



Kids love snacks, especially when they get to help prepare the food. Bible Bites is a 10-Lesson curriculum that uses simple recipes to explore the parables of Jesus. Children will love the hands-on experience, the yummy treats, and learning the most familiar lessons in the Bible.

Bible Bites is guaranteed to keep kids attention, get them into God's Word, and help them connect personally with the love of Jesus Christ.

What is Bible Bites?

- Bible Bites is a 10-week Sunday School Curriculum on the Parables of Jesus for children.
- The way to a child's heart is through fun and food! So, why not combine these elements with Biblical knowledge to feed their bodies and their souls?
- Kids will love this easy-to-digest teaching format. In each lesson, kids will prepare and enjoy a snack while learning about the parables of Jesus.

You are viewing the combined lesson series in one printable PDF document; you also have access to our source files (including DOCX lesson plans and blank memory verse poster) using this link:

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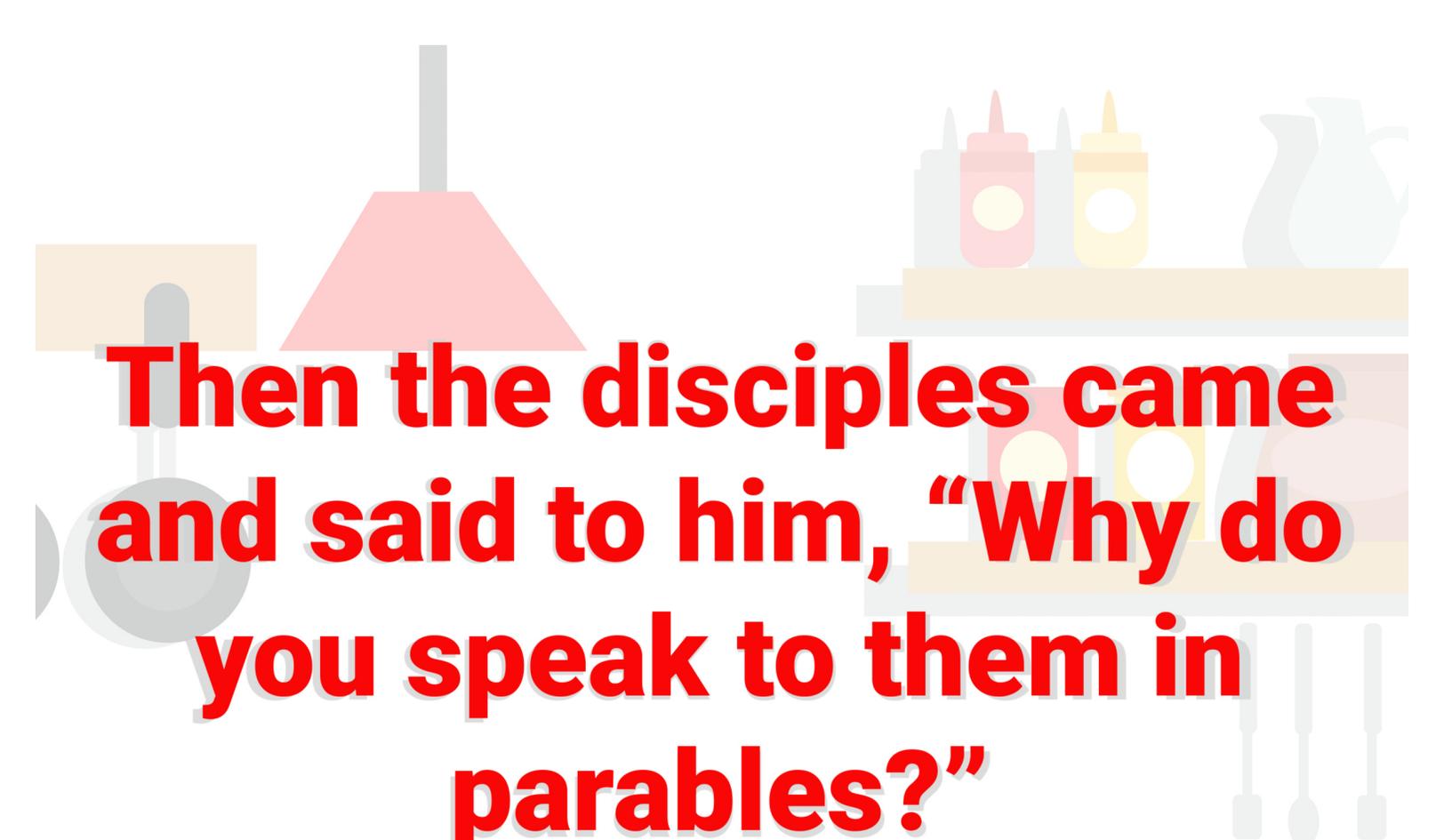
10 Week Lesson Overview

1. The Parable of the Lamp Stand (Matt. 5:14-16)
2. The Parable of the Speck and the Log (Matt. 7:1-5)
3. The Parable of The Wise and Foolish Builders (Matt. 7:24-27)
4. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-33)
5. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Matt. 13:44-46)
6. The Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Matt. 21:33-41)
7. The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:3-7)
8. The Parable of The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)
9. The Parable of The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10)
10. The Parable of the Two Servants (Matthew 24:45-51)

Every Lesson Includes

- Group Snack Activity
- Simple Bible lesson
- Discussion questions and prayer
- Memory verse activity
- Printable Bible activity worksheets (younger & older versions)
- Bible coloring page
- Multiple age-appropriate learning activities
- Take home review sheets for parents

The memory verse posters will be used over the entire series to help the children learn the complete passage.



**Then the disciples came
and said to him, “Why do
you speak to them in
parables?”**

Matthew 13:10 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

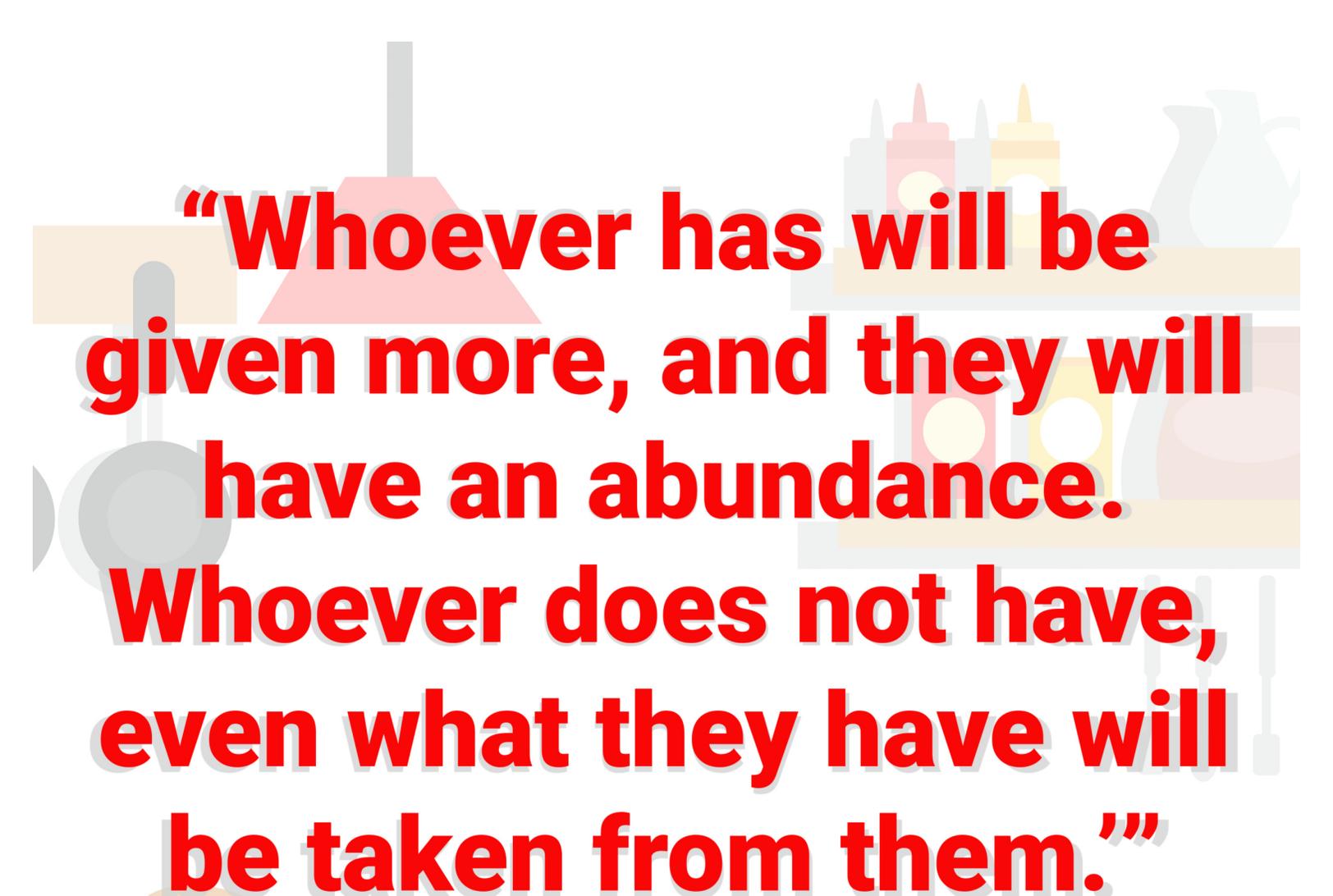
**And he answered them,
“To you it has been given
to know the secrets of
the kingdom of heaven,
but to them it has not
been given.**

Matthew 13:11 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



“Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance.

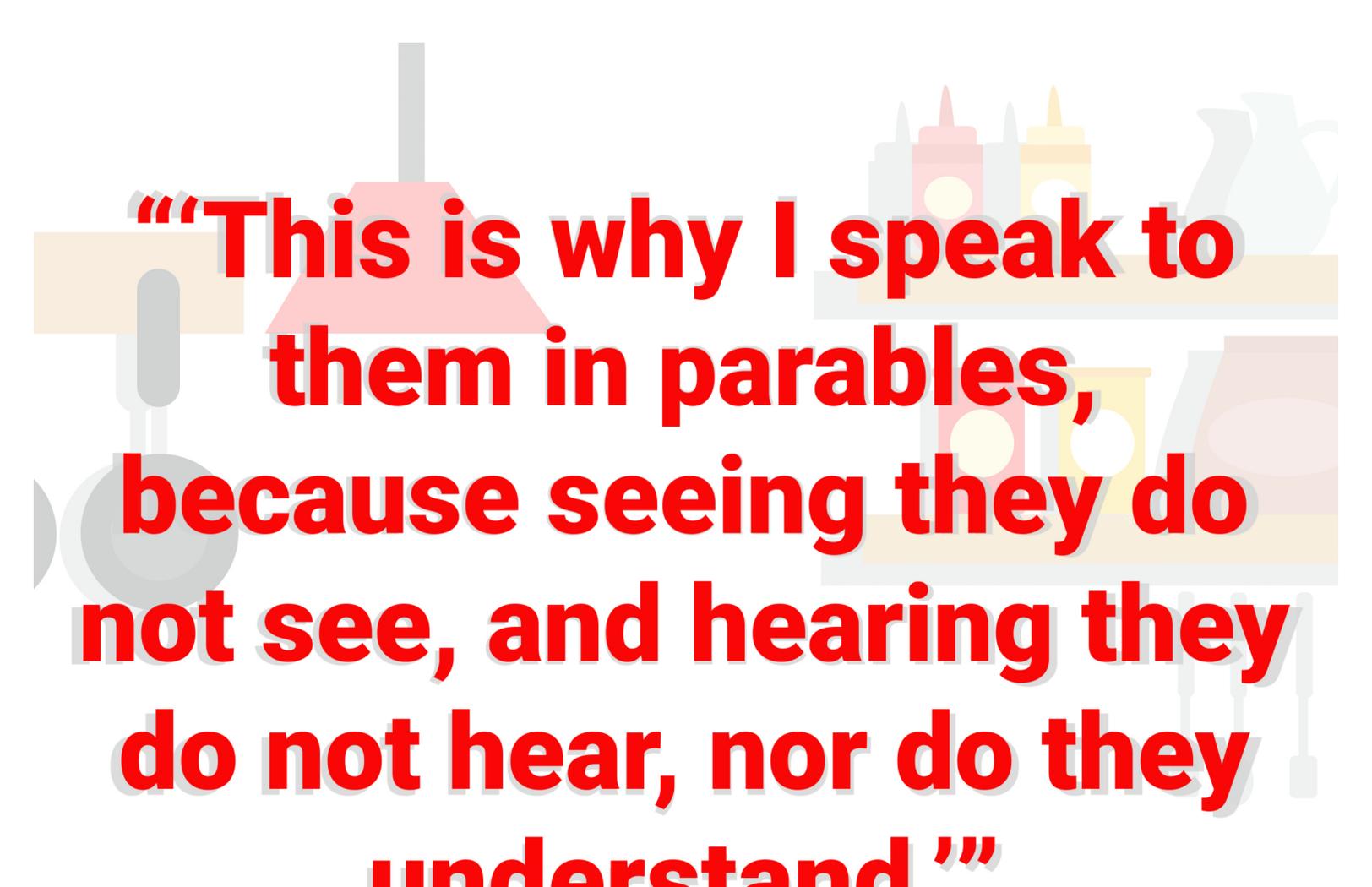
Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”

Matthew 13:12 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



““This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.””

