

Year 3, NT PreK Lesson 6: God's People Treasure Him

Lesson Highlights:

- ✓ **Scripture References:** Matthew 6:19-24; 13:44-46
- ✓ **Teaching Point:** God's people treasure Him above everything else.
- ✓ **Unit Memory Verse:** *Matthew 6:21* – For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- ✓ **ABC Verse:** *Matthew 6:33* – Seek first the kingdom of God.

Lesson

Overview

It's a hard lesson. Not because we have a hard time figuring out what Jesus meant, but because it goes against everything the world, Satan and our flesh would have us believe. You can't serve both God and money. We will always end up hating God when we do. The way we earn money and what we spend it on tells everyone...even strangers at the store...what we think about God and His kingdom. If we give up a lot for His kingdom, then it must be worth a lot. And if we won't give up anything for it, then everyone knows He's worth almost nothing. And why would they want something worthless? Pray with us that our kids begin turning their lives into living parables about our Savior's worth.

Story

Well, we're still in the book of **Matthew** this week and learning a lot about Jesus. Jesus came to start the most amazing thing of all...God's kingdom on earth. Jesus came to start gathering God's people. He told us how we can be a part of it...and what it's like in it. We learned that God wants us to pray to Him...to ask Him for what we need. And God wants us to forgive other people who hurt us because He forgives us. Well, today Jesus is going to talk about another part of our lives that is also really, really important. Money...and how we spend it...and what we buy...and what we're willing to give up for Jesus.

Let me start off by showing it to you like this. Let's say I told you that I hid a penny somewhere in this room...and whoever finds it gets a prize! Would you go search for it? (*see what they say*) How long would you look? Well, that kind of depends on what kind of prize, right? What if I said, "If you find it, you get to keep it!" Would you search for a little bit to find it? Would you stay here all day for it? (*probably not*) No. We find pennies everywhere, don't we? People drop them and don't even pick them up. But what if I said that if you find the penny you win a trip to Disney World? (*or other prize you think your kids would like*) Would you look hard then? (*I bet so*) Sure! I'd probably want to race you, too! We would do a lot if we really wanted that prize. Well, that's exactly what Jesus was trying to teach His disciples...and us.

Year 3, NT PreK Lesson 6: God's People Treasure Him

Jesus told us that money is fine, but it's not the best thing in the world. It can buy us food and a place to live and a clothes...and that's all good. But sometimes we want money and things like toys and movies and other things too much. And you know what? That's just like everyone else in our world, too. Kids in faraway places are just like you. They like things, too. Everyone does.

But Jesus wanted us to know that we're supposed to be different than other people. We're supposed to love Jesus more than money or toys or clothes or even places like Disney World. Jesus really wanted His disciples to understand this so he told them two stories...and I'm going to tell you them today. They're really, really short ones. Here's the first one...

Jesus said that his kingdom is like a man who was walking in another person's field. As he was walking along, he saw something off to the side...something sparkly...gold! A big treasure! When he went over to it, he started digging around...and the more he dug, the more there was! There was more there than he had ever seen anywhere! He found more treasure than anyone else had. He would be the richest man in the world...except...guess what? It's not his treasure because it's not his field. Whatever is found on this land belongs to the person who owns the land.

What should he do? Well, he knows exactly what to do. He covered up that treasure and went back into town and started selling everything he had. Everything! He sold his house, his cart, his animals, his clothes, his furniture, his food, his rugs...everything! And can you imagine what everyone around him thought as he did this? They would have thought he was crazy! When other people sell all they have it's because they don't have enough money for food or something. They're usually sad or angry, but not this guy. Every time he sold something, he laughed and was so happy. That's because those didn't understand. They have no idea that he's not losing everything...he's going to buy that field and have the treasure! That's a pretty good trade, right?

The other story told the same kind of story. There was a man who bought and sold pearls. What are those? (*round, white jewel that grow in oysters...you may have to explain what that is...show them a plastic one*) Women wear them as jewelry, right? Well, most are pretty small. But this man searches and searches until he finds one that is better than every other pearl he's ever seen. If he can have this, he'll have a greater treasure than anyone else! So, you know what he does? (*sells everything to buy it*) Right! And do you think he was sad about that? (*no*) No way! He was so happy to do it! He was giving up just stuff...junk that he had...so that he could buy it all!

This is what we have to remember when we think money and the stuff it can buy. He is telling us exactly what we think He is. Don't spend your life worrying about money. Don't spend all of your time getting more and more and more. Don't try with all your might just to be rich so you can do whatever you want. Jesus is asking us to give up our stuff for Him...to love Him and treasure Him more than anything else on earth. It's worth it. It's worth everything...because He's worth everything.

