



PARABLES

STORIES WITH SECRETS



ROOTED
IPHC KIDS' CURRICULUM
- EST. 2020 -

PARABLES

UNIT 2- PARABLES: STORIES WITH SECRETS

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PARABLES

MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

UNIT 2-ELEMENTARY

In the *Parables* unit, we focus on four of Jesus' most popular parables He told while on earth. Each week, the kids will be learning that Jesus reveals hidden truths in every parable He tells. The verse the class will be memorizing is found in Psalm 78:2—"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things." Be sure to emphasize that Jesus doesn't keep secrets from us, but instead, He reveals them through stories.

Join in with the children as they discover Jesus' hidden truths!

WEEK 1

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), Various Seed Packets (3-4 different envelopes per class), *Question Cards* (1 set per pair), Whiteboards and Dry Erase Markers (Optional--1 set per pair), *Broken Seed Shell Page* (1 per child), *Inner Seed Page* (1 per child), Brass Fasteners (1 per child), Scissors, Markers or Crayons

WEEK 2

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Good Samaritan Page* (1 per child), Pencils (1 per child), Markers or Crayons

WEEK 3

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), *Treasure Bingo Boards* (1 per child), *Treasure Calling Cards* (1 set per class), Bingo Counters (16 per child), *Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl Word Search* (1 per child), Pencils (1 per child)

WEEK 4

LESSON MATERIALS: Puzzle Piece (1 per class), 2"x11" Strips of Construction Paper (any color- 1 strip per child), *Hands and Head Sheet* (1 per child), Glue Sticks, Scissors, Markers or Crayons

PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

BIBLE PASSAGE

Mark 4:30-32 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

Jesus reveals hidden truths.

FOCUS VERSE

"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things..." Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Various Seed Packets | *Question Cards* | Whiteboards and Dry Erase Markers (Optional) | *Broken Seed Shell Page* | *Inner Seed Page* | Brass Fasteners | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite thing to do outside?
- Where is your favorite place to be alone?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Worship is a great way to express our love for God, and we can do that in various ways depending on how God made us." For shy children, worship might involve closing their eyes. For the outgoing child, worship might include jumping and dancing. Genuine worship is always special to God, just remind the kids that we worship for God's glory.



GREAT LEADERS LEAD BY EXAMPLE. IF YOU ASK THE CHILDREN TO WORSHIP, WORSHIP WITH THEM.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children together for prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "Jesus, thank You for bringing everyone here safely. Please help us know and love You better as we read Your Word. Help us understand Your stories. In Jesus' name, Amen."

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “We just finished a whole month of talking all about Jesus’ miracles, and I have some good news: We get to keep talking about Jesus! Not only did He have the ability to do impossible, supernatural things, He also told amazing stories. In fact, Jesus was THE BEST storyteller ever! This month, we will learn about the stories Jesus told to His followers. We call these stories ‘parables.’ ‘Parable’ is a word for a story that has a special lesson to teach us. Jesus told parables to explain true things that may have been difficult to understand. Each of our parables this month have a secret truth that Jesus reveals! Now, before we begin, who would like to put up our puzzle piece?”

TRANSITION: Say, “We are almost ready to read one of the parables Jesus told, but first, I want to show you something...”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Various Seed Packets (3-4 Envelopes) | *Question Cards* (1 page per pair) | Personal Whiteboards with Dry Erase Markers (Optional) (1 per pair) |

Say, “To get ready to hear our story, we are going to look at some different seeds.”

GAME GOAL: To compare and contrast different seeds.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. First, pair up the children, and give one seed of each kind to every pair.
2. Next, instruct the partners to record their answers (whiteboards are optional) to the *Question Cards*. If you do not have whiteboards, the children will just share their answers with a partner instead of writing them down.
3. Once the children have recorded their answers, call on a few pairs to share their observations and responses with the class.

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job! All the seeds are so different! Let’s read a parable and figure out why Jesus taught about one specific little seed.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “We will be reading a very short parable about a mustard seed. Has anyone ever planted a seed? Great! Was the seed you planted big or small? YES! It was probably really small. Let’s take out our Bibles and read a story Jesus told about a very small mustard seed.” Read Mark 4:30-32 (ICB) together.

³⁰ Then Jesus said, “How can I show you what the kingdom of God is like? What story can I use to explain it? ³¹ The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. The mustard seed is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. ³² But when you plant this seed, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants. It produces large branches. Even the wild birds can make nests in it and be protected from the sun.”

Say, "What a strange story! This does not sound like the stories we read in books at home."

Ask, "*What are some things that make this story odd?* Right! This isn't a normal story. It was really short, and Jesus was trying to teach us something important with this story. Can everyone say, '**Jesus reveals hidden truths**'? Let's find out what He wants us to know."



READ THE SECRET (BELOW) IN A WHISPER TO EMPHASIZE HOW EXCITING IT IS.

PARABLE SECRET:

"The secret from our story is about how the Good News of Jesus started out small with only a few followers. Just like the tiny mustard seed, the name of Jesus grew and grew until people from all over the earth knew who He was—even us! Just like how the mustard seed started out small but grew to be the largest plant in the garden, the Good News of Jesus started out small but has spread over the whole earth! Do you see how Jesus used this story to reveal hidden truths to His followers and to us?"



MAKE THIS LESSON PERSONAL! SHARE YOUR OWN STORY ABOUT HOW YOU HEARD THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS.

TRANSITION: Say, "Jesus revealed a great secret when He told the parable of the mustard seed because **Jesus reveals hidden truths**. Jesus does not keep secrets hidden—He reveals them!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about our story." Give multiple children the chance to answer questions.

1. In this story, who reveals hidden truths?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths.**

2. To what did Jesus compare the Kingdom of God?

Response: He compared the Kingdom of God to the smallest seed—the mustard seed.

3. What did Jesus say will happen to the smallest seed?

Response: It will grow and become the largest plant in the garden.

4. What is the hidden secret that will spread over all the earth?

Response: The Good News of Jesus is expanding over the whole earth to include more and more people.

5. How do you think God wants to use you to grow (or expand) His Kingdom?

Response: Answers will vary.

6. What did we learn about Jesus today?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, Jesus is powerful, Jesus is a storyteller, Jesus is a truth-teller, Jesus is patient, Jesus is a secret revealer, Jesus is kind, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job answering these questions! **Jesus reveals hidden truths** to His people, doesn't He? Now, let's do an activity that will help us continue learning about the Good News of Jesus from our story today."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Broken Seed Shell* Page (1 per child) | *Inner Seed* Page (1 per child) | Brass Fasteners (1 per child) | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "We are going to make a craft called *Secret Seeds*. Why do you think we are calling it *Secret Seeds*? Right! Because **Jesus revealed hidden truths** to us and used a story about a seed to help us understand! Let's get started."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Broken Seed Shell* Page, *Inner Seed* Page, one brass fastener, and scissors.
2. Cut out the *Broken Seed Shell* Page on the dark bold lines and dotted line.
3. Then, the kids can color the *Inner Seed* Page and the *Broken Seed Shell* Page.
4. Use the brass fastener to fasten the two halves of the *Broken Seed Shell* together at the top of the *Inner Seed* Page.
 - The brass fastener should be placed through the dark black dots at the top of the *Inner Seed* Page and *Broken Seed Shell* Page.
5. You will be able to move the seed halves open and closed to reveal the "secret" inside the seed - **Jesus reveals hidden truths**.

TRANSITION: Say, "Awesome job! Your *Secret Seeds* look great! Let's get ready to recite a memory verse about today's story."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "This month, we will be practicing a new memory verse that reminds us that **Jesus reveals hidden truths** through parables. Get ready to hear it." Say the verse multiple times while modeling the actions. Then, have the kids practice it with you.

"I will open my mouth (*put hands around your mouth like you're shouting*) **with a parable** (*hold hands out like a book*); **I will utter hidden** (*quickly cover and then uncover your eyes*) **things.**" Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

CHALLENGE: Encourage children to practice the memory verse using different voices. You can start by reciting it in a British accent, a robot voice, or a high, squeaky mouse squeal.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Jesus is pretty amazing, and He is the BEST storyteller. Remember, Jesus taught us an important secret about how His Good News spreads out over the whole earth, just like the mustard seed. Jesus told amazing parables to explain and uncover secrets. It is all because He loves us. For the rest of this month, we will be discovering secrets Jesus wants to share with us because **Jesus reveals hidden truths**. Does anyone have a prayer request they would like to share before we end with prayer?"