Matthew 13:13 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

“Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.’”

Matthew 13:14 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

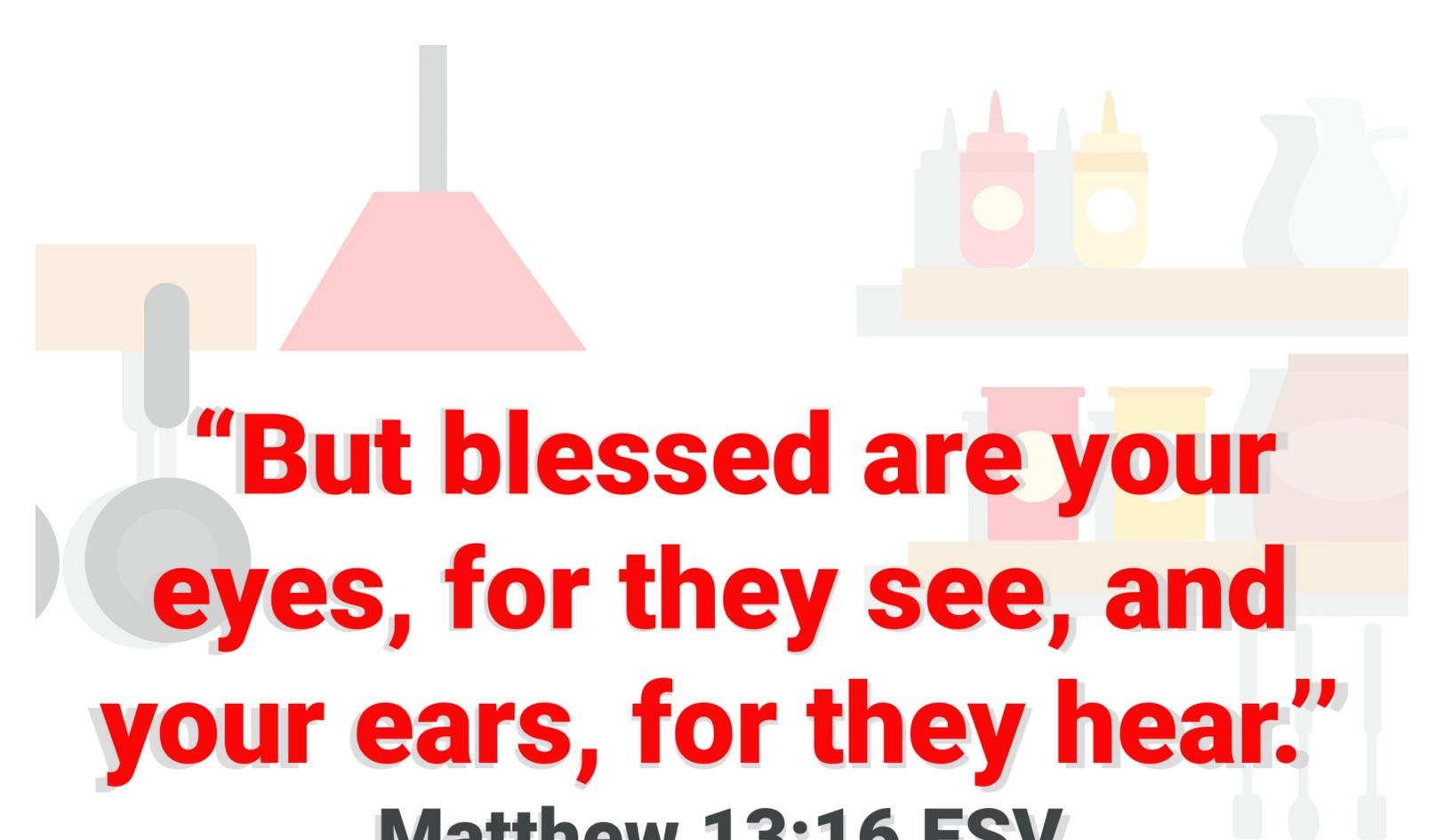
“For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.”

Matthew 13:15 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



“But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.”

Matthew 13:16 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

**“For truly, I say to you,
many prophets and
righteous people longed
to see what you see, and
did not see it, and to hear
what you hear, and did
not hear it.”**

Matthew 13:17 ESV



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Lesson 1: The Lamp Stand Candy Melt Candles



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Lamp Stand

“Let Your Light Shine” Matt. 5:14-16

Summary: Jesus reminds the people that they should be doing what is right and glorifying their father in Heaven—letting their “light” shine for the world to see.

A lamp on a lamp stand would have been a very common object in homes of Jesus’ time. The lamp consisted of a pitcher of oil with a floating wick. The wick would be lit and then placed on a stand so it would shine light on the whole room. Jesus uses this illustration to explain how we should present ourselves to the world once we have the light of Jesus inside of us. We shine that light on others, so they, too, can understand the hope of Jesus and put their faith in him.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children make the connection between knowing God’s truth and sharing it with others. They will come to understand that Jesus wants everyone to know the Gospel and be a part of God’s eternal kingdom. While we read the Bible to be filled with God’s light, others, who don’t know Jesus, watch us. So, we should be an example of God’s love, kindness, and truth.

Memory Verse: “Then the disciples came and said to him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’” Matthew 13:10 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Matthew 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:12



Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“Then the disciples came (Pat the air as if you’re patting each disciple on the head)

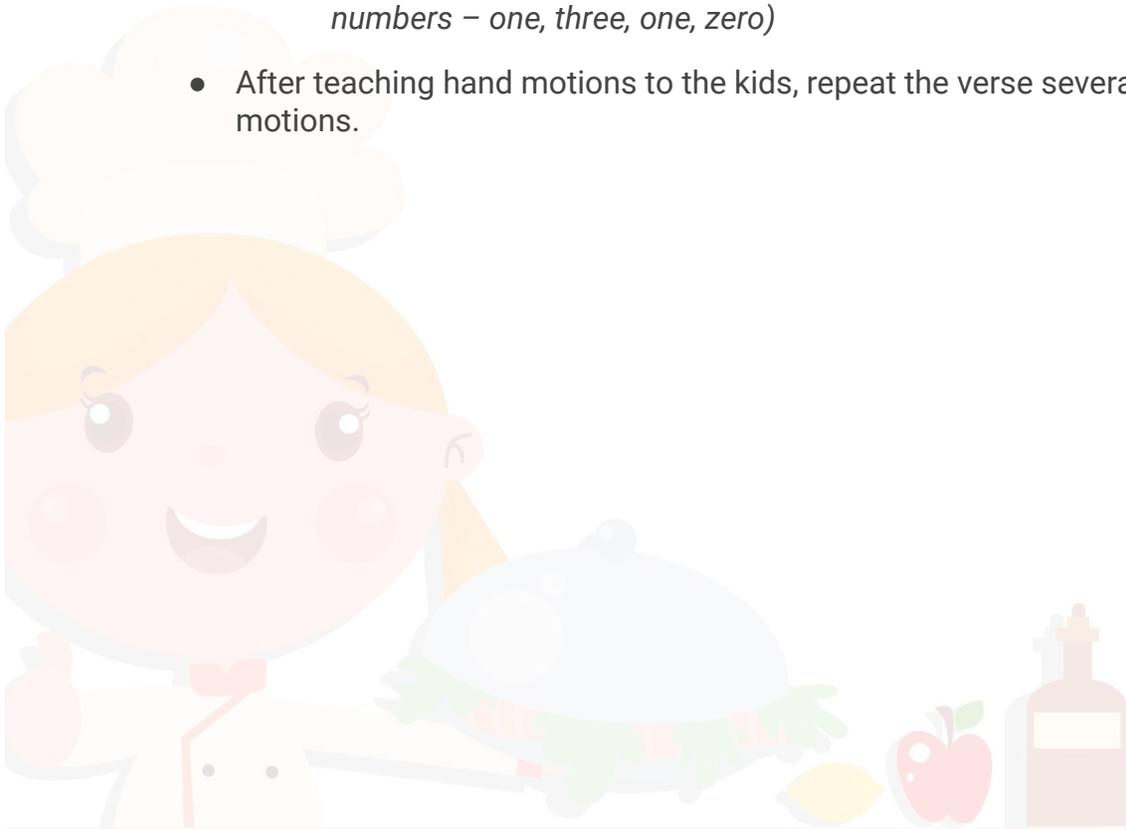
And said to him, (Cover your mouth and then lay your palm flat like you’re blowing a kiss)

‘Why do you speak to them (Put your cupped hands around your mouth)

In parables?’” (Pretend to open a book using your hands)

Matthew 13:10 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; hold up numbers – one, three, one, zero)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

Guess the letters.

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: Chalkboard, dry-erase board, or large tablet of paper, chalk, dry erase markers, or poster markers

Instructions:

- Draw a blank for each letter of each word in the memory verse.
- Allow each child to guess a letter to fill in the blanks.
- When a child is ready to guess the whole verse, they must wait until it is their turn again.
- Once the whole memory verse has been revealed, recite the verse together and practice the corresponding hand motions.



Lesson 1 Recipe:

Candy Melt Candles

Suggested time: 20–25 minutes

Supplies: Smoothie Straws (larger than regular straws); Pull apart licorice Candy; Vanilla Candy Coating; Plastic sandwich bags; Chopsticks; Bag of white sugar; Cups; Paper plates; Microwave; Scissors

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! We're going to be starting a new series this week. It's called Bible Bites. What do you think it will be about? (allow for answers) Food! That's right! We're going to be making different snacks and treats to help us remember God's Word!

Before we start with today's treat, I have a question for you today. Where does light come from? What are some sources of light in our homes? (light fixtures, flashlights, nightlights, LED lights, neon signs, etc.) Those are all great examples. What is a source of light on our birthdays? Candles! That's right! Who has ever had candles on their birthday cake? Yes, many of us have. What do people typically do when they are about to sing happy birthday and light the candles? They turn the lights down and light the candles, right. Why do you think we do that? [allow for answers] It's because we want to see the flames of the candles shining brightly. And if the lights are turned out, we can see the light shining brightly, right? Think about that for a minute while we set up our recipe for today.

Instructions:

- Before the lesson, put about two tablespoons of sugar into each cup. Make enough for each kid to have one. Do not allow the kids to eat the sugar!
- Give each child a paper plate, a smoothie straw (cut in half), one strand of Twizzlers Pull n Peel candy.
- Have the children come up to the microwave with their plate four at a time. Microwave four pieces of vanilla candy coating for a total of 90 seconds (stirring several times) inside of a glass measuring cup.
- Cover a small cup with a sandwich bag. Use a spatula to scoop the liquid candy into four plastic sandwich bags.
- Use your fingers to push the candy toward the bottom left corner of the sandwich bag. Once the candy is collected in the corner, twist the bag to form a piping bag. Snip the end of the bag to create an opening for the candy to escape.

