

SABBATH SCHOOL

Preteen Sabbath Instruction Program — Teacher's Outline

Level 3 • Unit 2 • Week 2

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE BIBLE

OBJECTIVE:

To show the students that God speaks to us through the Bible and shows us how valuable His Kingdom is through parables. The kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything else we can have, and we are learning to recognize the value of choosing God's way of life.

ATTENTION GETTER:

Supplies Needed:

- Fancy, gaudy, brightly colored costume jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, pins, earrings, etc.)
- Rhinestone and colored "gems" from a craft store (use later to decorate treasure chest pictures)
- Plastic gold coins or gold candy coins
- Jewelry chest or a shoe box covered in shiny gold or silver paper (cover lid and box separately)
(For option at end of lesson, have two candy coins for each student)

Fill the chest or covered shoe box with the jewelry, "gems" and gold plastic or candy coins. Have it hidden in a large paper sack under the teacher's chair.

Say: Let's imagine that we have a lot of money and we can buy anything we want. What would you want to buy? [Let students respond.]

Do: Take out the box of jewels.

Say: Things like what I have in this pretty box that could be worth a lot and could become more valuable over time if I took care of them. [Open the box and show the jewels.] Wouldn't it be fantastic to have *real* pretty, shiny stones? Or gold coins like these, only real? If we could buy fancy jewelry and gold like this we would be very rich. Could there be anything that is worth more? Let's see what God tells us.

BIBLE LESSON:

Say: In last week's lesson we talked about God being our friend. One of the ways we talked about Him being a friend is by making His instruction book, the Bible, interesting for us. Do you remember? We talked about there being stories of adventure, like the story of Jonah and the big fish; songs and poetry in the book of Psalms; stories of the future in Revelation; and mystery stories, like the parables that Jesus told. God talks to us in many ways through the Bible, doesn't He? When we want to know what our friend God wants us to do or to learn, we can always find out by looking in the pages of our Bibles.

Today we are going to read about two parables that Jesus told His disciples to help them understand that the Kingdom, and being a part of God's family, is more valuable than anything else we can have.

Ask: First of all, does anyone know what a "parable" is? [Give students time to respond.]

Say: A parable is a short story that is told to teach a truth or a moral lesson. Jesus told many parables to teach the wonderful things God has in mind for us if we choose His way of life.

Let's open our Bibles to Matthew 13 and read verses 1 and 2. [Have one or two students read the verses to the class.]

Say: Jesus went to sit by the Sea of Galilee one day and a large group of people followed Him wanting to hear more of what He had to say. He had been teaching them about God's way of life, and had performed many miracles of healing for them to see. There were so many people that followed Him this time that He had to get into a boat and go out a short distance into the water so that everyone could see and hear Him. He continued to talk to them in parables or stories about the Kingdom of heaven.

Ask: Do you know what the kingdom of heaven is? [Give time for any students to respond.]

Say: The Kingdom is the government and way of life that God will set up here on the earth after Jesus returns. Jesus will be the ruler of this Kingdom and all people of all nations will learn God's way of life and will learn to obey Him. No more will there be leaders of different countries like we see today. The leader of our country is called the President; the leader of Germany is the Chancellor; the head of the government of Israel today is called the Prime Minister. Sadly, many of these leaders do not get along. In God's Kingdom there will be only one overall leader—Jesus Christ—He will be the King of kings! Those who are lesser leaders in that time will be taught to get along with each other.

Ask: Which one of God's Feasts teaches us about His Kingdom? [Let students respond. Answer: the Feast of Tabernacles.]

Say: Yes, the Feast of Tabernacles. And at the Feast of Tabernacles we learn how wonderful the earth will be when Jesus is the ruler. The animals will not be wild. The streets will be safe to play in—

no more killings. People will be healed of all kinds of diseases. Each year we learn how great it will be to be in God's Kingdom.

Jesus wanted the people who were following Him to know these things too, but it wasn't time for everyone else to understand. So after He told some more parables, He sent the crowd away and went back into the house. He did not tell them the meaning of His stories. But in the house, His disciples came to Him and asked Him to explain the meaning of the parables to them. Jesus did as they asked. He also told them two more stories about the Kingdom. Let's read those stories in our Bibles. Turn to Matthew 13:44. [Have one student read the verse.]

In this story, Jesus tells about a man who finds a treasure in a field. Maybe it was a treasure of jewels and gold like these. [Point to the box of jewelry.] If he had treasure like this, he would be rich, wouldn't he?

Well, that's what he thought, too, so he went and sold everything that he owned so that he could buy that field. He gave up everything that he thought was important to him to have the very best. That's what Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like—the very best we can have—more valuable than anything we have now or that we can buy. If we choose God's way of life we will receive the most valuable thing that there is—eternal life in the very family of God.

Let's read verses 45 and 46 and learn another parable about the Kingdom. [Have one student read these verses.]

This story tells about a merchant.

Ask: Does anyone know what a merchant is? [Wait for students to respond.]