SAMPLE PRAYER: "Jesus, we praise You for explaining hidden things to us, Your children. Thank You for loving us enough to tell us the truth. Help us listen closely for Your voice. Help us understand what You tell us in Your Word and the things we hear from Your Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE —

Children can continue to work on unfinished crafts or verse memorization if there is time. Additionally, you could also let the kids retell the story to make sure they understand what you taught. When parents arrive, give them a copy of the monthly Parent Guide (downloadable) before they leave.

PARENT GUIDE GOALS:

1. To provide engaging questions and activities for family discipleship.
2. To review what the children are learning each week.

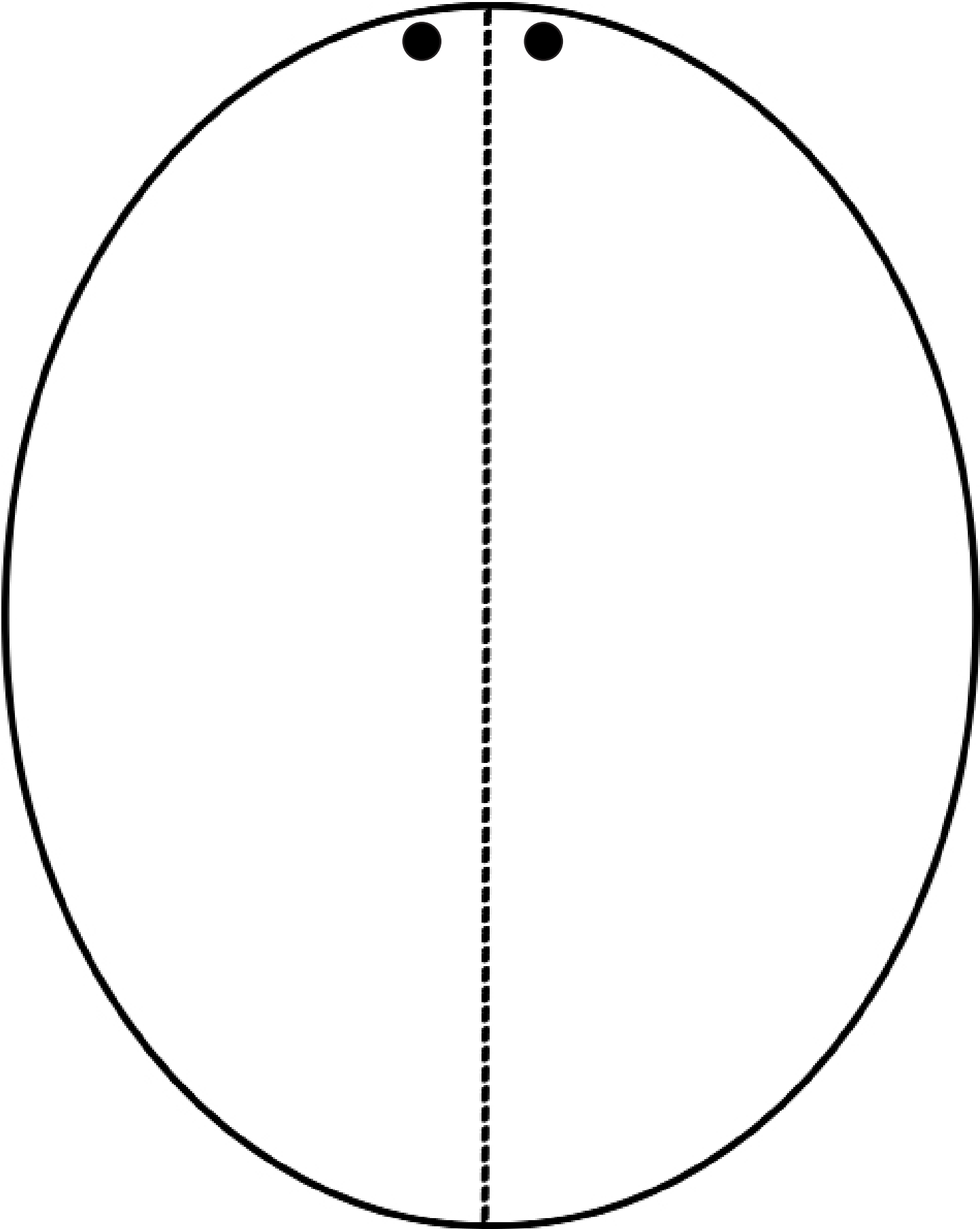
JESUS REVEALS HIDDEN TRUTHS

MARK 4:30-32



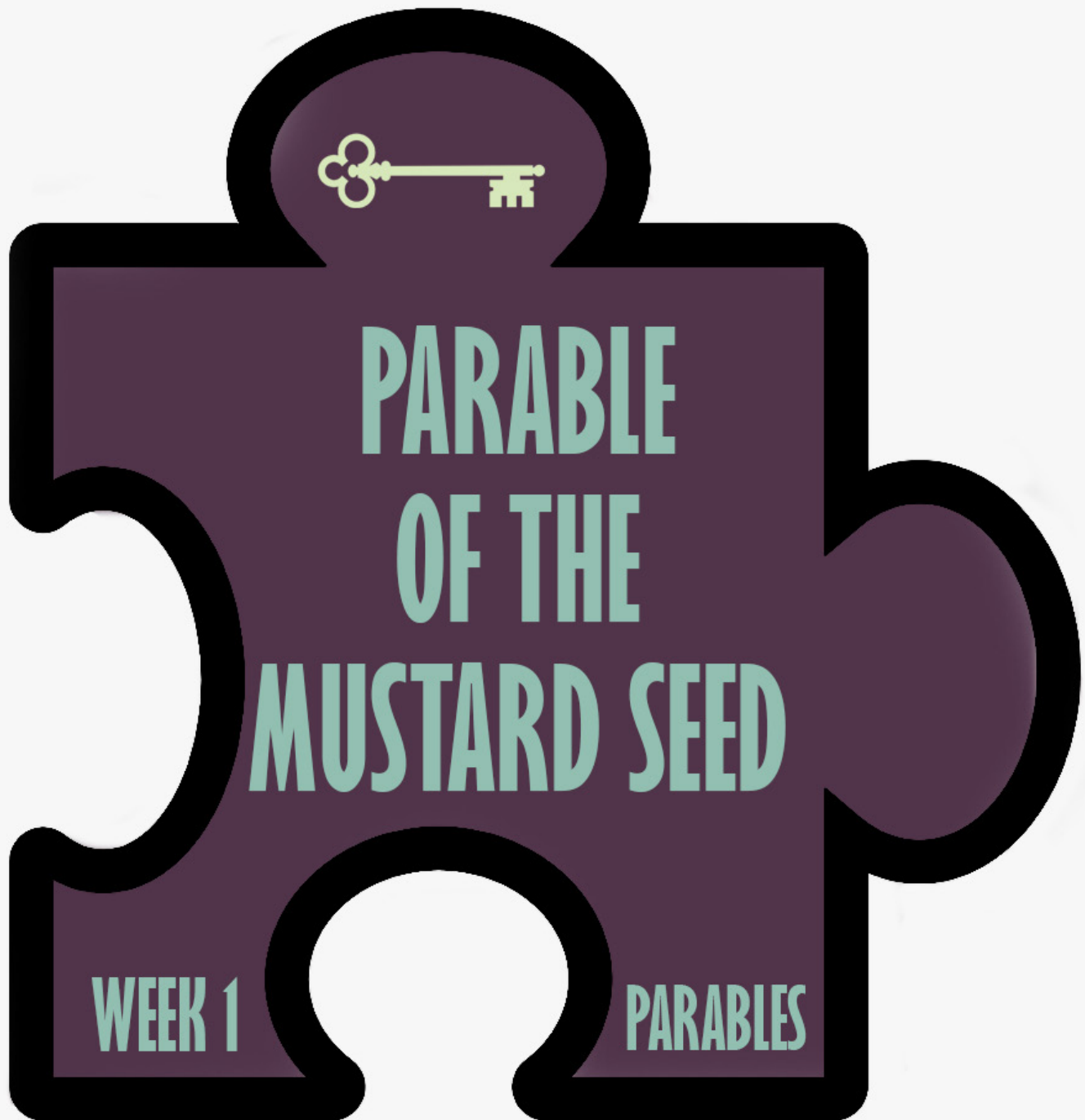
INNER SEED

BROKEN SEED SHELL



QUESTION CARDS

Which seed is the largest?	Which seed is the smallest?
Which seed do you think will grow into the largest plant?	What makes these seeds different from each other?
How are the seeds the same?	What kind of plant do you think will grow out of each seed?
How does each seed feel in your hand?	Why do the seeds have different shapes and sizes?



PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 10:25-37 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

Jesus reveals hidden truths.