- Allow the child to squeeze the candy into their straw and fill it up. The best way to do this is by holding the straw horizontally and filling it at both ends. Have the children place their filled straws onto their plates and bring them back to their table. Once there, the child will need to immediately stick their straw into the sugar. This will help to coat the bottom of the “candle” and keep the candy inside.
- Now, the children will pull off a piece of their Twizzler and stick it into the top of the straw to form the candle’s wick. Place the finished candles into the fridge for 10 minutes to allow them to set.
- Once the candle has hardened, have the children push the candy out of the straw with a chopstick.
- When everyone has had the chance to create their candle, you may allow the children to eat their candles.

****Note:** Give children a coloring sheet to work on while everyone is creating their candles.



Transition to **Large Group Teaching.**

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss ways that light makes a difference in our lives (nightlights, lamps, headlights on cars, flashlights, and so forth). Connect these light sources with the way that we are supposed to present ourselves as Christians in a dark world.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? A candle, that's right! We talked about how we turn the lights off or down when we blow out our birthday candles so that we can see the candles burning brightly. Well, did you know that Jesus called us the "light of the world." What do you think he means by that? [Allow responses.]

Does he mean that we literally glow like a flashlight if we believe in Him? No, Jesus is using a special story, called a parable, to get his point across. A parable is a "bite sized" story that teaches a big truth about God or His Kingdom. Jesus often used parables to teach, and as we memorize our verse, we'll understand why..

Bible Passage: Help the kids understand the background of this passage and what the lamp and lamp stand meant to the people of that time. The people that Jesus encountered were not Bible scholars. They lived lives of simplicity. Their focus was on keeping their families safe, warm and fed. Jesus didn't speak down to the people just because he was more knowledgeable. He used examples that would make sense to them.

LEADER: A lamp on a lamp stand was a very common object in homes of that time. The lamp consisted of a pitcher of oil with a floating wick. The wick would be lit and then placed on a stand so it would shine light on the whole room. Jesus used this illustration to explain how we interact with the world once we have the light of Jesus inside of us. A lamp cannot light itself, but once lit, the fire burning on it can light other lamps. In a similar way, we cannot make ourselves shine with Jesus' light. However, once we have the light, Jesus can use His light in us to set other people's lives aglow..

READ: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house."

Matthew 5:14-15

LEADER: What will happen if you cover a light? [Allow responses.] It won't be useful! That's right! The purpose of a light isn't just to be seen, it's to make it so you can see

everything else clearly. Jesus loves us in a way that can transform our lives completely. His love helps us see life more clearly. We can be good examples of God's love and truth in the world. We all know that the world can be a dark and scary place sometimes. But God calls us to be a light in that darkness so others will be drawn to Jesus. He wants us to show love for others and share about Jesus so that we can glorify our "Father in Heaven."

Can any of you explain what it means to "glorify God"? [Allow responses.] Great answers! Glorifying God means living in a way that shows other people just how Good God is. Glorifying God can help guide others to Christ like a beacon of light. That means being a shining example of God's truth. It doesn't mean we have to be perfect, but we should strive to be like Jesus so that others will see that we are different and be drawn to a life of faith.

LEADER: God calls us to be shining examples of Jesus so that others will know that we are different. We aren't overcome by the darkness of the world. We help others find safety and hope in Jesus.

READ: Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

1 Peter 2:12

LEADER: In this passage Peter encouraged his fellow Christians to be good representatives of Christ. He reminded Christians that even when others speak against us or try to get us into trouble, we still must behave in a way that glorifies God.

When we say we follow Jesus but do not think, speak, or behave in the ways Jesus did, it sends untrue messages about God to the world. If we say "God loves you," and then treat people unkindly, cruelly, and unlovingly, it communicates that we don't really believe what the Bible teaches. Other people may wonder why they should trust the Bible if we don't even seem to.

But the wonderful thing about walking with Jesus is that, even when it feels difficult, God is with us to give us power and strength. When a light is turned on, it doesn't have to try extra, super hard to make enough light. As the power of electricity flows through it, it simply does what it was made to do! In a similar way, we were made to glorify God, and when His power is inside us, we do exactly what He made us to do! The light of God in our lives can help guide others to Him, and He can light their lives as well!

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- What is the name of the type of story that Jesus tells his followers to help them understand God's truth?
- Jesus calls us a "_____ of the world?"
- Jesus says if we have a lamp, we wouldn't hide it under a _____.
- How do we shine our lights in the darkness?
- What's one way we can shine our lights in the world?
- Why do you think parables were an effective way to explain Jesus' teachings?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us Jesus

And allowing Him to make the ultimate sacrifice for us.

Thank you for allowing him

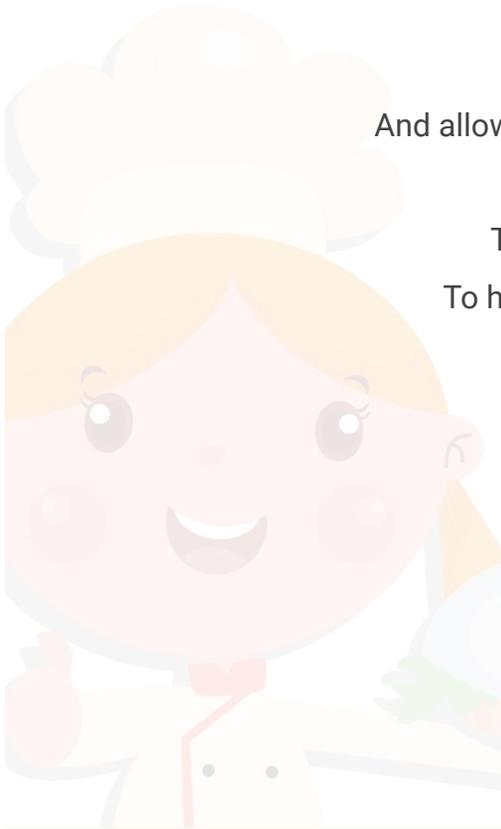
To walk the earth and use his parables

To help the world understand your goodness.

We pray that we would be lights

In the world for you every day.

In Jesus name, Amen!



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

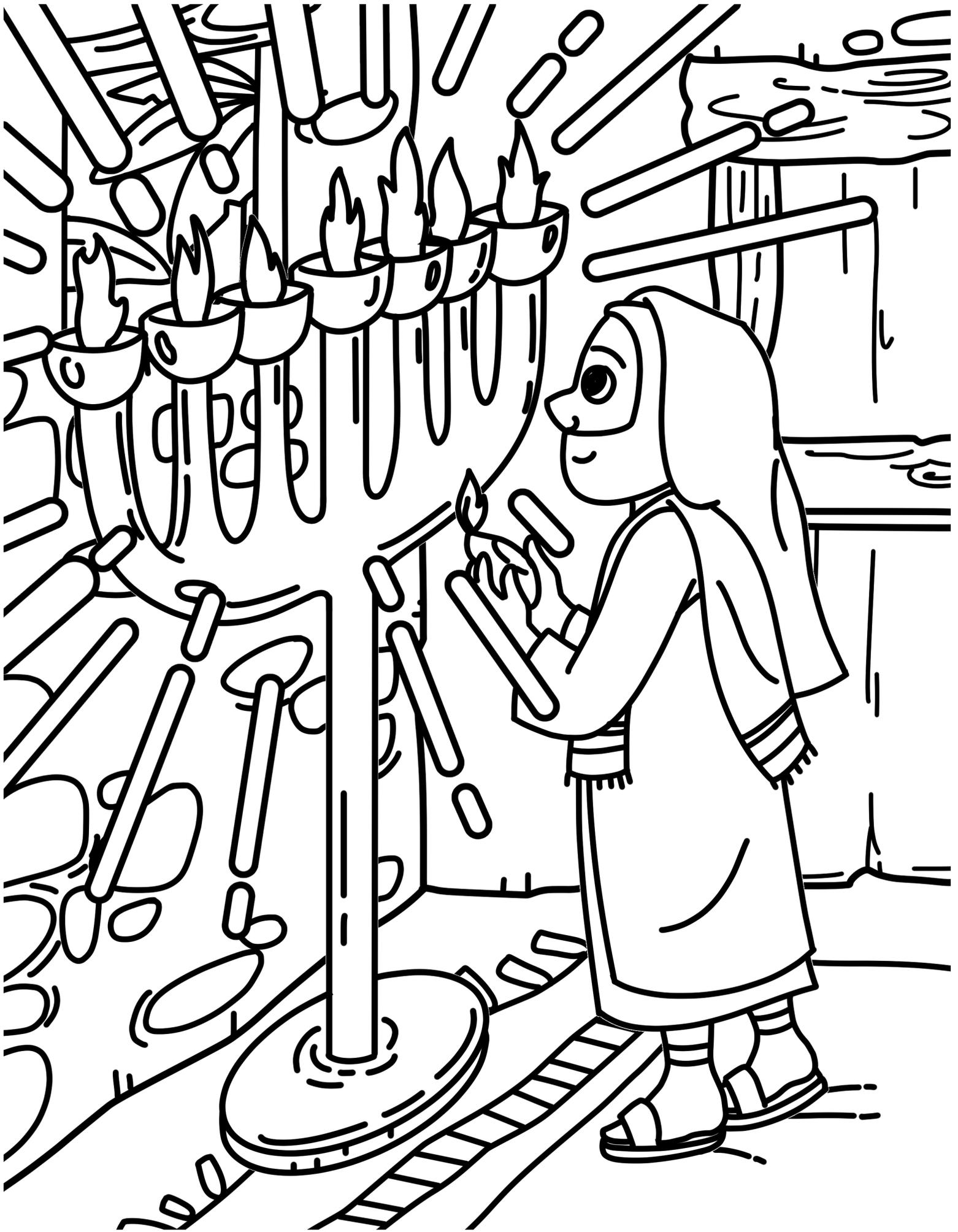
Let Your Light Shine! Even if you didn't go to Sunday School on a regular basis as a child, you probably know the song "This Little Light of Mine." While we might not have thought the song had a deeper meaning as children, the concept behind the song is one of profound Biblical truth. We are called to be lights in the world, which is a big job. Today, we talked about the Parable of the Lamp Stand and what it means to be a light in the world. The children created edible candles to help them remember to share God's truth and the hope of Jesus to others around them.

Over the next few weeks we are going to be exploring several of the Parables of Jesus and how he used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through each part, we'll talk about how each parable spoke to the situations of Biblical times and how it still speaks to us today.