The way we spend our money...and our time...and use our stuff...tells everyone whether or not we love Jesus with all our hearts. Pray with me that God would give us hearts like that...hearts that believe that Jesus is the highest treasure we could ever have.

Prayer Time

Before you pray, allow the kids time to share with you things that are happening in their lives. Be sure you write these down with their names for you to pray for as the week goes along. Ask individuals about how things went with the things they mentioned the previous week. As the leader, begin by opening and thanking God for this lesson:

- Praise Jesus for giving us a kingdom far greater than anything we can have here.
- Ask God to give us hearts that are free from the love of money so that we can treasure His Son, Jesus, above all other things.

Pray for any specific requests named either by praying yourself or by opening it up to those who said they would pray.

Suggested Follow-up Activities

Teachers are free to choose the activities that they feel are best for their group. The idea is that as the children work and play, remind them of the truths they just learned.

Scripture Memory: Figure out your reward system for memorizing the Scriptures provided in this section. Give the children several opportunities to tell it to you either when they first arrive or at the end of class. **If using the ABC verses, a color page is provided as a take home page.**

Craft: Treasures and Pearls – Remind the kids that today we learned that God’s people have to treasure Him above everything else. When we earn money, spend it and use our things in a way that honors Him, other people will see that He is the highest treasure we could ever have and is worth everything we have.

Give each child a shell and a small, plastic pearl. Have them glue the pearl into the middle of the shell.

Next, give them a small, clear container and allow them to put a few of the plastic gold coins inside. They can then take it over to a tub filled with dirt and put some dirt on top of the coins. If you’d like, they can then seal the lid on by putting glue around the edges before closing. (Alternately, small Ziplocs can be used.) They can then carefully shake around the dirt inside until they can find all of their coins.

Materials: sea shells; plastic pearls; liquid glue; small, clear containers with lids or snack sized Ziploc baggies; small, plastic gold coins; dirt; large tub; plastic spoons

Craft: Hidden Treasure – Remind the kids that today we learned that God’s people have to treasure Him above everything else. When we earn money, spend it and use our things in a way that honors Him, other people will see that He is the highest treasure we could ever have and is worth everything we have.

Year 3, NT PreK Lesson 6: God's People Treasure Him

Give each child a copy of the pictures and have them color those as they'd like. Provide scissors and have them carefully cut along the dotted lines of the field picture. Next, provide them with either a piece of construction paper or cardstock and have them glue their field picture to it being careful to only put glue along the edges. They will then raise up their flap and glue the treasure chest below it.

Materials: craft paper; crayons or markers; scissors; cardstock or construction paper; stick glue

Activity: What's It Worth? – Remind the kids that today we learned that God's people have to treasure Him above everything else. When we earn money, spend it and use our things in a way that honors Him, other people will see that He is the highest treasure we could ever have and is worth everything we have.

Would someone volunteer to help me? (*pick someone and have them stand near you*) I'm going to give you a dollar. You can keep it and take it home with you. Is that pretty cool? How many of you wish that you had one, too? (*see what the other kids say*) Yeah. We love money. We love what it can buy us, right? Well, what if I told you that I was willing to make you a trade? Let's see what you think. (*pull out the smallest piece of candy*) Here you go. Let's trade. (*reach for the dollar...he'll probably say no*) No? You won't trade it for this? Why not? (*see what he says*) So, it's not worth it, right? That dollar means more to you than this piece of candy. What about two of those? (*pull out one more*) Will you trade now? (*probably not*) Hmm... okay what if I added this? (*pull out the single serving bag of candy*) Will you trade me now? (*see what he says...if he says no, talk about the fact that he still values the dollar more than that much candy and pull out the largest bag and see what he says...if you can finally get him to say yes, move on...if he refuses still, ask one of the other kids if they would have traded and move on...offer to let him keep the dollar or the individual candies and share the other candy with your class later*)

So, that dollar mattered a LOT to you. You wouldn't trade it again and again...until finally we found something that mattered more. Jesus wanted us to understand that His kingdom was like this. We're supposed to think of it like the best possible things we can get...so good that we'd be willing to sell anything to get it.

Materials: small, individually wrapped pieces of candy about the size of Hershey's Kisses; an individual serving bag of candy like M&Ms; a large bag of individually wrapped candies; a bag to hold them all that the kids can't see through