FOCUS VERSE

"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things..." Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Good Samaritan* Page | Pencils | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite and least favorite vegetable?
- If you could have any superpower, what would it be? Why?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Before starting worship, remind the children why we, as Christians, praise God. Say, "We praise God because He is the Creator of everything. He loves us and wants to have a relationship with us. God deserves all of our worship!"

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children for prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, we praise You for bringing us to church today. Thank You for giving us the Bible so we can learn about You and have a relationship with You. Help us hear and understand Your story. In Jesus' name, Amen."



TRY "POPCORN PRAYER" TO GET CHILDREN MORE INVOLVED. THIS FORM OF PRAYING STARTS WITH ONE PERSON SAYING A SHORT PRAYER AND OTHER CHILDREN "POPPING IN" BY EXPRESSING REQUESTS OR PRAISE TO GOD. WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, YOU CAN CONCLUDE.

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “Today, we are continuing our lessons called *Parables* where we look at Jesus’ stories with secrets. Can someone remind the class what a parable is? Great! Parables were stories told by **Jesus to reveal hidden truths**. Does anyone remember which parable we learned about last week? Great! Last week, we discussed the ‘Parable of the Mustard Seed.’ This week, we will hear another one of Jesus’ parables. Who would like to put up our puzzle piece this week?”

TRANSITION: Say, “Before we read another parable, let’s play a game!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Say, “We are going to play *I Spy* to see who can reveal the hidden objects the fastest.”

GAME GOAL: The person who guesses the hidden objects correctly, wins.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Start by choosing someone to lead *I Spy*.
2. The spier will say, “I spy with my little eye something _____ (color).”
3. One at a time, the kids will raise their hands to guess what the spier is spying.
4. When the object is guessed correctly, that person will become the new spier.

TRANSITION: Say, “Everyone did an awesome job! In our story today, **Jesus reveals hidden truths** just like we revealed hidden objects in our *I Spy* game! Now, let’s read our second parable together.”

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, “Today’s story is called the ‘Parable of the Good Samaritan.’ Something we need to know before we read is that while a lot of people liked Jesus, He was disliked by many others. The man Jesus is talking to at the beginning of today’s lesson did not like Jesus. In fact, he was trying to trick Jesus into saying the wrong thing so people would stop listening to Him. Has anyone has ever tried to get you in trouble? How did it make you feel? Yeah. It does not make you feel very good, does it? Well, Jesus is going to teach us a hidden secret using this story because **Jesus reveals hidden truths**. Now, let’s take out our Bibles and read about a time someone tried to trick Jesus.” Read Luke 10:25-37 (ICB).



THIS IS A LONGER STORY. TO KEEP THE CHILDREN ENGAGED, ADD IN SOME “GASPS” AND “AWW’S” WHEN YOU SEE THE PROMPTS. ASK THE CHILDREN TO JOIN IN TOO!

²⁵ Then a teacher of the law stood up. He was trying to test Jesus. He said, "Teacher, what must I do to get life forever?" ²⁶ Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" ²⁷ The man answered, "Love the Lord your God. Love him with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind. Also, "You must love your neighbor as you love yourself." ²⁸ Jesus said to him, "Your answer is right. Do this and you will have life forever." ²⁹ But the man wanted to show that the way he was living was right (*GASP*). So he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ To answer this question, Jesus said, "A man was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Some robbers attacked him. They tore off his clothes and beat him. Then they left him lying there, almost dead. (*GASP*)" ³¹ It happened that a Jewish priest was going down that road. When the priest saw the man, he walked by on the other side of the road (*GASP*). ³² Next, a Levite (*assistant to a priest*) came there. He went over and looked at the man. Then he walked by on the other side of the road (*GASP*). ³³ Then a Samaritan traveling down the road came to where the hurt man was lying. He saw the man and felt very sorry for him (*AWWW*). ³⁴ ... [The Samaritan] put the hurt man on his own donkey and took him to an inn. At the inn, the Samaritan took care of him (*AWWW*). ³⁵ The next day, the Samaritan brought out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. The Samaritan said, 'Take care of this man. If you spend more money on him, I will pay it back to you when I come again (*AWWW*).'" ³⁶ Then Jesus said, "Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by the robbers?" ³⁷ The teacher of the law answered, "The one who helped him." Jesus said to him, "Then go and do the same thing he did!"

Say, "What a great story! Jesus was teaching about something BIG in this parable. Let's uncover the secret Jesus has for us."



WHISPER THE EXPLANATION OF THE PARABLE FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT.

PARABLE SECRET:

"Our secret in this parable is about how Jesus wants us to love others. Do you remember how the Samaritan cared for the hurt man, took him to an inn, AND paid for him to stay there until he was well? That is how Jesus wants us to love people! The Samaritan sacrifices his time and money to help an injured man. Jesus wants us to love others this much! In fact, Jesus tells us that we are to love others as much as we love ourselves (Matthew 22:39)! Wow! This Samaritan is an example of how we should treat others—with lots of love! **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, doesn't He?"

TRANSITION: Say, "Jesus uncovered a great secret when He told the 'Parable of the Good Samaritan.' Jesus doesn't keep secrets hidden—He reveals them!"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about our story from today."

1. In this story, who reveals hidden truths?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths.**

2. How many people helped the injured man? How many people left him there?

Response: Only one—the Samaritan—helped him. Two men walked past him without helping.

3. What secret did Jesus tell with this parable?

Response: Jesus revealed that He wants us to treat people with lots of love like the Samaritan did.

4. After hearing the parable, who do you think Jesus would say our neighbor is?

Response: Everyone is our neighbor, especially those who need help.

5. Who is the best example of someone loving us like the Samaritan loved the injured man?

Response: Jesus! He sacrificed even more than the Samaritan did when He died for us. Romans 5:8 tells us we were God's enemies, and yet He gave His life for us. Now, we are God's children. We can't do anything to get rid of the sin that separates us from God, but Jesus could, and He did!

6. What did we learn about Jesus today?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, Jesus is loving, Jesus is merciful, Jesus takes care of us, Jesus is welcoming, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job answering the questions! Isn't it amazing how **Jesus reveals hidden truths** and teaches us new things? Now, let's do an activity to help us remember what we have learned."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Good Samaritan* Page (1 per child) | Pencils (1 per child) | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "I want for us to think about this question: 'What is one thing you can do this week to be a good neighbor like the Good Samaritan?'"



IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO WRITE SOME OF THE SUGGESTIONS DOWN SO THE CHILDREN CAN REFER BACK TO THE IDEAS IF THEY FORGET.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Instruct the children to write down something they will do this week to be a Good Samaritan.
2. Talk about what the children wrote.
3. Make sure to include a discussion of **WHY** we love others.
 - Say, "We love others because Jesus loves us and we love Jesus. The Bible says when we love others, we are really loving Jesus! Loving others (especially our enemies) will be hard sometimes, but Jesus gives us the strength, through the Holy Spirit, to obey Him."



ACTIVITIES LIKE THIS ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN LEADERS PARTICIPATE. DON'T BE AFRAID TO SHARE ABOUT TIMES WHEN IT WAS HARD FOR YOU TO LOVE OTHERS TOO!

TRANSITION: Say, "All of those ideas sound great! I can't wait to hear about how you love others this week! It is time to practice this month's memory verse!"

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Explain that the class will be practicing the memory verse from last week that reminds them that **Jesus reveals hidden truths** through parables.

"I will open my mouth (*put hands around your mouth like you're shouting*) **with a parable** (*hold hands out like a book*); **I will utter hidden** (*quickly cover and then uncover your eyes*) **things."** Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

CHALLENGE: Do a "round robin" style verse reading. This method works best in a circle. One person will say the first word of the verse, and then the person to their right will say the following word until the whole verse has been recited.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "**Jesus reveals hidden truths** to those who follow Him! He loves to help us understand who He is, who we are, and how we are to live. In just a moment, we are going to thank Jesus for teaching us through the Bible. Does anyone need prayer for themselves, their families, or their friends?" Invite a few children to pray for the needs of each other.



DON'T SKIP ASKING FOR PRAYER REQUESTS! THIS TIME IS OFTEN THE KIDS' FAVORITE PART OF THE LESSON.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "Jesus, we praise You for revealing hidden truths to us through parables. Thank You for being here today. As we continue to read the Bible and spend time with You, help us understand how to know You better. In Jesus' name, Amen."

RELEASE —

This time can be used to finish any incomplete activity, review the parable, or practice the month's memory verse again.

