

Ask: • **Which liquid do you think worked the best?**

Say: **Did you know that ketchup and taco sauce contain vinegar and salt? So those results might be similar to the results from the cup with just the vinegar and salt. The lemon juice works, too, but it might take a little longer to make the penny shine.**

Ask: • **How is finding the shiny copper of the penny under the dirt and dullness like finding a treasure in a field?**

Say: **Seeing just a little bit of shine made us want to make the whole penny sparkle! If we found a dirty penny in a field, we might not want to keep it. But seeing a pile of shiny coins looks more like a treasure! God is a treasure. When we experience his love, friendship, and power, we want more of him in our lives! We don't want to just follow him a little bit; we want to put him first in our lives and value him more than anything.**



Supplies

- Bibles
- large clear vase or jar
- ping-pong ball
- bag or container of granulated sugar
- spoon
- thermos of hot water
- stirring spoon

Set It Up

Say: **We're learning that God is a treasure. If I asked, most of you would say you do treasure and love God. It's an easy answer to say! But what does it really *mean* to treasure God? Let's dig in to that.**

Dig Deeper

Place the ping-pong ball in the vase. Say: **Imagine this ping-pong ball is God. Right now, we can clearly see God in this vase. He's the main thing—the only thing—right in the middle of everything. But sometimes we fill our lives with other treasures.**

Have a child read Matthew 6:19-20.

Ask: • **What are some possessions or other physical things people consider to be treasures?** For each answer, have a child scoop a spoonful of sugar into the vase.

Say: **All the stuff we treasure is starting to cover up God. He doesn't look so important in this jar anymore. And sometimes it's not just *stuff* we treasure; there was a man in the Bible named Paul who treasured his own accomplishments. Listen to this.**

Have a child read Philippians 3:5-6.

Ask: • **What are some accomplishments or things about ourselves that we sometimes treasure?** For each answer, have a child scoop a spoonful of sugar into the vase. Examples could include winning a sports tournament, getting straight A's, or having a lot of friends. Continue adding sugar until the ball is completely covered.

Say: **All the things in the world, like our stuff and our accomplishments, are kind of flashy and shiny. It's easy to give them our attention. God isn't forcing anyone to treasure him. He's there, but he won't *make* you put him first.**

But after Paul met Jesus, he realized that God was far more important than his own accomplishments. Listen to what he wrote next.

Have a child read Philippians 3:7-9.

Ask: • **Why is everything we just named garbage compared to knowing Jesus?**

• **Be honest: Do you *really* agree with Paul that everything you named is garbage? Explain.**

Say: **It's not that the stuff in our lives is truly bad. But when it crowds out God, we're missing out on the best treasure of all! Let me show you what I mean. We can keep the stuff in our lives, but when we treasure God, that stuff begins to become invisible. It's there, but it doesn't distract us anymore, because God rises to the top of our list.**

Pour hot water into the vase and stir it. The sugar will dissolve, and the ping-pong ball will rise to the top.

Ask: • **What's the difference between our vase before we added water and our vase now?**

• **How does that difference remind you of what it looks like when we treasure God?**

Have a child read 1 John 2:17.

Say: **God is a treasure because knowing Jesus has infinite value. God can do so much more in our lives than our stuff or our accomplishments ever could.**

Ask: • **What can God do that other things can't?** Examples include loving us more than anything, always being with us, valuing us, forgiving us, and making a way for us to go to heaven.

Say: The more you get to know Jesus, the more natural it will be to treasure him. You'll see the value of Jesus' love, hope, and joy in your life. No amount of money, stuff, or accomplishments can fill your heart like Jesus can. As you get to know God, your heart will start to fill up with love for him, just as our vase filled up with water and God rose to the top. God is a treasure, and we can fill our hearts with him.

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