As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

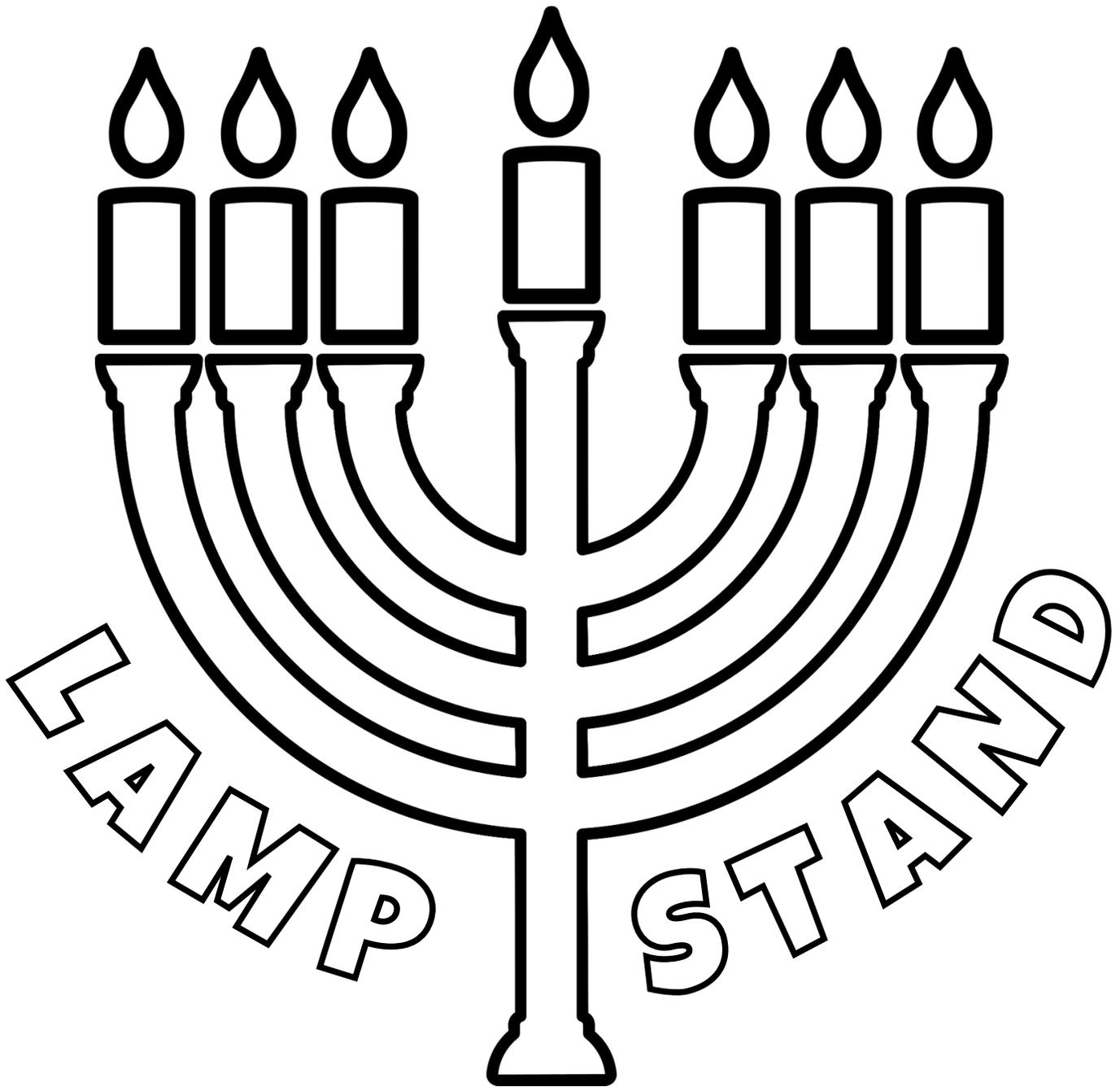
- What is the name of the type of story that Jesus tells his followers to help them understand God's truth?
- Jesus calls us a " _____ of the world?"
- Jesus says if we have a lamp, we wouldn't hide it under a _____.
- How do we shine our lights in the darkness?
- What's one way we can shine our lights in the world?
- Why do you think parables were an effective way to explain Jesus' teachings?
- Make a list of five people you can talk to about Jesus as a family.
- Make a blanket fort in the living room and use flashlights to create shadow puppets. Remind your children that the world is sometimes a dark place, but we have the light of Jesus to light our path.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.



The Parable of the Lamp Stand (Matt. 5:14-16)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of the Lamp Stand (Matt. 5:14-16)

Then Jesus asked them, "Would anyone light a lamp and then put it under a basket or under a bed? Of course not! A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light will shine."

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WORD BANK

LAMP

LIGHT

BED

STAND

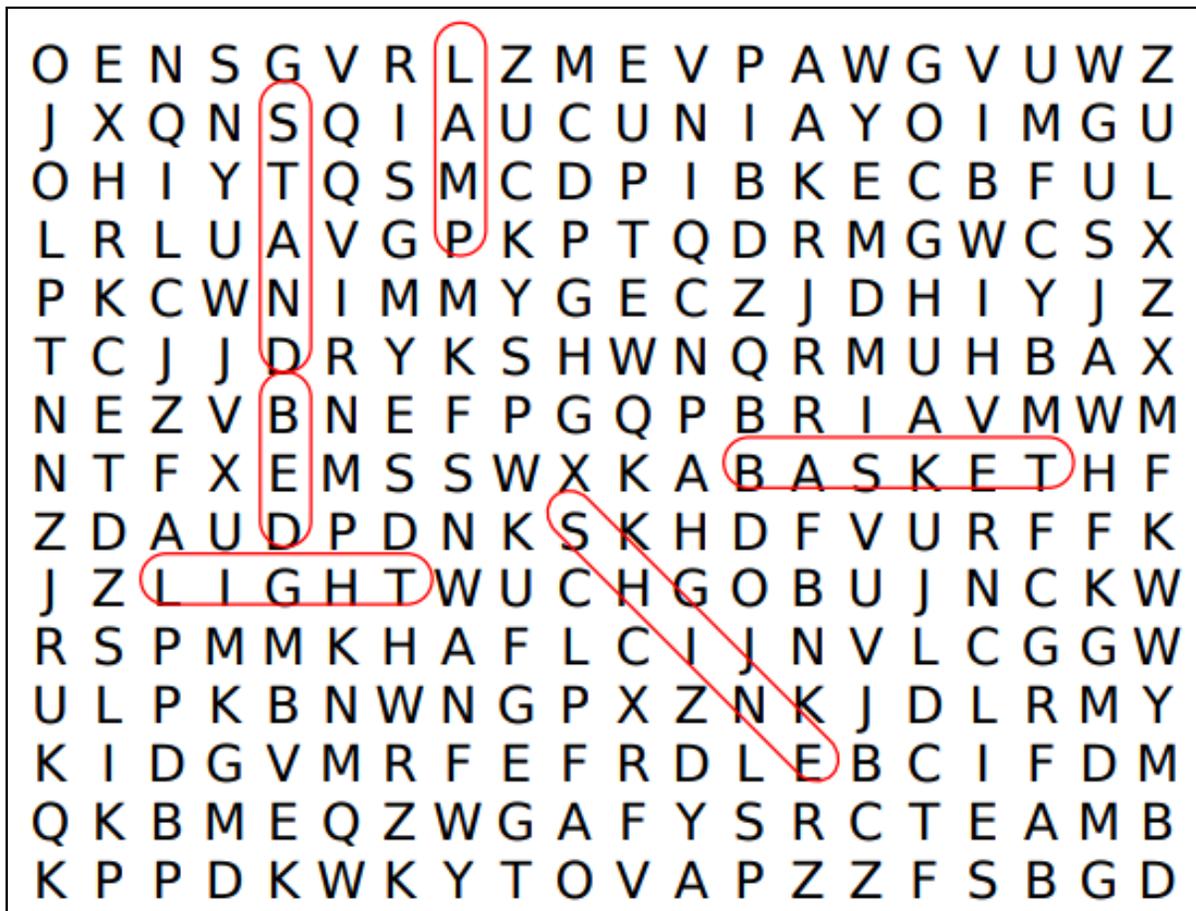
BASKET

SHINE

Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of the Lamp Stand (Matt. 5:14-16)

Then Jesus asked them, "Would anyone light a lamp and then put it under a basket or under a bed? Of course not! A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light will shine."



WORD BANK

LAMP

LIGHT

BED

STAND

BASKET

SHINE

Lesson 2: The Speck and the Log

Log Roll Cakes



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Speck and the Log

“Remove Your Log” Matthew. 7:3-5

Summary: Jesus uses the Parable of the Speck and the Log to help his followers understand that it is more important to focus on their own faith walk than it is to judge the relationship others have with the Lord.

He tells his disciples not to think about the little things that others are doing wrong (specks) when they haven't corrected the big problems (logs) in their own lives. Jesus wants them to focus on their own obedience, rather than focusing on the obedience of others. He wants them to be humble and loving toward their fellow man, and be a good example to others coming to know Jesus. **Gospel Connection:** This lesson will help children understand that pointing out the sins of others doesn't bring us any closer to God. Jesus died for all of our sins, and we should focus on strengthening our own faith so that we can better help those who are struggling with sin.

Memory Verse: “And he answered them, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.’” Matthew 13:11 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Matthew 7:1-5; Galatians 6:1-5



Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“And he answered them, (Put your hand to your ear like you’re answering a phone)

‘To you it has been given, (Put palms out in front of you as if you’re giving something away)

To know the secrets (Cup one hand around your ear and pretend someone is telling you a secret)

Of the kingdom of the heaven (Pretend to put on a crown; point to Heaven)

But to them (Point to people around the room)

It has not been given (Put palms out in front of you as if you’re giving something away)

Matthew 13:11 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, one)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.

LEADER: Jesus often taught using parables, which are like “bite-sized” stories that teach big, important truths about God or His kingdom. To some people, parables made no sense at all; they often wondered what Jesus was talking about. However, to those whom God chose to help understand, the parables made sense and revealed wonderful things to help people understand what God is like: His love, holiness, power, and goodness.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

Domino Effect

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: Set of dominos, pieces of paper or small Sticky Notes, pen/marker

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verse (a few words at a time) onto Sticky Notes or small pieces of paper. Make two sets (one for each “team”). Attach the notes to the dominos and set them in two piles on either end of a table.
- Divide the class into two teams and have them stand behind the table where their dominos are set out.
- When you say “go,” the children on each team will put the dominos in the right order to spell out the memory verse. The dominos must be standing upright on the table.
- When they think they’re correct, the leader will check their work. If they are correct, they can push their dominos and watch their memory verse fall in line.



Lesson 2 Recipe:

Log Roll Cakes

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Swiss cake rolls (3 packages per 4 kids); Plastic knives; Plastic forks; Paper Plates; Chocolate Frosting (about 1 can per 10 kids); zip-top plastic bags (optional)

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? (allow for answers) Parables! That's right! Parables are stories that Jesus tells to teach his disciples and followers important lessons. Today we're going to be creating another sweet treat to help us remember another parable that Jesus told.

Before we start with today's recipe, has anyone ever gone into the woods or in your yard at home and picked up sticks? Some of them are small and skinny and you can pick them up with your fingers. But then others are heavier. Would you pick up a big branch if it had fallen down? No, it would be too heavy. Well, today's parable has to do with logs, so that's what we're going to make! But thankfully, our logs will be made of cake and frosting and not wood. Let's get started!

Instructions:

- Before the lesson, cut a third of your total swiss cake rolls in half. For example, if you have 12 kids, you will need 9 packages, for a total of 18 rolls. Cutting 6 in half will yield 12 rolls and 12 half-rolls.
- You may choose to make a swiss cake log before the lesson to serve as an example for the kids.
- Give each child a paper plate, one cake roll, and one half-roll.
- Help the kids use plastic knives to spread a small amount of chocolate frosting onto their whole roll to attach the half-roll.
- Instruct the children to spread the remainder of their frosting onto the top of both cakes. Then use the fork to make lines in the frosting to give it the look of wood.
- When everyone is finished, the children can eat and enjoy their treat.
- You may also store the treats in small zip-top plastic bags to send home at the end of the lesson.

Transition to **Large Group Teaching**.

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10–15 minutes

Discuss the Log Roll Cake and how someone who looked at it from a distance might think it wasn't appetizing. That person might not realize the cake's sweetness if they judged it before looking at it closely. Connect this to the way that we sometimes judge others by their actions and appearance, instead of focusing on our own walk with the Lord.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe?[*Allow responses.*] That's right! We made logs. Some of these look pretty real. What if we put these on a table on the other side of the room and someone walked by, I bet they would think that our logs were actually made of wood. If they judged before they actually got the correct information, they would miss the sweetness of the treat, right? Well, sometimes that happens to us. Maybe there's a new kid at school or on your baseball team. Maybe they look different from you or maybe they don't act like you or your friends. If we judge before we get to know the person, we might miss out on the sweetness of a new friendship. The same thing can happen in our faith walks as well.

LEADER: This parable is part of a longer lesson called the Sermon on the Mount, that Jesus gave on a mountain to a large group of His followers. He gave them lots of instructions about how life in the Kingdom of Heaven is different from life without God. Jesus warned his followers about the dangers of judging others.

READ: "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

Matthew 7:1-5

LEADER: Jesus's first words in that verse were a clear, direct command. He said, "Judge not, that you not be judged." He explained to his followers that God will judge the same way we judge others. If we judge others harshly, we ought to expect God to judge us harshly as well. He went on to say that we shouldn't worry about the speck in someone's eye when there is a log in our own. Do you think he means there is really a log in our eyes? [*Allow responses.*] No, of course not! Jesus was speaking figuratively. If I ignore

my own sin, but am quick to point out areas where I see someone else struggling, I'm proving that I don't really understand God or His grace and mercy. Jesus was telling His followers that they shouldn't judge someone else's struggles before working through their own with God's help. No one is perfect, and we all need help to live for God, so judging another person's imperfections doesn't help anyone. But does that mean we should never point out sin in someone's life? [Allow responses.] Let's see what else the Bible says about that!

READ: Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.

Galatians 6:1-5

LEADER: The book of Galatians was written by Paul, a messenger chosen by Jesus to spread the gospel. Paul told the Galatians that God wanted them to be humble. Because God looked at each of them and showed love, grace, and forgiveness, He wanted them to treat one another with the same love, grace, and forgiveness.. This still holds true for Christians today. But that doesn't mean we ignore sin; we are called to restore those caught in sin. But how?