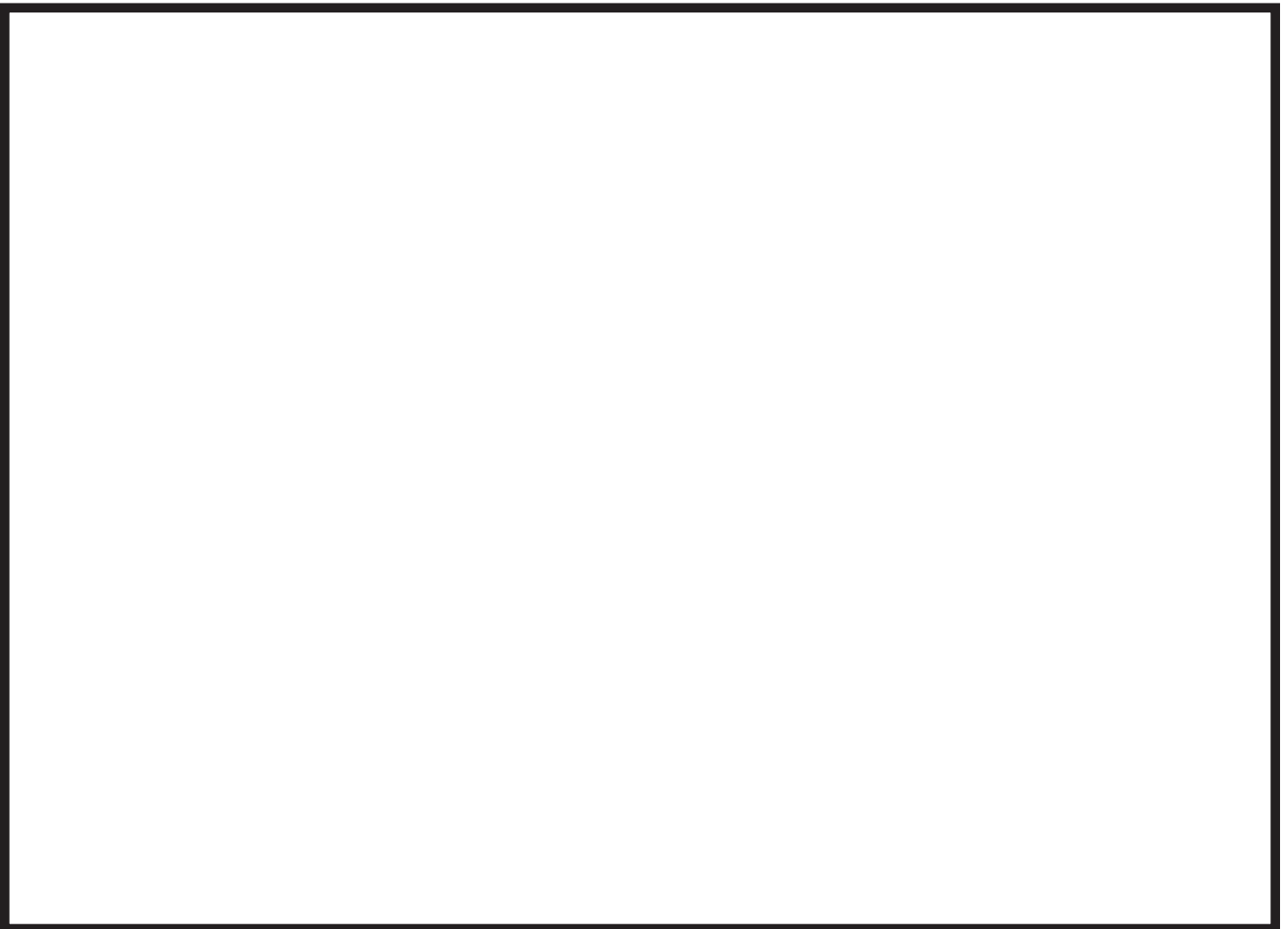
THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

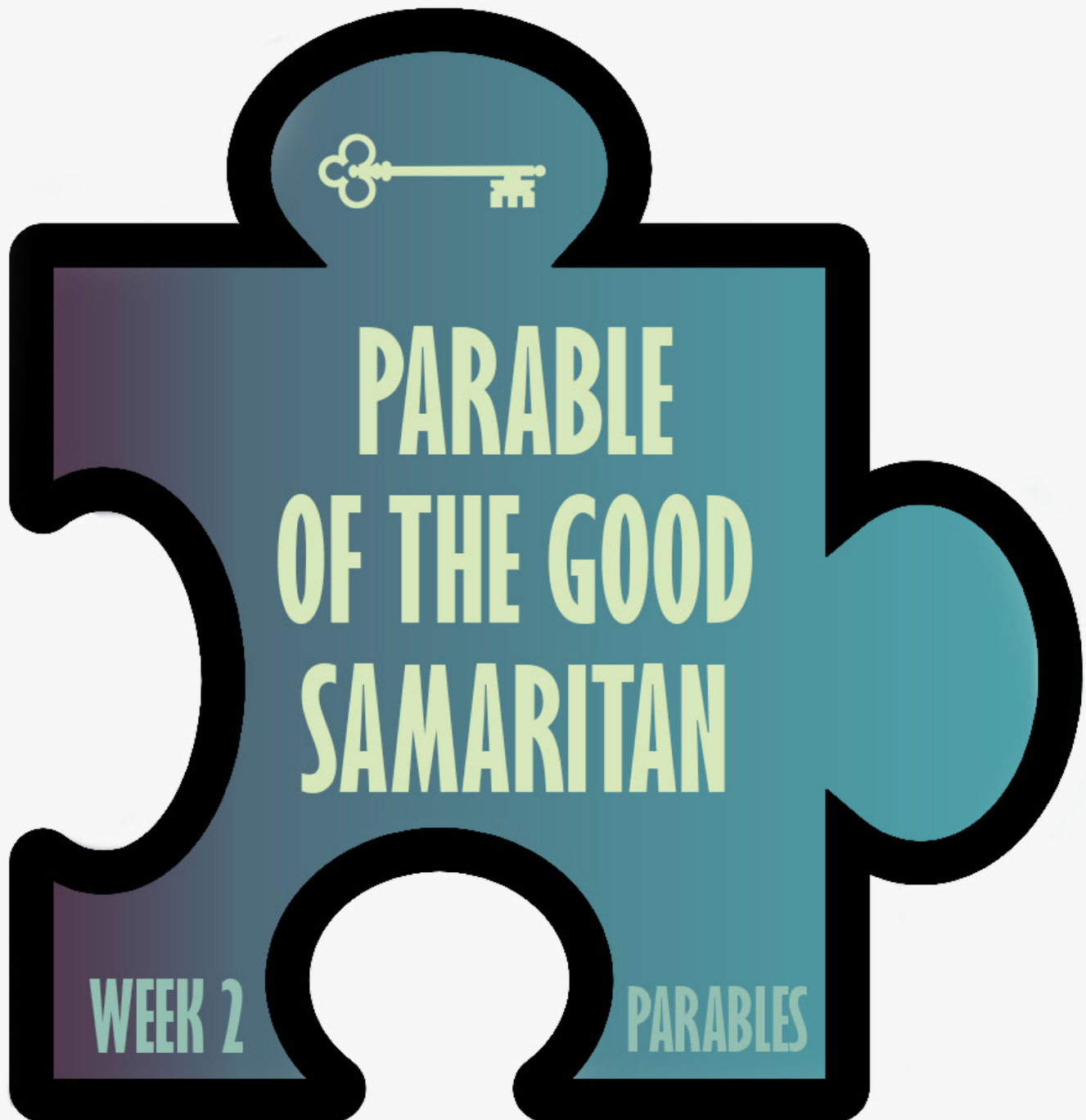
LUKE 10:25-37

How can you be a "Good Samaritan" and love someone this week?

Who are you going to love like the "Good Samaritan" this week? _____

Draw a picture of you loving this person:





PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE AND PEARL

BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 13:44-46 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

Jesus reveals hidden truths.

FOCUS VERSE

"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things..." Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Treasure Bingo Boards* | *Treasure Calling Cards* | Bingo Counters | *Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl Word Search* | Pencils |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What do you like most about coming to church?
- If you could trade names with someone in this room, who would it be and why?



PLAYING A NAME GAME WILL HELP YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER.

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Jesus revealed truths through His parables, and now the Holy Spirit speaks truth to those who know Him. Sometimes we hear from God in worship. God (through His Spirit) may tell us how good He is or remind us how much we need Him. God might do this by reminding you of a verse from Scripture, or He may help your heart soften in forgiveness as you consider how great His forgiveness is to you. Listen when He speaks to you. The more you practice listening for His voice, the better you will get at hearing Him. As you worship, be open for God to reveal hidden truths about Himself."

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children together.



