

Focus: Our treasure is in heaven

Materials:

- Cd: 25 Sunday School Songs
- Beginners Bible
- Fish picture to color
- Crayons
- Net
- Flash cards

Gathering (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is _____. Last week we talked about making good choices. When we make good choices we are spreading the kingdom of God.*

Opening Prayer

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

Let us pray. Thank you God for your love and care; we are happy to be your special catch. Thank you for teaching us that people are more special than toys. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

Amen.

Song/Movement

Trust and Obey, track:, from 25 Sunday School Songs

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc. Have children sit on their carpet squares when finished.

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way
When we do His good will
He abides with us still
And with all who will
Trust and obey
(chorus)
Then in fellowship sweet
We will sit at his feet

Or we'll walk by His side in the way
What He says we will do
Where He sends we will go
Never fear only trust and obey
(chorus 2x)
Chorus
Trust and obey
For there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus
But to trust and obey

Alternate Creative Movement

Have kids form two equal lines facing each other, or a big circle. To the beat of the music have them take four steps toward each other and clap the hands of the child facing them (or their own), then take four steps back and clap their hands together. Repeat.

Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

God's kingdom is the real treasure.

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *The Kingdom of God is people living in peace and happiness with God, one another, and all of God's creation. Jesus wants us to live in happiness with God forever. Throughout his life, Jesus told stories to teach about the kingdom of God. We call these stories parables.*

Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: The Beginners Bible, pp. 358-362 and 354-357, *The Treasure and the Pearl and The Net*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

Discussion Starters:

- *What are the 3 stories we hear in the bible today? The Treasure-The Pearl-The Net*
- *What do the first two stories teach about?—keeping our treasure in heaven. It is worth giving up all our toys love others. We will carry our friendships with us to heaven. We buy our treasure in heaven by treating others with love and respect and spending time with them. Especially time with God in prayer and going to Mass.*
- *What does the story of the fish teach about the end of time? -- In the final story of the fishermen catching all sorts of fish, we find that the unjust and the just are together in the net. This parable teaches that God's kingdom is open to rich and poor, good and bad; but at the end there will be a sorting out of those who are good followers of God and those who are not.*

Reflection on Reading:

In today's gospel, Jesus tells three stories to teach about the Kingdom of God. In the first parable, the man who finds the buried treasure must be willing to risk everything he has. The second story of the pearl is similar, but it is not a poor man but a rich man who seeks the treasure. This shows that God's kingdom is available to everyone, rich and poor alike. The first two parables teach that the kingdom of God is so valuable that one must risk everything for it. The result is complete joy in finding what is most important in life. The last story tells us that as long as we seek our treasure in heaven we will live in God's Kingdom forever.

Gospel Activity

Activity 1:

The theme for today is the Kingdom of God. To begin, provide each child with crayons and an outline of a fish. Invite the children to put their name on the fish and cut it out. Put a net in the center of the room and invite the children to come forward and place their fish in the net. Explain that all children are special to God. We are God's special catch because God loves us.

Discuss:

- How does God care for the fish of the sea?
- How does God care for us?
- Why are we God's special catch?

Allow time for discussion. God cares for all of creation. The Kingdom of God is where people live in peace and happiness with God, one another, and all of God's creation.

Activity 2:

Real Treasure

Show kids flash cards and ask if what they see is real treasure or not. Explain as necessary the big idea here...money and things are not treasure...

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

Closing Prayer

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who gives us all we need to find true happiness??*

Do we believe in Jesus, who teaches us which is truly valuable in the Kingdom of God??

Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who helps us live as God wants us to??

Sending Forth

Say: Remember that our treasure is in heaven. Make time to play with our friends and not think anything we have is more important than friends.

Lining Up/Closing Song

Play "This Little Light of Mine" track 10 from 25 Sunday School Songs while children put away any materials and line up. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.

