

The Connection

Weekly Bible Verse: "Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge."
Proverbs 23:12 (NIV)

July 26, 2020

Together



Together we can continue to make sure that children hear the stories of the Bible and of God's love and promises! Together let's keep doing kid's ministry at the time our kids need it most.

Jesus Told a Story

Scripture: Matthew 13:44-46

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field."

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. ⁴⁶When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

Parables are rich visual stories that often contain surprises and challenges to our expectations. Every time we think about them, there is the potential for a new insight.

God's Kingdom is wherever God and God's people are at work in the world, bringing love, forgiveness, hope and comfort. Each parable that Jesus told explores different aspects of the what the Kingdom is. As we look at parables, let's ask **"What is the kingdom of God like? And to what should I compare it?"** (Luke 13:18). The Kingdom is like a treasure you discover was hidden, and make your own. The Kingdom is the perfect pearl you've been searching for, and is worth everything you've got. The Kingdom of Heaven is not only a place, but it is Jesus reigning or ruling in the hearts of those who love Him.

By looking at the parables, we can begin to under-

stand where to look for the Kingdom of God, what it's like, and how to become part of it. Parables are meant to challenge our thinking, make us ask questions, and lead us to new insights we may not see in our first encounter.



The Parable of the Treasure

Jesus describes a treasure so great, so valuable, so precious, the man sold everything he had to gain it. He did not value anything that he owned as much as he valued the chance to have the treasure. Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven with this valuable treasure. What Christ has offered us is so great, so valuable, that there is nothing we have that is worth keeping if it means we can't be in the Kingdom.

There are many wonderful things that we treasure here on Earth, but the greatest treasure that we could ever obtain is Heaven. Jesus is encouraging his listeners to "look for the Kingdom like you would a great treasure and be ready to give up what's wrong, and do everything you can to do what God wants you to do." No small task.



Parable of the Pearl

Jesus told about a big white pearl. In this parable Jesus shows us we should ask Jesus into our hearts, and make him our number one priority. God knows we can never pay the price for our sins, so he sent Jesus to pay the price for us. Now, all we have to do is believe in Jesus, and we can receive the greatest treasure in all the world!

What is God saying? God wants to take away everything in our lives that keep us away from Him. But when we consider what God has given us, we will realize there is no price we could ever pay to equal that gift. God wants us to know that the kingdom of Heaven is worth any price we must pay. It's worth more than money, more than popularity, more than power. God wants us to have the kingdom of Heaven. And he wants us all to be willing to do anything to receive it.

Additional Pages:

Coloring Page - Pearl and Treasure (2)

Word Activity - Parable of the Pearl

Resources:

Pearl of Great Price
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDDTDtB3eBU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvQoTXIBVFY> (fun song)



Questions for Today's Lesson

How does it make you feel to know that God wants us to search for Him and his kingdom?

How can I discover God's treasure in my life?

What can I do to tell others about God's Kingdom? Who can I invite to come and learn about Jesus?

Digging Deeper



Ideas to add to the discussion of this week's Bible story:

- ◆ **Draw** something/someone you treasure.
- ◆ **Look Up** information on where pearls come from.
- ◆ **Go** on a treasure hunt.
- ◆ **Read** some of Jesus' other parables.
- ◆ **Make a Poster** with \$ signs vertically along the left side. Children

can list "things" that have a HIGH PRICE TAG but that might not necessarily honor God.

- ◆ **Find sticks** and make a cross to remind you that Jesus is the greatest treasure.
- ◆ **Use beads** to make a necklace, bracelet, or ring of "great worth"
- ◆ **Find a box** and make a treasure chest. Fill the box with favorite scripture verses.
- ◆ **Eat** an oreo cookie. Take the cookie apart and look at the creamy white center and round shape. Let it remind us of the round pearl and the treasure we have in Jesus. God wants all of us to have the gift of Heaven, and if we give our hearts to Jesus, we can have the pearl of priceless value.

Parables

- Parables are rich visual stories that often contain surprises and challenges to our expectations. Every time we think about them, there is the potential for a new insight.
- Parables are meant to challenge our thinking, make us ask questions.
- A parable is a seemingly simple story with a twist or surprise that reveals a deeper meaning in a memorable way. They are designed to share a truth but as Jesus notes in Matthew 13, they also confound those who don't want to listen, or think they already know the answer.
- Often, parables use exaggeration to accentuate the point and make it memorable. The Kingdom's seed was "the smallest," the pearl was the "greatest," for example.
- Parables also often use phrases, such as, "like," as in —the Kingdom of God is "like" a treasure that's found. In that sense, parables are sometimes metaphors.
- By their nature, parables invite the hearer to question what they mean. Jesus used parables to challenge conventional thinking, and help people grasp new insights. Like a crystal in the sun, as we turn them around in our minds and discussions, they reveal new rays of light.