IF YOU ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS, COMMUNICATE CLEAR EXPECTATIONS BEFORE YOU START TEACHING. ONE WAY TO DO THAT IS BY ESTABLISHING A FEW (NO MORE THAN FIVE) CLASS RULES THAT YOU REFERENCE EACH WEEK. THE CHILDREN CAN EVEN HELP YOU COME UP WITH THE RULES!

SAMPLE PRAYER: “God, we praise You for being a good God! We are so grateful that we do not have to beg You to be with us. You want to be with us because You love us. Help us listen to Your Word like it is the first time we are hearing it. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, “This is the third week we are studying *Parables - Stories with Secrets*. Can someone tell us what a ‘parable’ is? Great! ‘Parables’ are stories told by Jesus to explain hidden truths. Truths are just words that tell us the way things really are! In our first story, we talked about a tiny mustard seed that later grows into one of the largest plants in the garden. Then, last week, we discussed the ‘Parable of the Good Samaritan’ and how we need to love others. Did anyone practice being a good Samaritan this week? Thanks for sharing! Can someone put our puzzle piece on the wall before we read Jesus’ next parable?”

TRANSITION: Say, “Let’s get ready to read this week’s parable!”

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Treasure Bingo Boards* (5 Versions-1 per child) | *Treasure Calling Cards* (1 set) | Bingo Counters (16 per child) |

Say, “To prepare for our story, we are going to play *Treasure Bingo*! Who can tell me what treasure is? Great! Let’s play.”

GAME GOAL: The person to get four-in-a-row first, wins.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. Hand out a *Treasure Bingo Board* and Bingo Counters (like pasta wheels, mini pom-poms, pennies, seeds, etc.) to each person.
 - Make sure to use all the different versions of the Bingo boards.
2. Explain that when you call out the Bingo icon using the *Treasure Calling Cards*, each person or team must cover up that square with a Bingo Counter.



BEFORE BEGINNING THE GAME, EXPLAIN WHAT EACH SYMBOL IS. USE ONE OF THE BINGO BOARDS TO NAME EACH SYMBOL.

3. Whoever gets four-in-a-row first, wins.

4. Replay and switch *Treasure Bingo Boards* if there is extra time.

MODIFICATION: To make this game more engaging, use all of the different versions of the Bingo boards. If you have a lot of kids in class, you could also have the kids partner up instead of giving one *Treasure Bingo Board* to every person.



IF YOU WANT TO REWARD THE WINNERS, CHOOSE A PRIZE TO GIVE AWAY AT THE END OF EACH GAME.

TRANSITION: Say, "Good game! We can play this again later, but for now, let's jump into our story where we will be talking about the most important treasure of all!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Today's parable is about the Kingdom of Heaven (sometimes called the Kingdom of God). The Kingdom of God is the rule or reign of God on earth (or God's way). In today's lesson, Jesus uses not one but TWO parables to explain the importance of His Kingdom. These parables go together because they talk about similar things - TREASURE. Let's read Matthew 13:44-46 (ICB) to find out which hidden truth Jesus reveals this time."

⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field. One day a man found the treasure, and then he hid it in the field again. The man was very happy to find the treasure. He went and sold everything that he owned to buy that field." ⁴⁵ "Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a man looking for fine (expensive) pearls. ⁴⁶ One day he found a very valuable pearl. The man went and sold everything he had to buy that pearl."

Say, "What interesting parables! Let's look at a secret Jesus uncovers in these stories."



YOU CAN WHISPER THE SECRET FOR ADDED DRAMA.

PARABLE SECRET:

"The secret in this parable explains how valuable God's kingdom and His way is. What did these men do when they discovered the treasure and pearl? Yes! Both men sold everything they had to get the treasure. Jesus is teaching us how valuable and special His Kingdom is. In fact, there is no amount of money that would be enough to buy His Kingdom. It is priceless! He wants to teach us that the most important thing we will ever do is welcome Jesus and His ways into our lives and love Him like the men in the story loved the treasure and pearl. Do you see how **Jesus reveals hidden truths**? Nothing is more important than knowing, loving, and finding Jesus!"



CLARIFY THAT WE DO NOT HAVE TO SELL ALL OF OUR BELONGINGS TO SHOW GOD WE LOVE HIM.

TRANSITION: Say, "What did you think of this awesome secret we discovered in our story? Aren't you grateful that **Jesus reveals hidden truths**?"

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's discuss our story and see what we have learned from God's Word."



TEACHERS, IF YOUR CLASS IS HAVING A HARD TIME STAYING FOCUSED DURING THE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS, MAKE IT A COMPETITION! YOU CAN SPLIT UP YOUR CLASS INTO TWO TO FOUR TEAMS, HAND OUT BUZZERS, AND SEE WHO CAN ANSWER THE MOST QUESTIONS CORRECT.

1. Who reveals hidden truths?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths.**

2. Jesus compared the Kingdom of Heaven to what two things?

Response: A hidden treasure and a fine pearl.

3. Why do you think the men sold everything they had?

Response: They sold everything because the treasure they found was more valuable than all of their other possessions combined.

4. How would you feel if you found the most valuable thing in the world? Would you sell everything you had to get it?

Response: Answers will vary.

5. Why do you think Jesus and His Kingdom are more valuable than any other thing?

Response: When we find Jesus and His Kingdom, we are made sons and daughters of God! There is nothing more wonderful than being God's children and receiving His peace, forgiveness, joy, etc.

6. What does this story tell us about Jesus?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, Jesus is giving, Jesus is priceless, Jesus is patient, Jesus is our treasure, etc.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great answers! **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, doesn't He? Are you ready for our next activity?"

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | *Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl* Word Search | Pencil |

Say, "Our activity today is a word search about the 'Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl.' We will be revealing the hidden words in our word searches like **Jesus reveals hidden truths** through His parables."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give each child a *Parable of the Hidden Treasure and Pearl* Word Search and pencil.
- The words in the word search will all be words from the story.
2. If you have a range of ages, pair older students with younger students, or have the older students help the younger ones as they finish.

CHALLENGE: You can make this into a competitive game to see who can be the first one to find all the words.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job with the word search! If you are not finished, you can work on it later or when you get home. Now, let's practice our memory verse about hidden things."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “We will continue practicing this month’s the memory verse that teaches us about **Jesus revealing hidden truths** through His parables.”

“I will open my mouth (*put hands around your mouth like you’re shouting*) **with a parable** (*hold hands out like a book*); **I will utter hidden** (*quickly cover and then uncover your eyes*) **things.” Psalm 78:2 (NIV)**

CHALLENGE: Write the whole verse on a board and read it together. Then, erase one random word at a time and see if the children can still say the verse. Continue in this fashion until all the words are erased and the children are reciting the whole verse by memory.

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “**Jesus reveals hidden truths!** He loves to help us understand the Kingdom of Heaven. We are going to thank Jesus for revealing hidden truths to us through the Bible and the Holy Spirit. Does anyone have a prayer request?” Encourage children to participate in the prayer.

SAMPLE PRAYER: “Jesus, we praise You for revealing hidden truths to us in today’s parables. Thank You for allowing every one of us to hear about how valuable You are. Help us look for Your Kingdom all of the days of our lives. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

RELEASE —

Allow dismissal time to be a space where relationships are deepened. Ask the children what their favorite part of the lesson was. You could ask also what they are learning from this month’s parables or what God has been teaching them.



THE UNPLANNED AND UNSTRUCTURED MOMENTS YOU HAVE WITH YOUR STUDENTS ARE AS IMPORTANT AS THE STRUCTURED TIMES.

PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE AND PEARL

G P M G H M G M K E B D E C D
 F N O Z L O O K I N G N R N E
 T D I H X D O N L Y V P U W N
 A U I H G A B S U S B O S S W
 Q R S N C G R U C O F B A H O
 S D I Z U R I E E L R S E E A
 B K L J K Y A S V D A A R A M
 G N I H T Y R E V E L I T V Y
 H A P P Y H J M S W A R R E I
 E R Y V I D R E L C H L A N S
 E O K D D T N Q S K H C S E R
 H D D J J X J S P U M W N I P
 A E K A Y E G M S U S S L W E
 N T E R C E S I S L A P T R H
 D I Q P R N B S O N H F L Q U

EVERYTHING
 HAPPY
 JESUS
 OWNED
 SEARCHING

FOUND
 HEAVEN
 KINGDOM
 PEARL
 SECRET

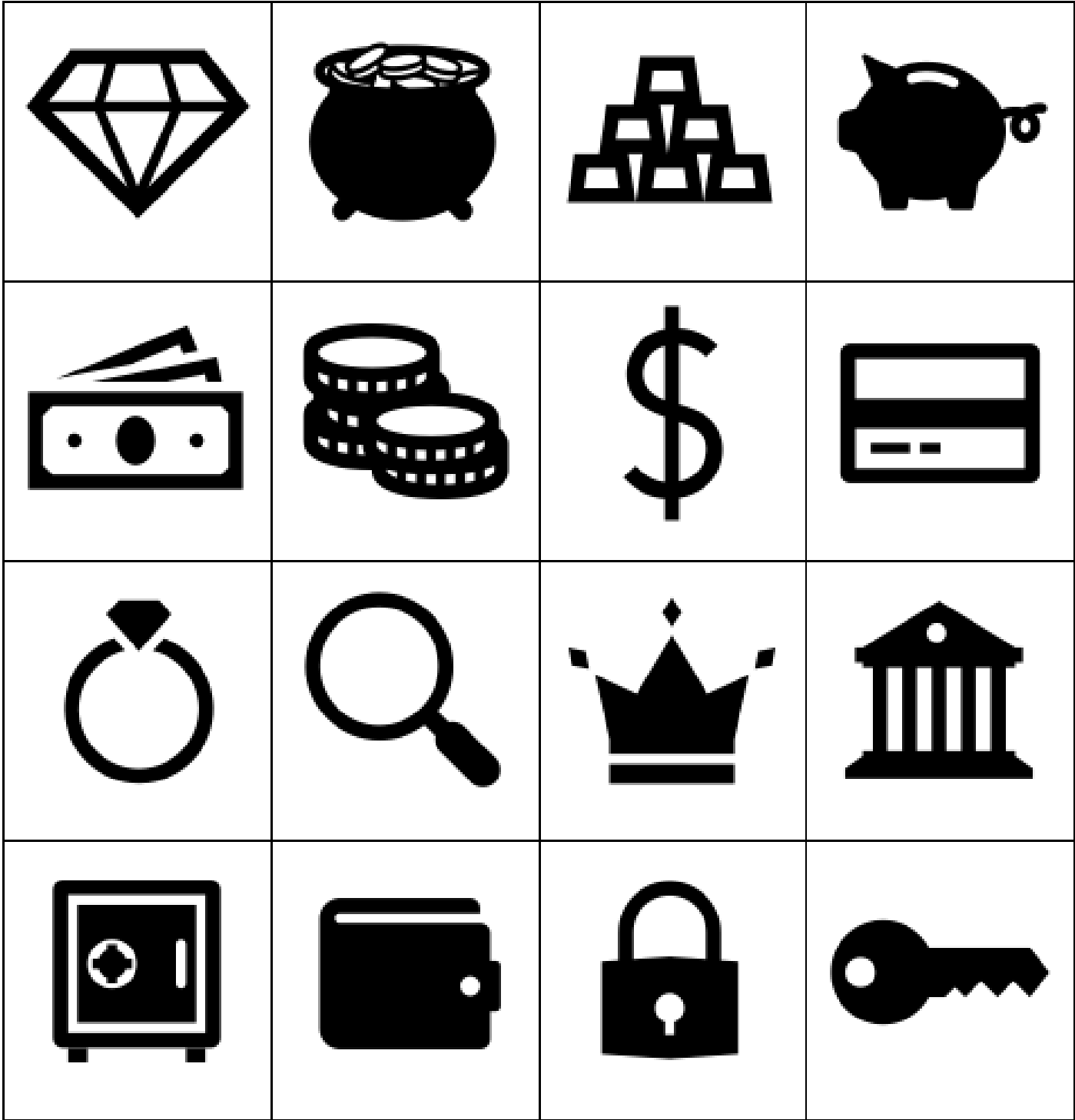
GOD
 HIDDEN
 LOOKING
 REVEALS
 SOLD

TREASURE CALLING CARDS



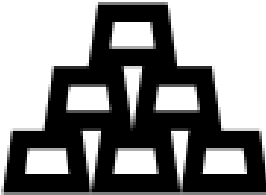


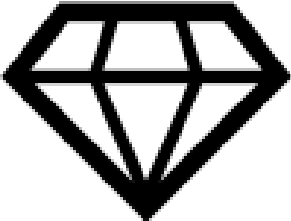




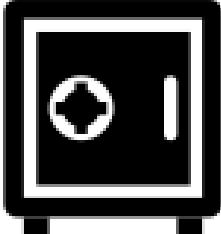
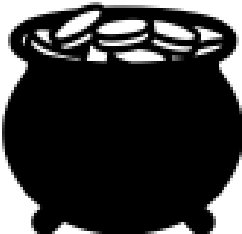

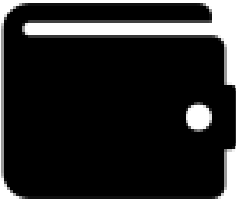


Cut out each square.

Diamond	Pot of Gold	Gold Bars	Piggy Bank
Cash	Coins	Money Symbol	Credit Card
Ring	Magnifying Glass	Crown	Bank
Safe	Wallet	Lock	Key

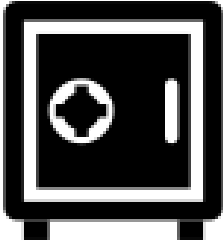



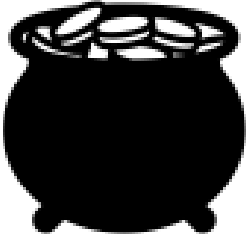




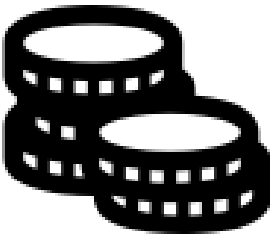
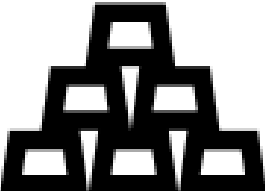

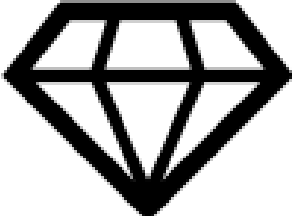



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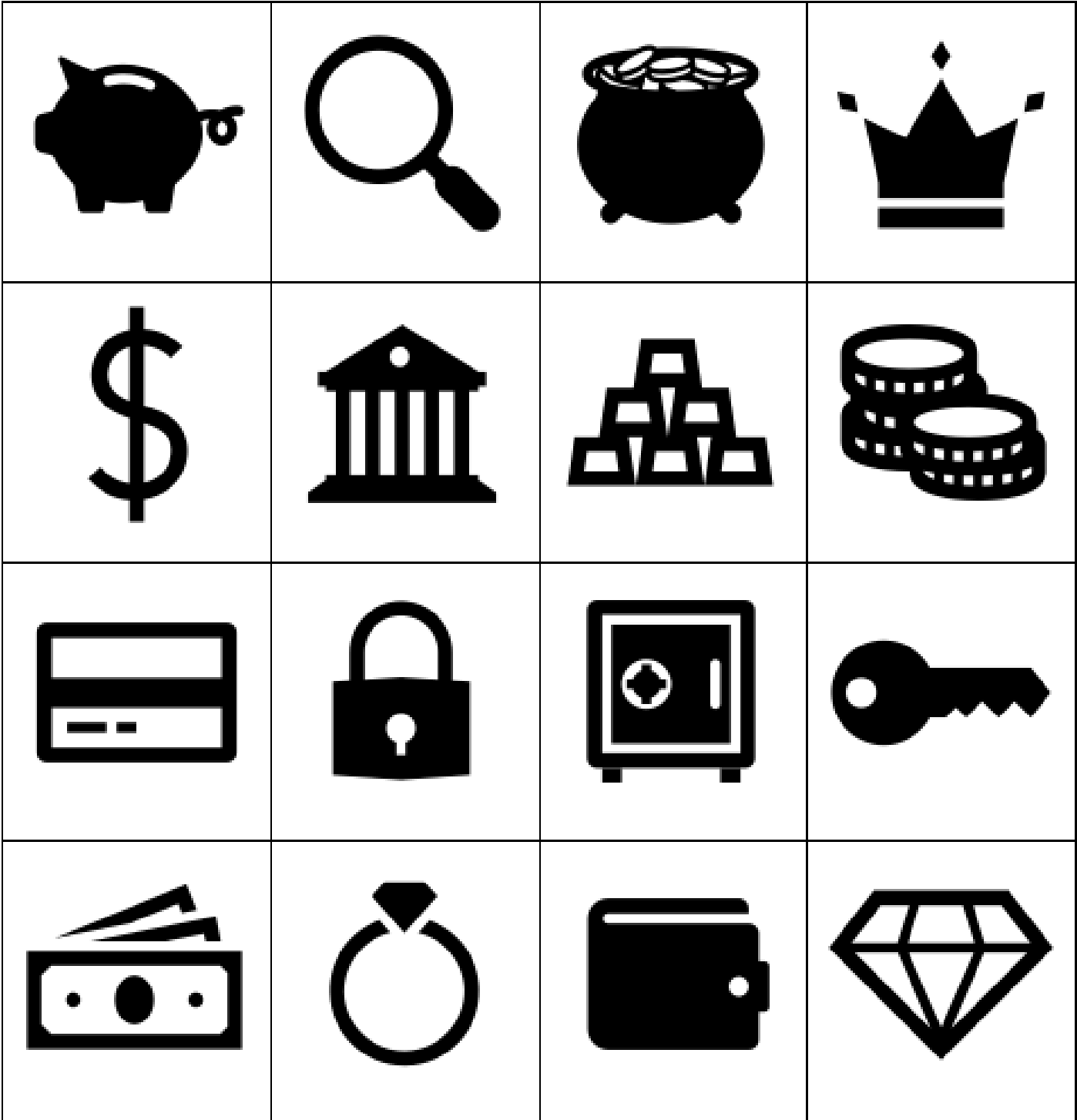
TREASURE BINGO (2)