In our last lesson we talked about how we should live like Christ so that we would draw people to Him. This is the same idea. If we behave as though there are some "big" sins and some "little" sins, we are misrepresenting God. God sees all sin as equally bad, and we are all born in sin, separated from God.. In reality, we know that we are all sinners and no sin is greater than another. When we are honest about the sin we struggle with and the ways God has begun to heal the damage of sin in our lives, it helps others see that there is hope in Jesus.

We hold one another accountable to glorify Jesus in our lives. It is also important to surround ourselves with other believers who can help us be our best selves. When times are tough and we are tempted to sin, those believers will help us through. We support each other as believers without judging each other.

So, the next time you have the urge to judge someone or compare yourself to another, remember how Jesus would want you to respond. Be supportive, help them through their difficulties, and trust that God will forgive all the sin of those who put their faith in

Jesus.

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- Who was Jesus speaking to in those passages?
- These verses are part of a larger teaching that Jesus gave on a mountain. What was that lesson called?
- What does Jesus warn his followers about?
- How should we respond when another person is sinning?
- How can we restore someone who is struggling with sin?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us the Bible and Jesus' words.

Help us to remember that we are not perfect

And we should give others grace when they are imperfect.

Remind us that we should not judge others

Because you will judge us with the same harshness.

We pray that we can get to know people

Before we judge their motives and actions.

In Jesus name, Amen!

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Log Roll! Did you ever ride one of those log rides as a child? All of a sudden you're sliding down a waterslide before you know what's happening. There's no time to change your mind. That can happen when we are quick to judge others before we get to know them. You prejudge them and say something you regret before you even realize what you're doing. In today's lesson, we read The Parable of the Speck and the Log and heard what Jesus says about harshly judging those around you. He tells us that we shouldn't point out the speck in our brother's eye before we address the log in our own.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through each part, we'll talk about how each parable spoke to the situations of Biblical times and how it still speaks to us today.

As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - What does Jesus warn his followers about?
 - Why do you think Jesus uses a speck and a log in this parable?
 - What will happen to us if we judge others?
- Go for a walk and pick up sticks. Describe each stick (differences, similarities)
- Introduce yourself to new people at school, church, your neighborhood, etc.
- Write down a list of things you struggle with and make a plan to improve
- Read books about different cultures

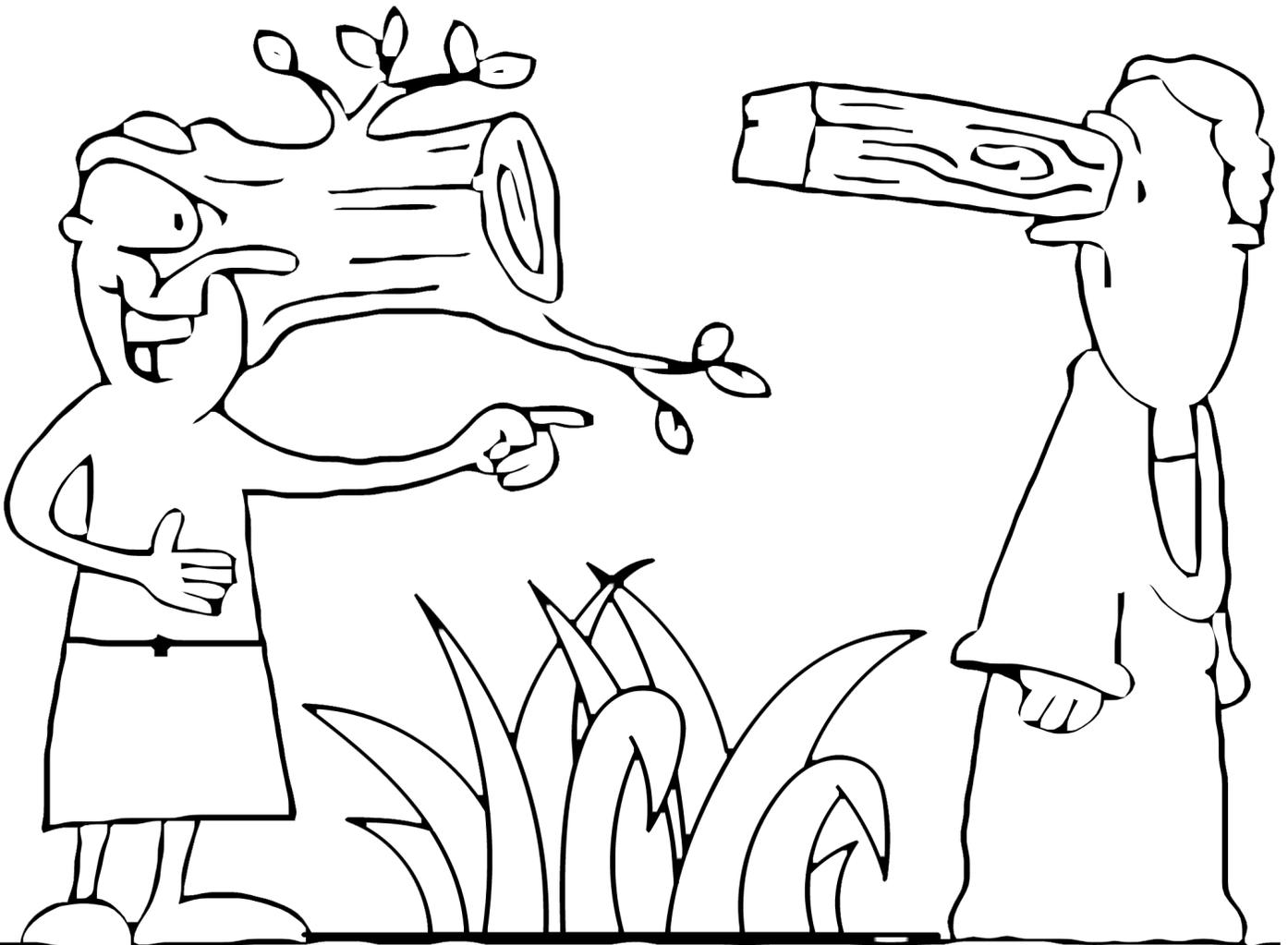
Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.



The Parable of the Speck and the Log (Matt. 7:1-5)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.

SPECK AND THE LOG



Lesson 3: The Wise & Foolish Builders

No Bake Chocolate Rocks



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Wise and Foolish Builders

“Build on the Rock” Matthew 7:24-27

Summary: Jesus uses the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders to explain that when you build your life upon faith in God you will not be torn down or defeated by the trials of life. He compares a faithful life to a wise man who has built his home on top of a rock.

Jesus once again uses simple examples from the everyday lives of the people he’s speaking to in order to get his point across. Understanding faith can be a daunting task, but if you explain the stability and consistency of God like a house built on a firm foundation, then it can be more easily understood. The people of that time would have understood that building your house on sand would be a foolish choice, just like it would be a foolish choice to go through life without faith in God.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that faith in God is the only firm foundation upon which we can build our lives. Although our lives are not easy, God holds us up, helping us get through any trial. Through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection, we have a firm foundation on which our faith rests; we have hope for the future that allows us to rest in God despite trials.

Memory Verse (combination of Week 1 and 2): “Then the disciples came and said to him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ And he answered them, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.’”
Matthew 13:10-11 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Matthew 7:24-27; Psalm 118:22



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

"Then the disciples came (Pat the air as if you're patting each disciple on the head)

And said to him, (Cover your mouth and then lay your palm flat like you're blowing a kiss)

'Why do you speak to them (Put your cupped hands around your mouth)

In parables?'" (Pretend to open a book using your hands)

"And he answered them, (Put your hand to your ear like you're answering a phone)

'To you it has been given, (Put palms out in front of you as if you're giving something away)

To know the secrets (Cup one hand around your ear and pretend someone is telling you a secret)

Of the kingdom of the heaven (Pretend to put on a crown; point to Heaven)

But to them (Point to people around the room)

It has not been given (Put palms out in front of you as if you're giving something away)

Matthew 13:10-11 (Draw an "m" in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, zero, one, one)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

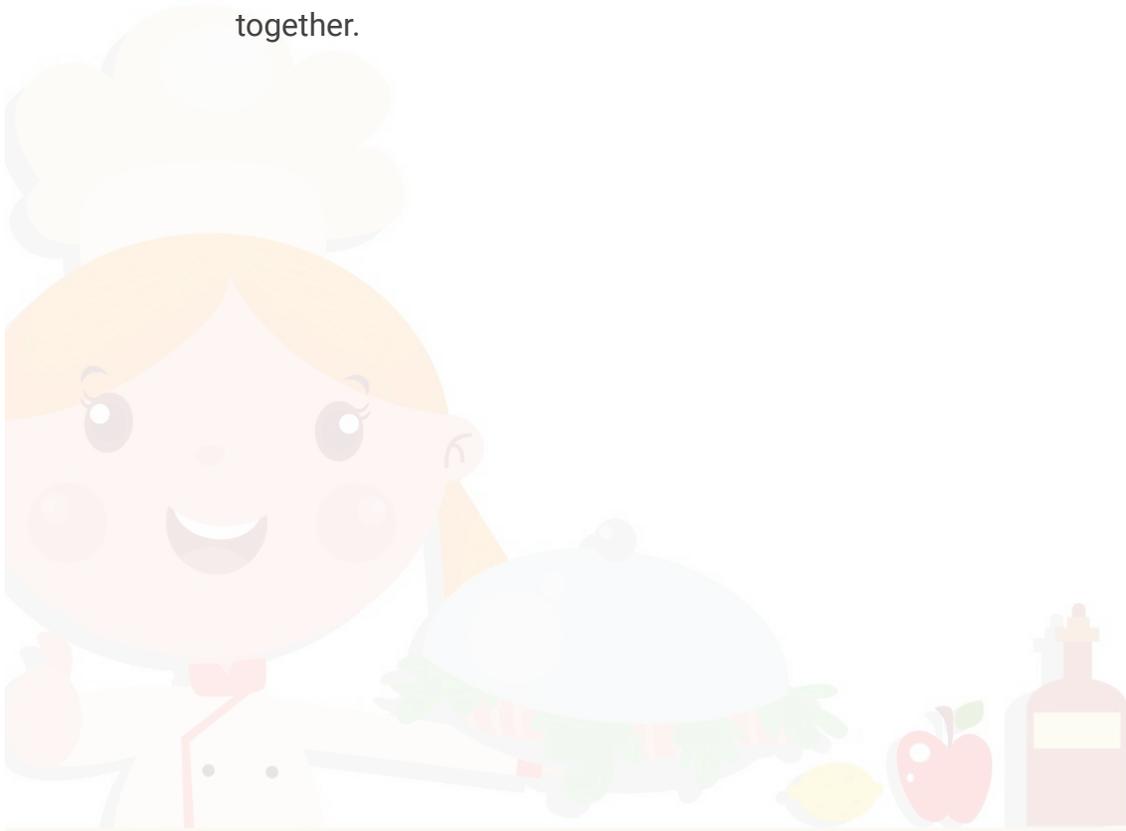
Building Knowledge

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: Large building blocks (like Duplo blocks), self-adhesive name badges, pen/marker

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verse (a few words at a time) onto self-adhesive name badges. Make two sets (one for each "team"). Attach the name badges to the front of individual blocks.
- Divide the class into two teams and have them stand behind the table where their blocks are set out.
- When you say "go," the children on each team will put the memory verse in the right order by putting the blocks together.
- When they think they're correct, the leader will check their work. The team that gets their memory verse together first wins.
- Recite the verse together when both teams have finished putting their blocks together.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Lesson 3 Recipe:

No Bake Chocolate Rocks

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Half a package of chocolate sandwich cookies; Gallon zip-top bag; Bag of M&Ms (10.7 oz bag); White chocolate baking chips (12 oz); Sweetened condensed milk (7.4 or 7.6 oz); ¼ tsp salt; Paper Plates; Spoon

Instructions:

- Before the lesson, scrape the cream from the chocolate sandwich cookies, placing the cookies into a gallon freezer bag. Crush the cookies and set them aside
- Heat the white chocolate baking chips, sweetened condensed milk, and salt in a saucepan. Stir until smooth. Remove from the heat and stir in the cookie crumbs. Set aside to cool for at least 30 minutes.
- During the lesson, give each child a paper plate with a small handful of candy coated chocolate pieces. Instruct them not to eat the candies until given permission to do so.
- Provide each kid with a few tablespoons of the cookie mixture.
- Demonstrate how to roll the mixture into a ball and then flatten it.
- Kids will place a chocolate candy piece in the center and cover it with the mixture to look like a speckled rock.
- You may allow the kids to eat their rocks, or send them home in snack size zip-top bags.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? [Allow answers.] Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories Jesus used to teach his disciples and followers big lessons about what God is like.

