

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT POSSESSIONS

LUKE 12



KEY PASSAGE: Jeremiah 29:12-13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is prayer? Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.

CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus taught people to seek God's kingdom because knowing God is the greatest treasure. When people trust in Jesus, they are welcomed into God's kingdom and can trust that God will provide for all their needs.

STORY POINT: Jesus taught people to seek God's kingdom.



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

In our modern consumer-driven culture, Luke 12's parable of the rich fool provides a relevant warning against the danger of greed, as well as a timely cure for the anxiety that ails us when we seek first our own kingdom rather than God's.

In this chapter, we read about Jesus being interrupted from His teaching to break up a civil squabble between two brothers fighting over their inheritance. Jesus asked why they would want Him to serve as the judge between them and issued a serious warning, not just to the greedy brother, but to everyone in the crowd: "Be on guard against all greed, because one's life is not in the abundance of his possessions." The man who called out for Jesus' help was probably not expecting a rebuke from Jesus in the form of a parable.

Jesus went on to teach them what it looks like to put God's kingdom above their own, to seek His will for their lives rather than accumulating more money and possessions that won't stand the test of time. He taught them what it means to treasure God above the things of this world and to receive the gift of everlasting life that will not perish.

Trusting in God's power above your own ability to provide for yourself doesn't come naturally to us. Though the kids hearing this story may not be as familiar with this reality as you are, reflect on what it means to trust in and treasure God above all else, to believe that we are worth more to our Creator than the beautiful sights we witness in nature. It takes faith to read these words of Scripture and to believe them with confidence and hope. Pray for a childlike faith to reign in your heart as you share this story with boys and girls this week.

Lead the kids in your class to see how worthy God is of our trust, obedience, and worship. Pray that God would soften their hearts and provide them with the peace that comes from knowing their lives are secure—both now and forever, when they trust in His Son's words of life.



Scan the QR code to listen to The Gospel Project for Kids Weekly Leader Training Podcast.



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel



PREPARE

PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- ☐ "I Spy" activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- ☐ construction paper

Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ pictures of items
- ☐ treasure chest
- ☐ empty trash can



LOVE

Review & Bible Skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- ☐ treasures, 1 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ construction paper
- ☐ chenille stems, 2 per kid

Reflection and Prayer

- ☐ Bible story coloring page



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video
- ☐ Story Point Poster

Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Jesus Taught about Possessions" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster
- ☐ felt board (optional)
- ☐ Biblical costumes (optional)

Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 24, Session 5" Questions from Kids video

Missions Moment

- ☐ "Mariah in Salt Lake City" printable

Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "With All Your Heart (Jeremiah 29:12-13)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “Did you ever want something so much that you couldn’t stop thinking about it? How did you feel if you finally got the thing you wanted? Were you completely satisfied?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the “I Spy” activity page.

SAY “Today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM** because knowing God is the greatest treasure. I am looking forward to sharing today’s story with you.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

☐ OPTION 1: PACK YOUR BAGS



Invite kids to sit around tables and distribute a piece of construction paper to each kid. Show kids how to draw a simple suitcase outline on their paper. Direct kids to think about some of their favorite things they own. Invite kids to share some of these items aloud with the group. Then, challenge kids to imagine they were moving far away or going on a very long trip and were only allowed to bring three things. What three things would they bring? Encourage kids to use colored pencils, crayons, or markers to draw these items in their suitcases. Then, invite kids to share what they packed with the rest of the group.

SAY “Was it hard to choose what you would bring? We have many earthly possessions we really like and enjoy, but today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM** because knowing God is the greatest treasure.”

☐ OPTION 2: TREASURE OR TRASH

Prior to the session, print off pictures or write words of different items such as broccoli, a soccer ball, books, money, a computer or tablet, a television, and a fancy car. In the middle of the room, place an empty trash can and a treasure box. Give the group the pictures and encourage them to work together to decide whether the items are treasure or trash, and then put them in the appropriate bin.

SAY “You guys had to think hard about whether some of those items were treasure or trash! Today we will see Jesus warn people that having many earthly treasures will not make us happy or content. While some of those items are good, none of them are lasting treasure. Instead, **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM** because knowing God is the greatest treasure.”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! I am so glad you are here! My name is [your name], and today I get to share a true story from God’s Word with you. If you have a Bible with you, will you take it out and place it in your lap? **[Distribute Bibles to kids who do not have one.]** Throughout Jesus’ earthly ministry, He taught about how people should live. Today we will see how Jesus warned people about storing up earthly possessions that will not last, but **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM** because knowing God is the greatest treasure. Let’s ask God to prepare our hearts to hear from His Word. ‘God, thank You for Your Word. Help us to hear what You would have us to hear and be obedient to do what You say. In Jesus’ name, amen.’ ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

Display the Big Picture Question Poster.