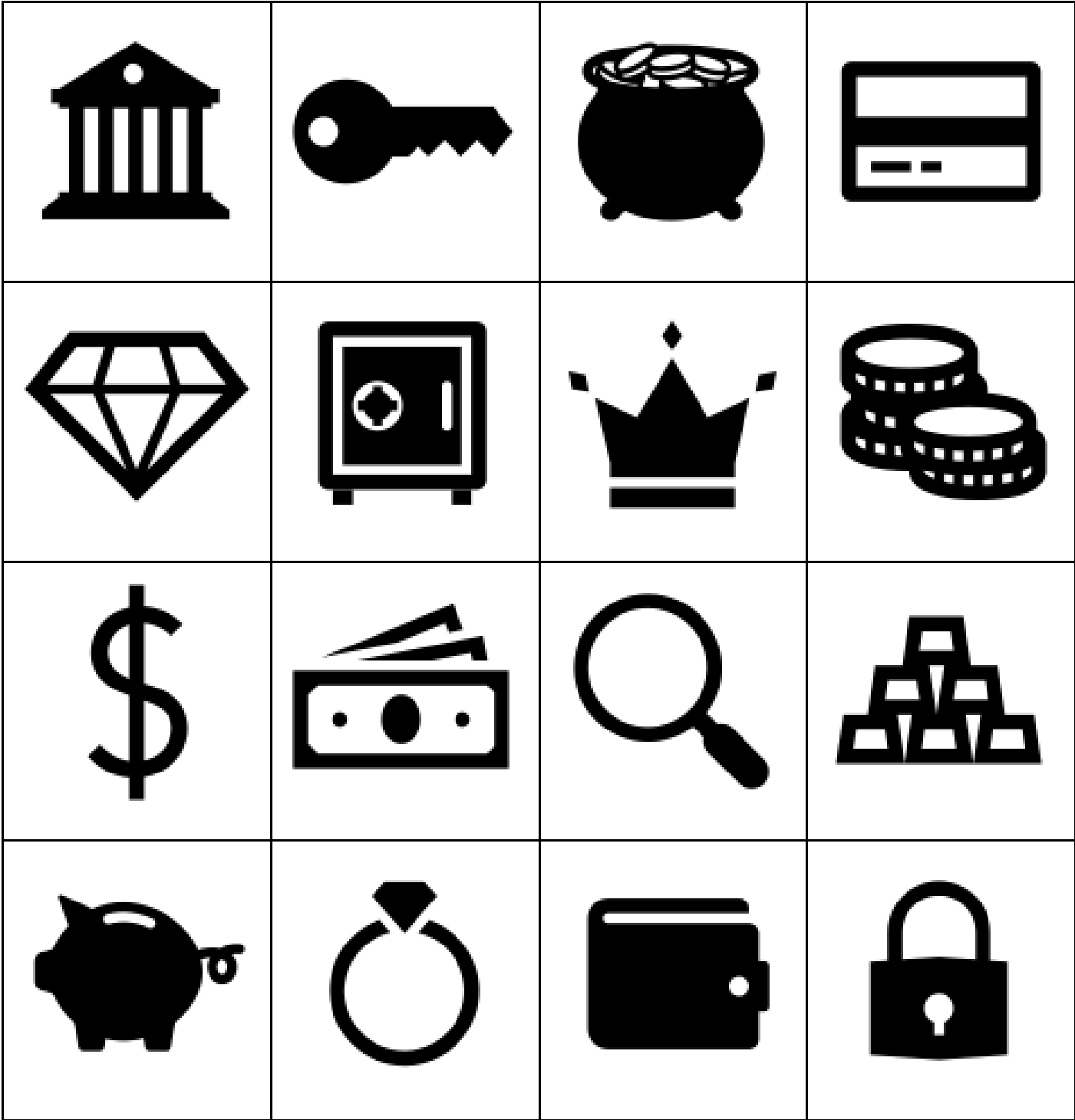
TREASURE BINGO (3)

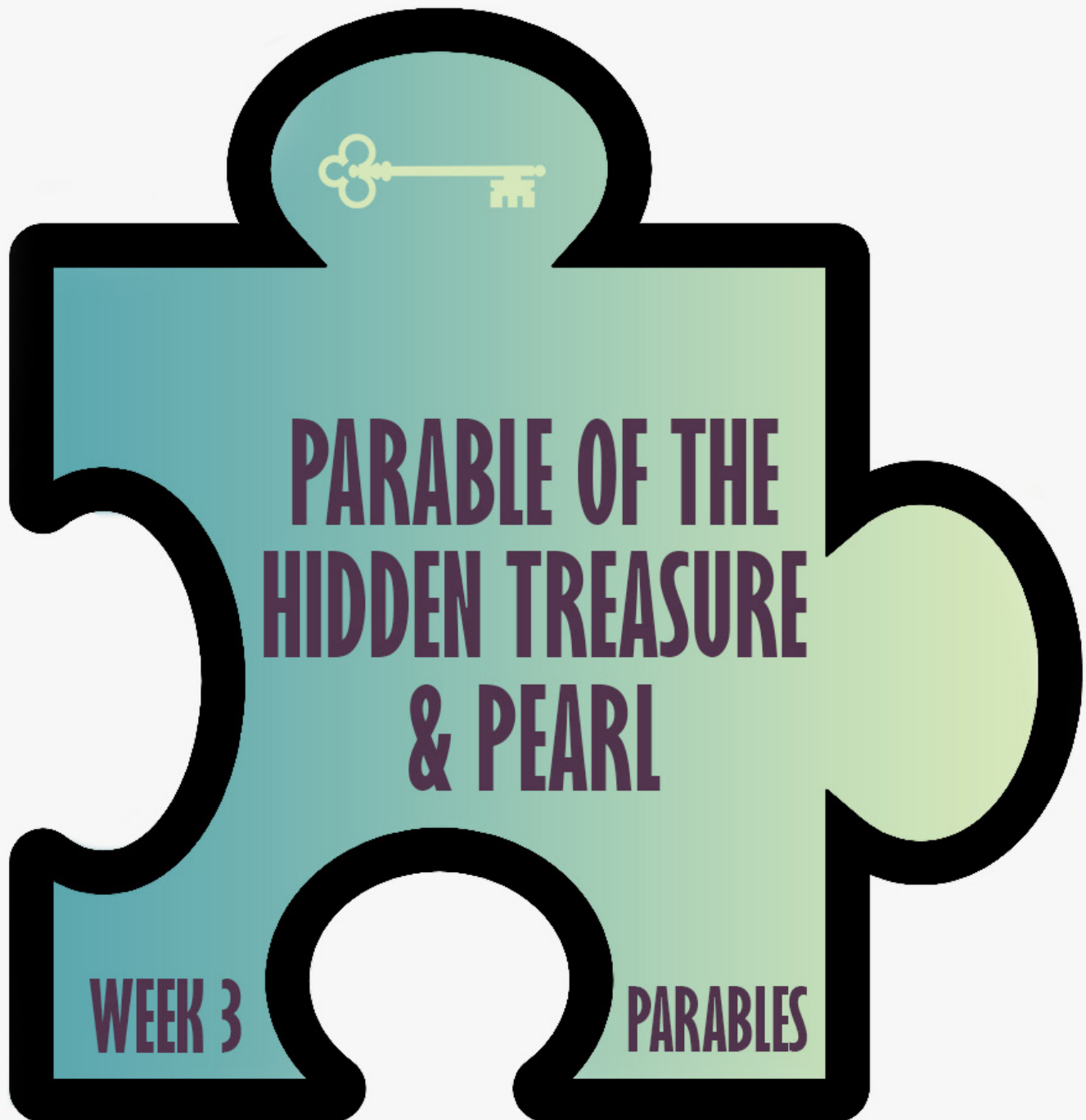
			
			
			
			

TREASURE BINGO (4)



TREASURE BINGO (5)





PARABLE OF THE LOST SON

BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 15:11-24 (ICB)

BIG IDEA

Jesus reveals hidden truths.