How would you describe rocks? [Allow answers, and write them down if possible] Are rocks hard or soft? Hard, of course!. If I set something on a sturdy, flat rock, it would probably stay, right? Yes! And what about sand? What happens when you hold sand? It runs through your fingers, doesn't it? Would you rather build a house on a solid rock, or soft sand? Let's see what that has to do with today's lesson.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the rocks and how they hardened. We know from seeing real rocks in nature that they are hard and unyielding. Connect these aspects of rocks to the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders. If we build our lives around faith in God, we will not perish like the house that was built on the shifting sand. Say something like this:

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made rocks, right? While the rocks we created were yummy, we know that we can't eat real rocks. Why is that? They're too hard, right? We're going to read about the Parable of the Wise and the Foolish Builders. If you are a wise builder, what do you think you would build your house upon? Let's find out.

Bible Passage: Read through the parable and Psalm 118:2. Help the children understand that God's love is never ending and by believing in Him, we have Him by our side in all of life's trials. And by believing in Jesus, we can spend eternity in Heaven with God.

LEADER: This parable, like many of his other parables, is part of a big speech Jesus gave on a mountain to a large group of His followers called the Sermon on the Mount. He wanted to give them some instructions on how to be a part of the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the last parable in his sermon. He wants those listening to remember that wise men listen to his words and follow them, while foolish men disobey and suffer consequences.

READ: "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Matthew 7:24-27

LEADER: Jesus used very direct language in His parables. Often, He told his followers exactly what the story was about. In this parable, Jesus started by saying, "Everyone

then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock." If we listen to His teachings and obey Him, our lives will be build on something solid and unchanging: God's truth..

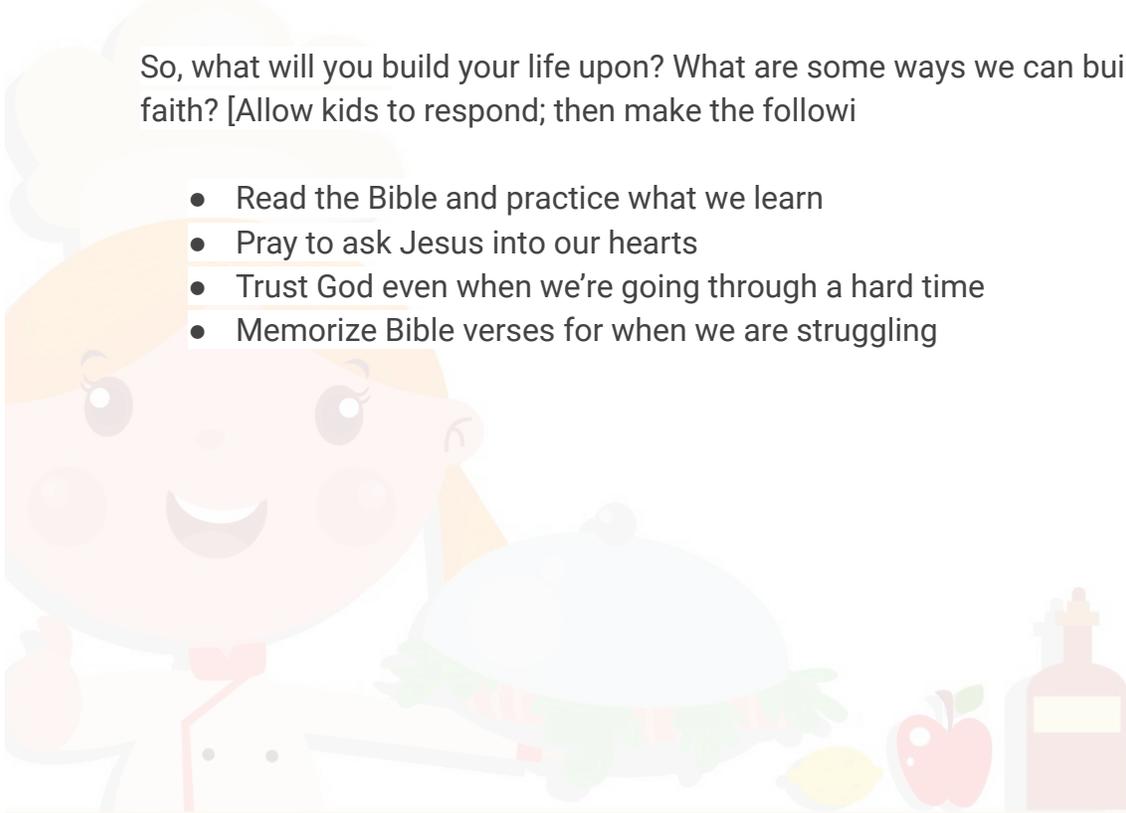
What is the other option Jesus mentioned? Where does the foolish man build his house? [Allow responses.] That's right, on the sand! We talked about the differences between the rock and the sand earlier. One was hard and sturdy and one fell apart as soon as you tried to pick it up. If you built your house upon the sand and it was tested with floods and wind, do you think it would hold up? No. Jesus wants us to know that God's perfect teachings are the only foundation that can stand up to life's troubles. We will still go through troubles, but God will hold us up. God never fails or gives up.

READ: "Let Israel say: 'His love endures forever.'"
Psalm 118:2

LEADER: Forever is a long time, isn't it? This verse reminds us that God will always be with us... today, tomorrow, the next day, and every day forever. Everyone who has faith in Jesus will live with God forever. I don't know about you, but I find it very comforting to know that God loves me forever and has secured my future with Him in Heaven through Jesus.

So, what will you build your life upon? What are some ways we can build our lives on faith? [Allow kids to respond; then make the followi

- Read the Bible and practice what we learn
- Pray to ask Jesus into our hearts
- Trust God even when we're going through a hard time
- Memorize Bible verses for when we are struggling



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- What is the parable a part of?
- What does the wise man build his house upon?
- What does the foolish man build his house upon?
- Why do you think Jesus uses the illustration of building a house to get his point across?
- What are some ways we can build our life on faith in God?

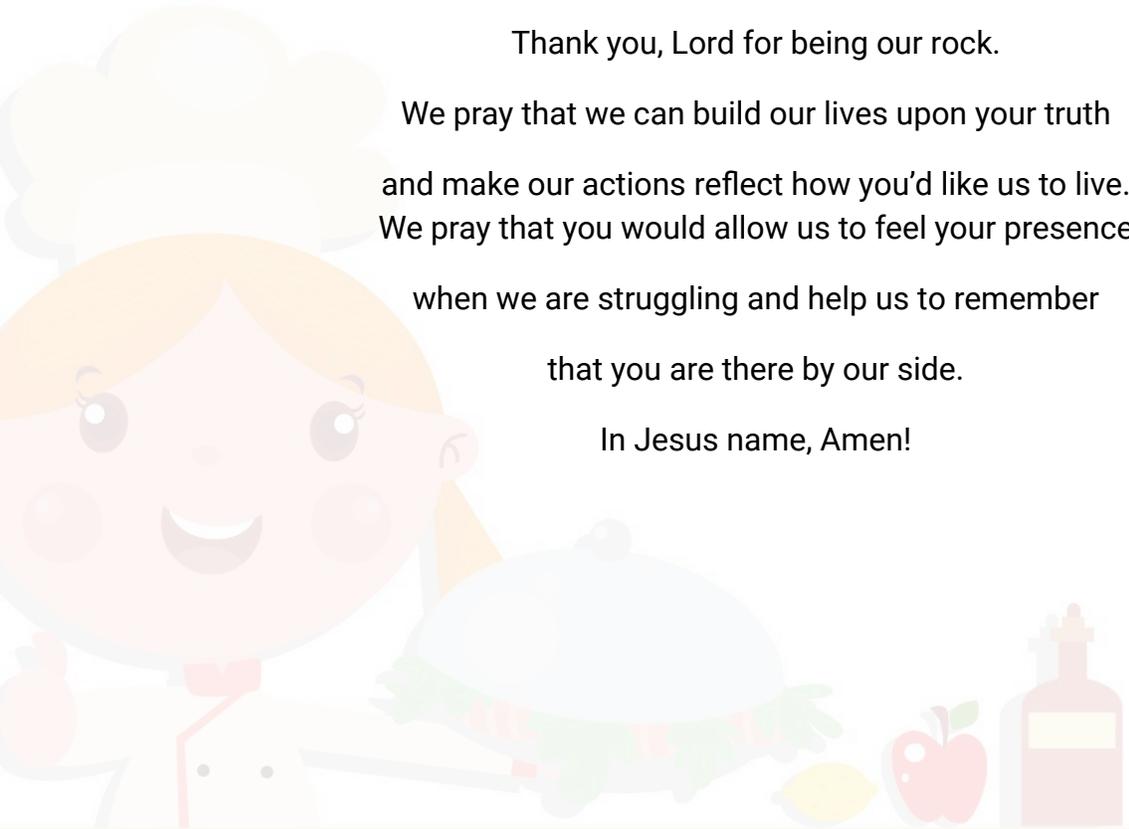
Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord for being our rock.

We pray that we can build our lives upon your truth
and make our actions reflect how you'd like us to live.
We pray that you would allow us to feel your presence
when we are struggling and help us to remember
that you are there by our side.

In Jesus name, Amen!



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Like a rock! An old commercial that aired decades ago, bragged that their trucks were built like a rock. Whether that was true or not, we know that God is the only rock we need in our lives. When we build our lives around faith in our Heavenly Father, then we will not collapse under the pressures of life. But when we ignore God's truth, we suffer the consequences. Today, we talked about the idea of God being the rock in our lives when we discussed the Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - What does the wise man build his house upon?
 - What does the foolish man build his house upon?
 - Why do you think Jesus uses the illustration of building a house to get his point across?
 - What are some ways we can build our life on faith in God?
- Go for a walk and collect rocks. Describe their differences and similarities.
- Make a house out of a small milk carton. Fill one container with rocks and the other with sand. Place the house on each container (one at a time) and pour water over it with a watering can. Discuss what happens and how the rocks kept the house from falling down.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



The Parable of The Wise and Foolish Builders (Matt. 7:24-27)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.

WISE



FOOLISH



Directions: Unscramble and rewrite the correct words.

The Parable of The Wise and Foolish Builders (Matt. 7:24-27)

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

SEWI _____

OLISFOH _____

UDSEIBRL _____

EVENOYRE _____

HOESU _____

IARN _____

CROK _____

Directions: Unscramble and rewrite the correct words.

The Parable of The Wise and Foolish Builders (Matt. 7:24-27)

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

SEWI

WISE

OLISFOH

FOOLISH

UDSEIBRL

BUILDERS

EVENOYRE

EVERYONE

HOESU

HOUSE

IARN

RAIN

CROK

ROCK

Lesson 4: The Mustard Seed

Pretzel Bites with Mustard Dip



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Mustard Seed

“Seed for Thought” Mark 4:30-33

Summary: Jesus uses the Parable of the Mustard Seed to explain that the body of Christ can start small, but when those who believe in Him live like Him, they can help to grow the Kingdom of God.

Jesus references the tiny mustard seed—the tiniest of seeds—that eventually grows many times its size. The kingdom of God started small, but has grown exponentially to reach all over the globe. With the Holy Spirit’s help, people from every tribe, tongue, nation, and people group will hear and respond to the gospel.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that they have a part to play in the kingdom of God. Their faith in God and Christ-like behavior can help draw others to Jesus, who will hopefully receive salvation.