Say: A merchant is someone who buys and sells things. If you were the owner of a jewelry store, you would be a merchant. You would buy necklaces, pearls and diamonds, for example, to then sell to people who came into your store. This merchant in Jesus' parable was looking for a very expensive and valuable pearl to buy. He, too, wanted the very best and when he found one pearl of great price, he gave up everything that was important to him so he could have it. Again, the lesson we learn is that if we choose God's way of life we will receive the most valuable thing that there is.

Ask: What is this most valuable thing? [See if students remember. Answer: eternal life in the family of God.] Yes, it is being a member of God's family forever.

Say: King David's son, Solomon, was known for being a very wise man. He was also a very rich man. In the book of Proverbs he wrote about what he learned is worth the most. Let me read a few of these verses to you. Even though he lived a long time before Jesus, he also learned that God's Kingdom is very important.

- Say: [Read Proverbs 21:21.] Solomon is telling us that if we choose to follow God's way of righteousness we will receive that "hidden treasure" or "pearl of great price"—life and honor in God's Kingdom.
- Say: [Read Proverbs 2:4-5.] Here Solomon is talking about wisdom. He says we should look for wisdom as we would look for silver or that hidden treasure we've been talking about, so we can make the right choices each day and obey God.
- Ask: And, again, where do we find the knowledge of God? [Let students respond. Answer: the Bible.]
- Ask: Can you tell of a time at school or at home when you have had to make a choice to do what was right or wrong? [Let students respond. Example: not cheat on a test; not make fun of someone; not lie about breaking something; not take something that isn't yours.]

Solomon says if we use wisdom in making choices we will learn more about God and His way of life.

Let me read two more verses in Proverbs 8 that tell us where to find the most valuable treasures that God wants to give us. [Read Proverbs 8:18, 21.] In these verses, Solomon continues talking about wisdom from God. Notice in verse 18 he says that "enduring riches and righteousness" are with Godly wisdom. Enduring means they will last forever, just as we will live forever in God's Kingdom when we make the right choices now and learn to obey God. In verse 21 God promises us we will inherit wealth and He will fill our treasuries with precious jewels, just as Jesus was telling the disciples many years later.

Next time you see expensive, shiny jewelry and gold, think about the jewels that God has given us now to help us learn about Him and His way of life, and the treasure He will give us in the future if we continue to obey Him.

- Do: As you ask the students the following two questions, be prepared to write down some of their answers and have some of your own answers ready. As the children respond, write down , on slips of colored paper, the godly jewels and place them in a plain box.
- Ask: What do you think are some of the jewels God has given us now to help us live His way? [Let students respond—Sabbath, Feast Days, healing, safety, the Bible, the Church, families, Holy Spirit.]
- Ask: What is the treasure that He will give us later, after Jesus returns? [Let students respond—eternal life in His Kingdom.]
- Ask: As you compare the two boxes of jewels, which one contains what is more valuable? Which jewels look more valuable? Are the jewels that God gives us as valuable as gold and jewelry Why?

LESSON APPLICATION:

Supplies needed:

Picture of the "treasure chest" (one for each student, copied on card stock)

Picture of "God's jewels" (one for each student)

Scissors

Crayons or markers

Elmer's school glue or Tacky glue

Rhinestones and colored "gems" from a craft store

Give each student a copy of the "treasure chest" and "God's jewels." Have them cut out the "jewels" and glue them on the treasure chest. They may also glue some rhinestones and colored "gems" to the picture and then finish it with crayons or markers.

Optional: Give each student two gold candy coins. Let them know that they can eat one piece of candy after they have told their parents or a church member the parable of the hidden treasure. The other piece of candy is for them to give to the person they tell their story to—so they can share their "treasure."

Music:

Sing "Seek Ye First" from the United Church of God hymnal.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,
And all these things shall be added unto you, al-le-lu, al-le-lu-ia.
Man shall not live by bread alone, but by ev'ry word
That proceeds from the mouth of God, al-le-lu, al-le-lu-ia.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:20a, 21 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

family activity

THE POINT:

God speaks to us through the Bible and shows us how valuable His Kingdom is through parables. In Matthew 13:44-46 we learned about two parables that teach us the kingdom of heaven is more valuable than anything else we can have, and we are learning to recognize the value of choosing God's way of life.

FAMILY TOGETHER TIME:

Have your child look up Matthew 13:44-46 in the Bible and read to you the parables of the hidden treasure and pearl of great price. Ask them the following questions:

- What is a parable? (It is a short story that is told to teach a truth or lesson.)
- What is the kingdom of heaven? (It is the government and way of life that God will set up here on the earth after Jesus returns.)
- What are some of the valuable "jewels" God gives us now to help us live His way? (Some are the Sabbath, Holy Days, healing, Holy Spirit, the Bible, the Church, families, etc.)
- What is the treasure that He will give us later, after Jesus returns? (He will give us eternal life in His Kingdom.)

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 6:20a, 21 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

TREASURE CHEST OF GOD'S JEWELS

Color the jewels below. Then cut them out and glue them onto the treasure chest.