FOCUS VERSE

"I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things..." Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Construction Paper | *Hands and Head* Sheet | Glue Sticks | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite thing to do at school?
- How can you be a good friend?

WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Sometimes we think we need to constantly change things up to keep kids interested. However, children need repetition. Choose a few songs that tie in with this month's theme and sing them each week. You can mix up their order or switch out one or two, but for kids who come only once or twice a month, repeating the same songs will help them feel like they belong.

PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather the children together.



PRAYER IS IMPORTANT. DO NOT RUSH THROUGH THIS PART OF THE LESSON. USE THIS TIME TO RE-CENTER YOUR AFFECTIONS AND THOUGHTS ON GOD.

SAMPLE PRAYER: "God, thank You for always being with us. We praise You for how good You are. Help us understand new things as we read about You in our Bibles today. In Jesus' name, Amen."

REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | Puzzle Piece |

BACKGROUND: Say, "This is the last week in our lessons about the parables of Jesus. Today, we will be discussing a parable about things that are lost. Remember, parables are stories told by Jesus to uncover hidden truths because He doesn't keep secrets from His followers. Instead, **Jesus reveals hidden truths!** The first parable we discussed was about a tiny mustard seed. The second parable was about the Good Samaritan. Then, in last week's parable, we learned about a hidden treasure and a valuable pearl. Those were some amazing stories, weren't they? Before we begin today's parable, would someone put our new puzzle piece on the wall?"

TRANSITION: Say, "Let's get ready for our story with a short game!"

ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Today, we will be playing a game called, *Two Truths and a Lie*! It is all about uncovering the truth. That sounds like what we have been doing these past few weeks, doesn't it?"

GAME GOAL: To discover hidden truths about the leader.

HOW TO PLAY:

1. The leader will start by thinking of two truths and one lie about themselves.
2. Next, the leader will share all three things with the class (in random order).
3. The class will try to guess which statement was a lie.
4. By a show of hands, vote on which statement each child thinks is false.
5. The leader will continue coming up with two truths and a lie as time allows.

TRANSITION: Say, "One thing we know about Jesus is that He will never lie to us. In fact, in John 14:6 Jesus said He is truth. Now that we have become experts on finding the truth, let's find the truth Jesus wants to share with us in today's story!"

LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Our parable for today is called the 'Parable of the Lost Son.' Have you ever been lost before? Wow! Many of you have been lost, just like the son in this week's story. Jesus used this next parable to uncover truths to the crowds following Him. Before we get to that, though, have you ever heard a truth you didn't like? Can you give me an example? Well, there were people in Jesus' day who didn't like some of the truths He was teaching, and the more Jesus taught, the angrier these people got. In a few weeks, we will learn more about what they did when they got super angry, but today, let's read Luke 15:11-24 (ICB) to find some of the hidden truths Jesus revealed to His followers."



BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE AND READ THE PASSAGE DIRECTLY FROM IT EACH WEEK. WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO KNOW THESE STORIES ARE FROM GOD'S WORD.

¹¹ Then Jesus said, “A man had two sons. ¹² The younger son said to his father, ‘Give me my share of the property.’ So the father divided the property between his two sons. ¹³ Then the younger son gathered up all that was his and left. He traveled far away to another country. There he wasted his money in foolish living... ¹⁴ He spent everything that he had. Soon after that, the land became very dry, and there was no rain. There was not enough food to eat anywhere in the country. The son was hungry and needed money. ¹⁵ So he got a job with one of the citizens (people) there. The man sent the son into the fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ The son was so hungry that he was willing to eat the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ The son realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, ‘All of my father’s servants have plenty of food. But I am here, almost dying with hunger. ¹⁸ I will leave and return to my father. I’ll say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and against you. ¹⁹ I am not good enough to be called your son. But let me be like one of your servants.’ ²⁰ So the son left and went to his father.” “While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. He felt sorry for his son. So the father ran to him, and hugged and kissed him. ²¹ The son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his servants, ‘Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get our fat calf and kill it. Then we can have a feast and celebrate! ²⁴ My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!’ So they began to celebrate.”

Say, “What a great parable! Let’s discuss the secret Jesus is uncovering for us.”



WHISPERING THE “SECRET” WILL HELP KEEP THE CHILDREN ENGAGED.

PARABLE SECRET:

“The secret Jesus uncovers in the parable is that God is like the father in the story. God is the greatest Father who loves us no matter what we do or how we treat Him. (Reread verse 20.) The Father was not angry or embarrassed by his son’s bad behavior; He was just happy to have him home! Do you see how this father had been waiting for his son - probably day after day - and as soon as he saw his son, he ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him? That is how God acts toward us. God does not hold a grudge when we run away, but He rejoices and celebrates when we come ‘home’ to Him. **Jesus reveals hidden truths** about how much God is like the father from our story. God loves us with a never-ending love.”

TRANSITION: Say, “Great job listening to the secret in the ‘Parable of the Lost Son.’ **Jesus reveals hidden truths**, doesn’t He?”

DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's discuss our story from today."

1. Who reveals hidden truths through parables?

Response: **Jesus reveals hidden truths.**

2. What secret did Jesus reveal in the 'Parable of the Lost Son'?

Response: God is the Father who will always love us.

3. Why did the son come home?

Response: He was hungry and desperate because he was starving. He was sorry he left his father who had taken good care of him.

4. How did the father react when his son returned?

Response: The father ran to him, hugged, and kissed him.

5. What else did this father do to welcome his son home?

Response: He gave his son a new robe, a ring for his finger, sandals for his feet, and threw him a party.

6. How does this parable change the way you think about God?

Response: Answers will vary.

7. What does this story tell us about God?

Response: God is loving, God is compassionate, God is forgiving, God is understanding, God is patient, God is waiting for you, etc.



IF YOU HAVE EXTRA TIME AT THE END OF THIS DISCUSSION, LET THE CHILDREN ASK QUESTIONS THEY HAVE ABOUT THE STORY. IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THEIR QUESTIONS, LOOK THEM UP TOGETHER.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great answers! God is so much kinder and more loving than we could ever imagine. I'm grateful **Jesus reveals hidden truths** to us. Now, let's do a craft to help us think more about our parable."

RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

MATERIALS: | 2"x11" Strips of Construction Paper (any color-1 strip per child) | *Hands and Head* Sheet (1 per child) | Glue Sticks | Scissors | Markers or Crayons |

Say, "For today's activity, we will be making a craft to help us remember the open arms of the good Father who eagerly waited to welcome home His lost son."

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. First, hand each person a strip of construction paper.
2. Next, tell the kids to cut out the hands and head from the *Hands and Head* Sheet.
3. Glue the hands to opposite ends of the construction paper strip.
4. Glue the head cutout in the middle of the construction paper so the head is sitting above the top of the construction paper.

TRANSITION: Say, "Great job making the arms of the Father! Now, let's practice the memory verse we have been working on for the past few weeks."

MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Explain that the class will be practicing this month's memory verse for the last time. Remind everyone that Jesus taught previously hidden truths through stories called parables.

"I will open my mouth (*put hands around your mouth like you're shouting*) **with a parable** (*hold hands out like a book*); **I will utter hidden** (*quickly cover and then uncover your eyes*) **things."** Psalm 78:2 (NIV)

CHALLENGE: Have the children try to put the words of this verse to the tune of a song they like. If they can't think of a song, be silly and put the verse to nursery rhyme tunes like "Mary Had a Little Lamb" or "Three Blind Mice."

REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "**Jesus reveals hidden truths!** When He was on Earth, Jesus loved teaching His followers secret truths through His parables. Let's thank Jesus for revealing these things to us. He could have made it hard for us to understand God's ways, but He didn't. Jesus wants everyone to know who He and the Father are. Let's pray!"

SAMPLE PRAYER: "*Jesus, we praise You for revealing hidden truths to us in parables. Thank You for showing every one of us how to be part of the Kingdom of Heaven. Help us be on the lookout for the great things You are doing in Your kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.*"

RELEASE —

Be intentional about dismissal time. As you wait for parents to arrive, connect with your kids through fun activities. For example, go back to the game you played during the ENGAGE period.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SON



While the son was
still a long way
off, his father
saw him coming.
He felt sorry for
his son. So the
father ran to him,
and hugged and
kissed him.

Luke 15:20