Memory Verse: “Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”
Matthew 13:12 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Mark 4:30-32; Acts 2:42-47



Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“Whoever has (Put out hands like you’re holding something)

Will be given more, (Pretend to be given so much it’s too heavy to carry)

And they will have an abundance, (Pretend to hold a big load with your arms)

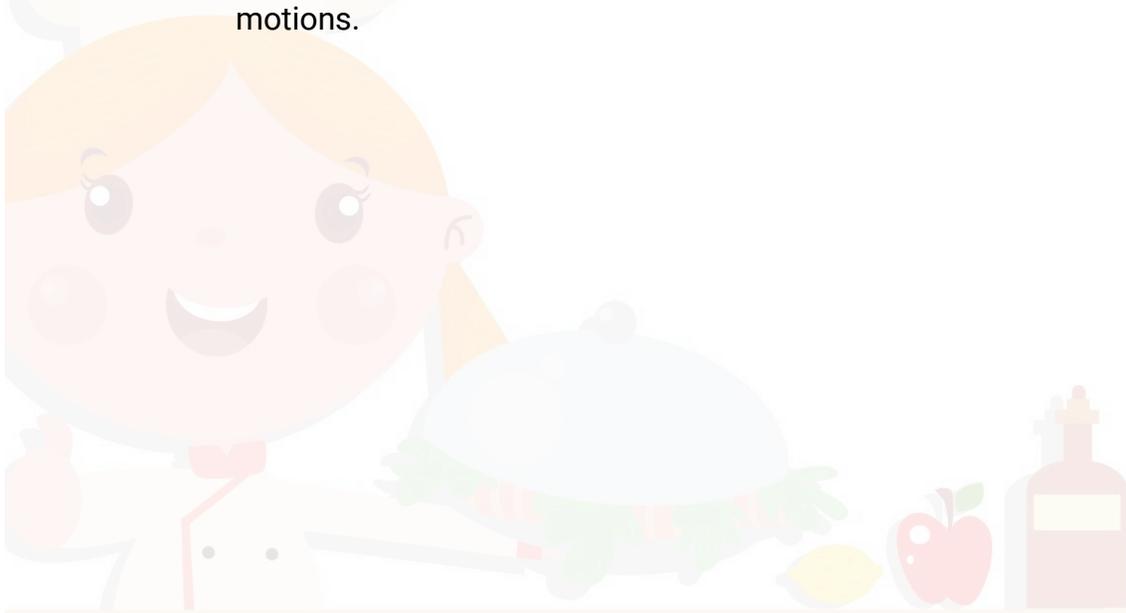
Whoever does not have, (Shake head and finger “no”)

Even what they have (Put out hands like you’re holding something)

Will be taken from them.” (Pretend to take something away from someone else)

Matthew 13:12 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, two)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

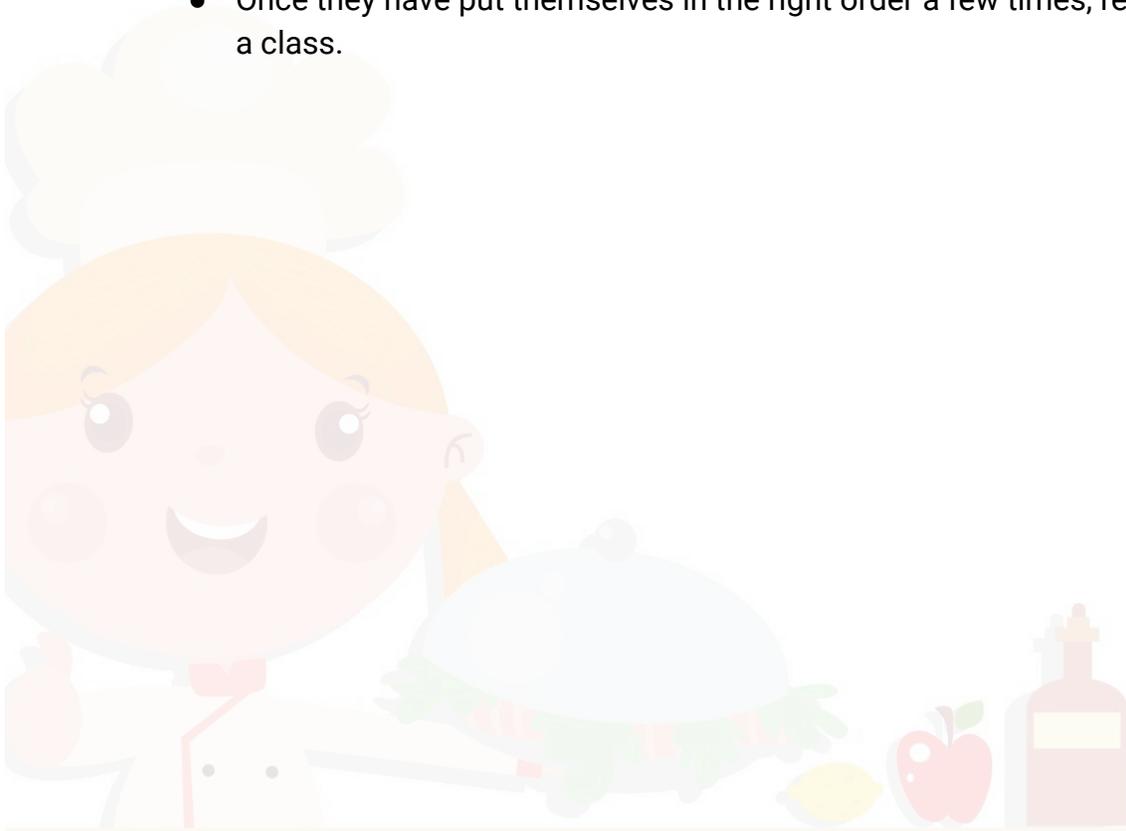
Order Up!

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: 8"x11" paper, marker, masking tape, stopwatch

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verse (a few words at a time) onto pieces of paper (large enough to be seen from a distance).
- When the children arrive, have them each take a piece of paper and tape it to their shirt.
- Explain that they will be putting themselves in the right order to form the memory verse. When you say "go" they will need to figure out who goes where and form one line. You will time their attempt.
- Do this a few times and see if they can beat their previous time.
- Once they have put themselves in the right order a few times, recite the verse as a class.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Lesson 4 Recipe:

Pretzel Bites with Mustard Dip

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Medium saucepan; Slotted spoon or mesh spider skimmer; mixing bowl; 6 paper bowls; Plastic spoons; Paper Plates; Recipe ingredients (see below); single Mustard seed

For Pretzel Bites: 2, 8oz cans of refrigerated biscuits; 4 Tbsp Baking Soda; 1 Egg; Sea Salt/Coarse Salt

For Mustard Dip: 2 cups mayonnaise; ½ cup honey; 4 Tbsp yellow mustard; 4 Tbsp dijon mustard; 1 cup brown sugar; 4 Tbsp lemon juice

Instructions:

- The night before the lesson, separate the biscuits and roll each into a log that is about ½ -inch in diameter.
- Cut each snake shape into 1-inch pieces.
- Boil water in a medium saucepan and add 4 Tbsp of baking soda to the water. When it has come to a rolling boil, place the biscuit dough into the saucepan.
- Let the dough boil for 15 seconds on each side and then remove them to a cookie sheet using the slotted spoon or mesh spider skimmer.
- Beat the egg in a small bowl.
- Once all of the dough bites are on the cookie sheet, brush them with the egg and sprinkle with sea salt.
- Bake for 15 minutes at 400 degrees.
- Let cool and place in an airtight container.
- During the lesson, allow volunteers to add the mustard dip ingredients to the mixing bowl.
- Allow the kids to take turns mixing the dip with a plastic spoon after each ingredient is placed into the bowl.
- When the mustard dip is well mixed, give each child a paper plate, two to three pretzel bites, and a dollop of mustard dip. When everyone has a plate and pretzel bites, they can eat and enjoy their creation. You may choose to send the snacks home with kids in zip top baggies.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? [(Allow answers.) Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite sized" stories that

Jesus used to teach his disciples and followers big lessons about God and His kingdom. Today we made mustard dip for our yummy pretzel bites! .

Some people love mustard and some don't, but did you know that mustard comes from a seed? Yes, it's true! Not only is mustard a seed, but it is really small. This is what a mustard seed looks like. [Show the class a real mustard seed and pass it around.] How big do you think a mustard tree is? [allow for answers] Think about that while we eat our snack.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the nature of seeds, and how something that starts very small can grow into something much larger. Ask the kids to think about ways humans and animals use plants, such as for food or shelter.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made mustard dip and we ate them with pretzel bites. Before we made our snack, I asked you whether or not you thought the mustard seed tree was big or small. What do you think? (allow for answers) Well, let's take a look at a mustard tree. (from snack ingredients). That looks pretty big to me. So, this tiny mustard seed grew to be this great big tree that provides shade and protection for animals and food for us. Let's read about what God says about a mustard seed in our Bible passage.

READ: Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Mark 4:30-32

LEADER: Jesus' parables usually start with an everyday object the people would have been familiar with. In this case, a mustard seed. The mustard seed is small, it can grow into a large, bushy tree. Then, many animals use it for shelter.

LEADER: Jesus often used seeds as the object of his parables. Back then, many people were farmers, and most people would have been familiar with how farming worked; They likely all had some experience planting and watching crops mature.. Jesus asked, "What is the Kingdom of God like?" The answer He gave was a mustard seed..

LEADER: Most seeds are pretty small, but the mustard seed is small even compared to other seeds. That doesn't stop it from growing into a large, bushy tree. In a similar way, the kingdom of God started very small, with just Jesus and his closest disciples. But as they Holy Spirit worked through them, the church grew and began to spread around the world!

When those who love Jesus and have faith in God come together, the Holy Spirit uses them to grow God's kingdom. Each of us can do great things when we have faith in God.

God's kingdom can grow to hold everyone who has faith. God will not turn away anyone who believes Jesus died on the cross for our sin and rose again. When you first believe in Jesus, your faith might be small, but as you read the Bible, pray and spend time with God, your faith begins to mature.

READ: And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

LEADER: An important part of our faith walk and building God's kingdom is to fellowship with other believers. What does *fellowship* mean? [allow for answers] It means spending quality time with others, really getting to know them, and glorifying God together with them. That's what this passage in Acts is all about! The early church spent time together, worshiped together, and broke bread together. What does it mean to "break bread"? [Allow responses.] It means eating together!

Food brings people together. We broke bread with each other today when we ate our pretzel bites and mustard dip! Our bread was pretzel bites, but it was still time to talk, laugh and get to know each other. That's important for building God's kingdom.

Early Christians came together to worship, pray and eat together in order to help each other stay faithful and close to God. They did all of the things Jesus did when he was alive—they were selling their possessions, giving to the needy, going to temple together, and living generously. And what was the result? [Allow responses.] "The Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved."

We can all be a part to build the kingdom of God and mature our faith. What are some ways that we can help to build God's kingdom? [Allow responses.] Great ideas! Let's talk more about those ideas in our discussion time.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- How is the mustard seed like God's Kingdom?
- Who is welcome in God's kingdom?
- How do we help to grow God's kingdom?
- How do we grow in our faith?
- Why is it important to fellowship with other believers?