SAY “ As we study God’s Word together, we like to think about a big picture question and answer that helps us focus on an important truth. Do you remember our big picture question? **[Allow responses.]** Our big picture question is: **What is prayer?** Do you remember the answer to this question? **[Allow responses.]** **Prayer is talking with God to praise Him, ask Him for help, and confess our sins.** When we trust God through prayer, we can trust that God will provide for all our needs. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the Giant Timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ Throughout Jesus’ earthly ministry, He performed miracles, proving that He is the Messiah. He also taught His disciples and the people who gathered around Him truths about the kingdom of God and how to live as a believer. Last week we studied what Jesus taught about prayer. Today we will see how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM.** ”



LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 12. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught about Possessions.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT POSSESSIONS

“As Jesus was teaching a crowd of people, someone said to Him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide his inheritance money with me.’”

Jesus replied, “Friend, who made Me a judge over you?” Then He said to the crowd, “Be on guard against greed! Owning many possessions will not make you happy or content.”

Then Jesus told them a parable: “There was a rich man who had a great farm that produced a lot of crops. The rich man thought to himself, ‘What will I do with all these crops? I don’t have enough room to store them. I know—I’ll tear down my barns and build even bigger ones. Then I’ll store so much away that I can rest for many years and just enjoy life.’”

“But God came to the rich man and said, ‘You fool! This is the night that your life will end. And all those things you saved and worked so hard for, who will get to enjoy them?’”

Jesus said, “This is how it will be if you store up treasure for yourself and are not rich toward God.”

Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Don’t worry about your life. Don’t worry about what you will eat or what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. The ravens don’t store up food, but God feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than birds? Can you add one moment to your life by worrying? And if you can’t do that, why worry about everything else?”

Jesus also told the people to think about the wildflowers and how they don’t work to make their beautiful colors and petals. He reminded them how God cares for His creation, especially people who are much more important than flowers.

Then Jesus said: “Seek first the kingdom of God, and the things you need will be added to you. Don’t be afraid. Your Father delights to give you the kingdom. Sell the things you own and give to the poor. Store up your treasure in heaven instead, where no one can steal it and nothing can destroy it. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Christ Connection: Jesus taught people to seek God’s kingdom because knowing God is the greatest treasure. When people trust in Jesus, they are welcomed into God’s kingdom and can trust that God will provide for all their needs. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Felt board: Use a felt board or print pictures of different people from today’s story and use them as you tell the story.

Eyewitness: Tell the story dressed in biblical costume as a person who witnessed Jesus teaching about possessions.



2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “As Jesus was teaching a crowd, He warned the people to be on guard against greed and having too many possessions. To help the people understand this, Jesus told a parable of the rich man who stored up as many crops for himself as he possibly could. When he ran out of space, he built bigger barns to store more crops. The man thought he would feel satisfaction, knowing that he had all that he needed for many years. What happened instead? **[Allow responses.]** The man was so busy storing up earthly treasures that he did not seek the true treasure of knowing God. This was to be a warning to all believers that we should be more concerned about knowing God than pursuing earthly treasures that do not last.

Jesus then reminded His disciples that they can trust God to meet all their needs. He pointed out if God cares for the birds and the flowers, how much more can we trust Him to care for our needs? What did Jesus say about worry? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus reminded His disciples that worry does nothing, so instead of worrying, they, and all believers, should seek God’s kingdom and trust Him to provide, just as He does the birds and the flowers.

Jesus taught people to seek God’s kingdom because knowing God is the greatest treasure. When people trust in Jesus, they are welcomed into God’s kingdom and can trust that God will provide for all their needs. ”

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY “Our first step in seeking God’s kingdom is to trust God to save us from our sins. If you would like to know more about this decision, please talk to one of your parents or a church leader. We would love to talk with you more about this! ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 24, Session 5” Questions from Kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What will it be like in heaven?
2. How does God free us from worry?



LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

One recent summer, Mariah served on a missions team of college students serving for six to eight weeks of the summer. This team's goal was to tell people in Utah about Jesus. Mariah was sad that so many people in Utah, and especially in Salt Lake City, don't follow Jesus. Many people there are part of a group that has "Church" and "Jesus" in its name, but these people don't believe true things about God and the Bible. These people call themselves the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They also go by the name LDS or Mormons. Sadly, Mormons think they follow Jesus, but because they don't believe true things about Him, they are not Christians. Mariah knew she needed to tell Mormons the true good news about Jesus.

Show the "Mariah in Salt Lake City" printable.

Mariah formed friendships with many Mormons and tried to tell them the true story about Jesus, but it was challenging. Even when she returned to her home in Charleston, South Carolina, where she attended college, she invited members of the LDS church to meet her in coffee shops and to come to her graduation party. She told them about Jesus whenever she met up with them.

In Mariah's last semester of college, she took a team of college students from her university to Utah. The team hosted game nights and ice cream socials and frequently told the Mormons the truth about Jesus.

After graduation, Mariah packed up her car and drove across the country to live in Utah so she could continue to tell the people who live there about Jesus. Pray for Mariah and other missionaries in Utah.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Jeremiah 29:12-13 together.

SAY “You all have done a great job memorizing our key passage over the last few weeks. Let’s review it one more time to make sure we have this truth from God’s Word memorized.”

Direct kids to listen as you say the key passage. When you stop, challenge kids to shout out the next word of the key passage. Repeat several times, leaving out different words each time. To close, say the entire key passage together from memory.

Lead kids to sing “With All Your Heart (Jeremiah 29:12-13).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “Thank You, Lord, that we can trust You to provide for all our needs. Help us seek Your kingdom above any earthly treasure. You are the greatest treasure. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Luke 12. Explain that one of the best ways to seek God's kingdom and to know Him more is by reading His Word. The Bible is the way God speaks to His children and how He shows us the best way to live and serve Him.

Consider pointing out the location of Galilee [C5] on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 12:33-34 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud.

SAY “ Today we learned how Jesus encouraged the people to spend their lives not building up wealth and possessions that can be stolen or destroyed but instead seeking His kingdom and heavenly treasure that last forever. When we seek God's kingdom, God will meet all our needs, including our greatest need of salvation. Jesus warned that where our treasure is, there our heart will be also. If we spend our life trying to collect as much money and possessions as we can, our heart will only be concerned with the things of this world. But, if we seek the kingdom of God and spend our time on earth storing up treasure in heaven, our heart will be on heavenly and eternal things—the things that are important to God. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What does Jesus say we shouldn't worry about? ”

The Bible tells us that followers of Jesus do not need to worry about not having what they need. In today's story Jesus reminded people that the Lord cares and provides for the flowers and birds. If the Lord provides for plants and animals, we know He will faithfully provide for His children. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 6:25-34.)

SAY “ How can trusting God help with worry? ”

Trusting in God means believing that He is good, that He cares for us, and that He will provide everything we need. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Peter 5:7.)

SAY “ Why do we need to be on guard against greed in our lives? ”

Jesus warned that we must not spend our entire lives trying to get as much money and things as we can. True satisfaction and joy do not come from having more things but are only found in following the Lord and knowing Him more. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Luke 12:15.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)



☐ OPTION 1: SEEK-AND-FIND RACE

Before this activity, hide small treasures around the room. Be sure to have at least one treasure for each kid. Gather kids in one group and explain that you have hidden treasures around the room for them to find. Challenge kids to look around the room for the hidden treasure. Direct kids to sit down once they have found a treasure, ensuring that each kid finds one. Then, discuss with kids how, similar to how they searched for the treasure hidden around the room, all believers can seek God every day because He is the greatest treasure.

SAY “ Today we saw how **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM**. Knowing God is the greatest treasure. Believers can know God more by reading, studying, and memorizing the Bible. ”

☐ OPTION 2: SEEKING GOD’S KINGDOM

Invite kids to sit around tables. Distribute two chenille stems and a construction-paper circle to each kid. Place glue in the center of the tables. Challenge kids to shape one of their chenille stems into a circle and attach the other chenille stem to the circle, creating a magnifying-glass shape. Next, brainstorm ways to seek God’s kingdom, such as reading the Bible, praying, sharing the gospel, memorizing Scripture, etc. Instruct kids to write one of these ways on their paper circle. Then, direct kids to glue the paper circle to the back of the magnifying glass.

SAY “ **JESUS TAUGHT PEOPLE TO SEEK GOD’S KINGDOM**. There are many ways we can seek God’s kingdom throughout our day. God is the greatest treasure and is worth seeking every day. ”

2 REFLECTION AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids. If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.