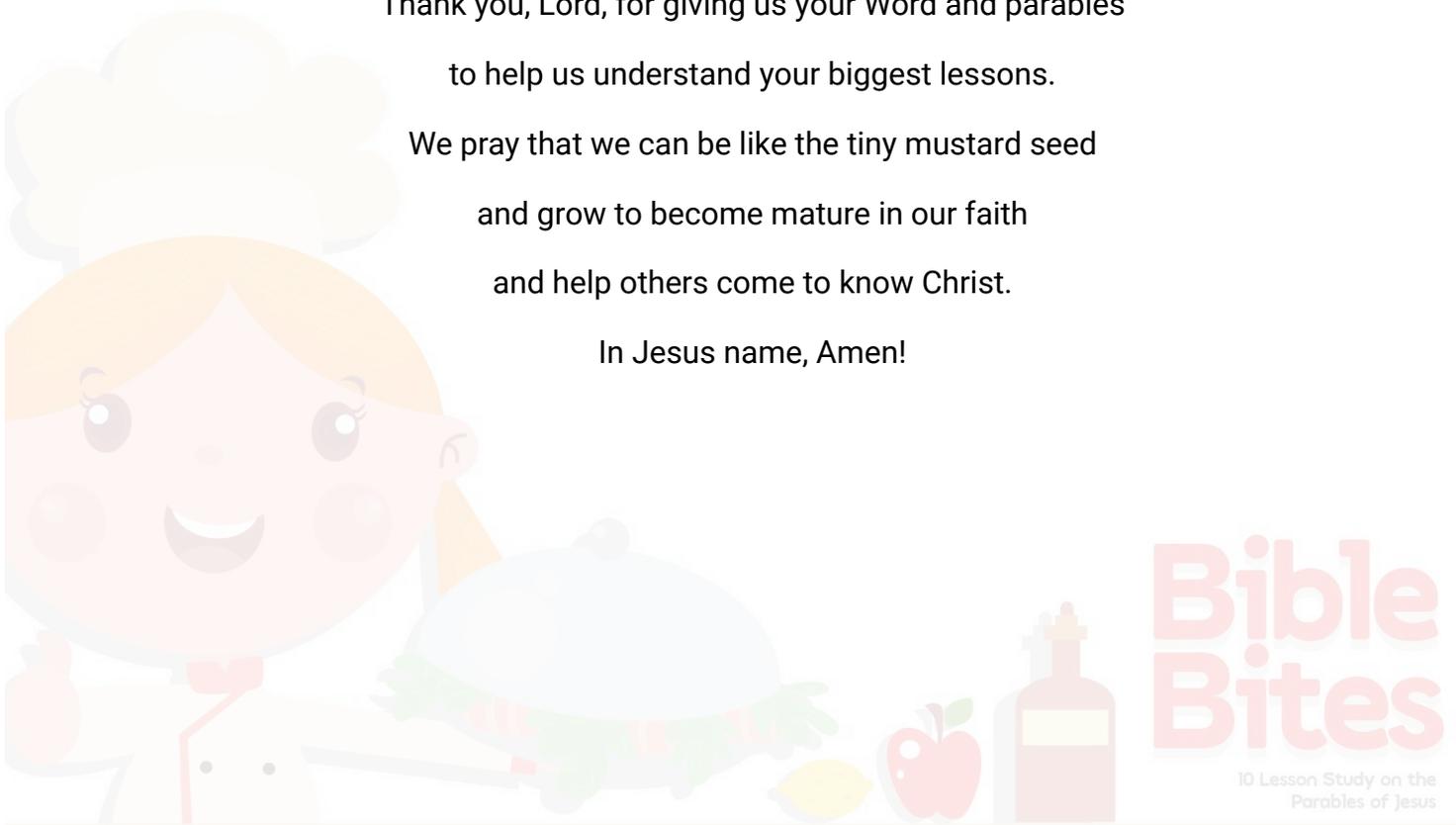
Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord, for giving us your Word and parables
to help us understand your biggest lessons.

We pray that we can be like the tiny mustard seed
and grow to become mature in our faith
and help others come to know Christ.

In Jesus name, Amen!



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Seed for thought! Today we talked about the Parable of the Mustard Seed. If you grew up in church, you probably know this parable better than all the rest. But, its truth still rings true, even in today's world. The children learned that we all play a part in building God's kingdom, even when we are small. We also discussed maturing our faith and allowing it to grow like the mustard seed—from tiny seed to big tree. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Mark 4:30-34 and see how it applies to your life.

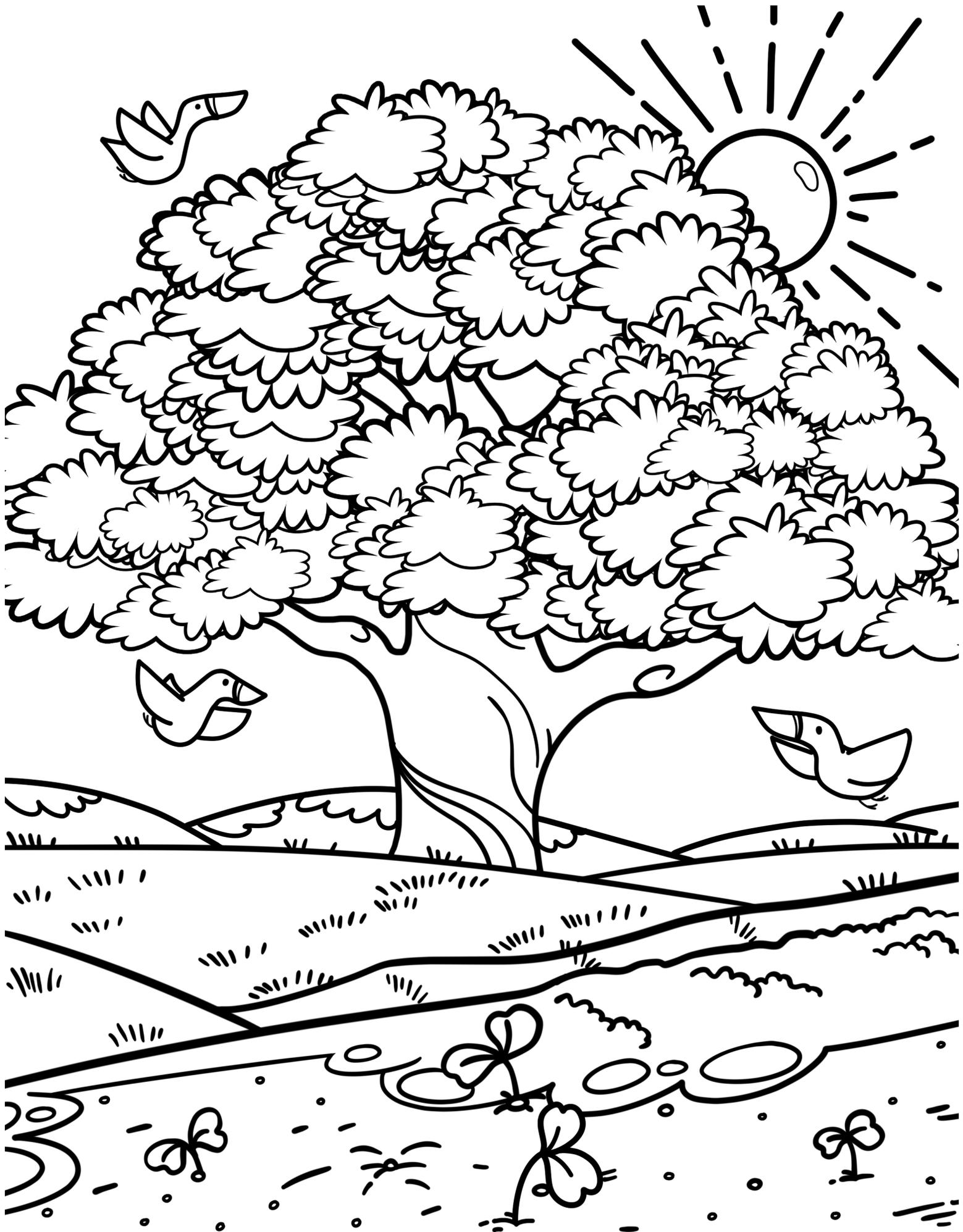
This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - What is the smallest seed?
 - What does the mustard seed become?
 - How do we help to grow God's kingdom?
 - How do we mature our faith?
- When you cut vegetables and/or point out the tiny seeds inside. If you're really ambitious, you can even plant these seeds and watch them grow.
- Talk about other seeds that eventually become plants/crops that give us food.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-33)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



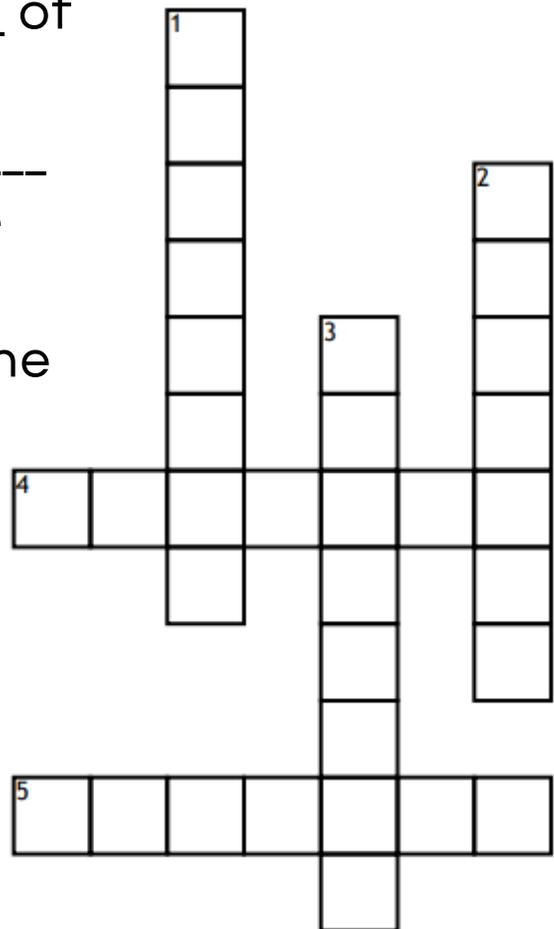
Directions: Let's solve the crossword puzzle.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-33)

Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Down

1. Mustard seed is the _____ of all seeds on earth.
2. What shall we say the _____ of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?
3. with such big _____ that the birds can perch in its shade.



Across

4. It is like a _____ seed
5. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the _____ of all garden plants

Directions: Let's solve the crossword puzzle.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Mark 4:30-33)

Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."

Down

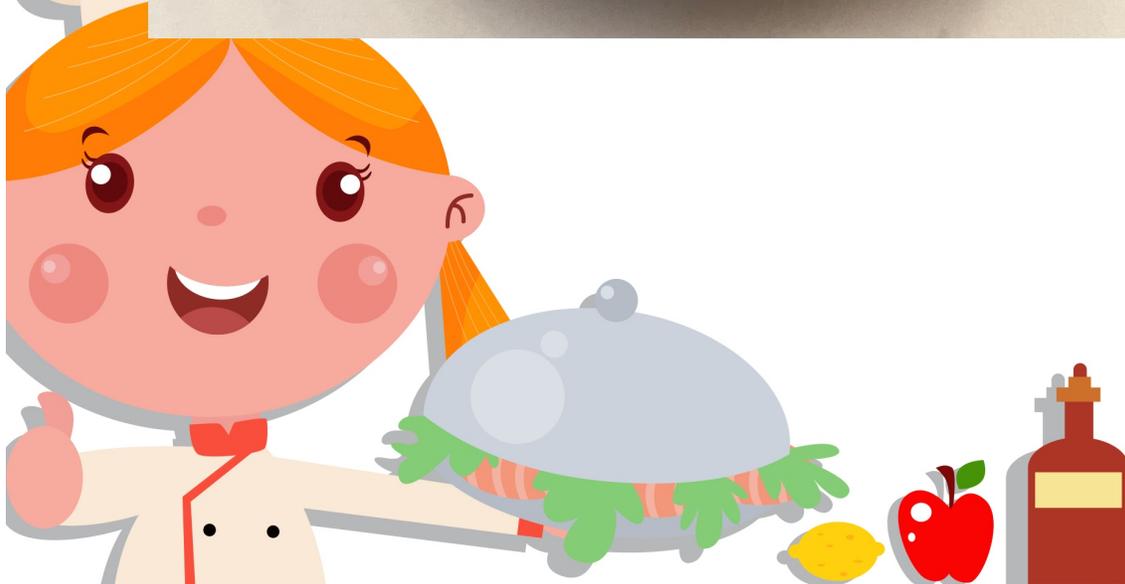
- Mustard seed is the _____ of all seeds on earth.
- What shall we say the _____ of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?
- with such big _____ that the birds can perch in its shade.



Across

- It is like a _____ seed
- Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the _____ of all garden plants

Lesson 5: The Hidden Treasure & the Pearl Buried Treasure Pudding



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

“Buried Treasure” Matthew 13:44-46

Summary: Jesus used the Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl to explain that there’s nothing more valuable than the Kingdom of God, and the sacrifices we make to be a part of His kingdom are worth it.

Jesus told two stories in this parable. Both of the main characters give up everything for the treasure they find. Our treasure is life with Jesus in the Kingdom of Heaven. But because we couldn’t afford such a treasure, Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice so that we receive it freely. Following Jesus may require us to sacrifice some earthly goals or dreams, but the ultimate treasure makes it well worth the price.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that their relationship with Jesus is the most important thing because it is what connects them to God. While we might feel like giving up earthly things is a sacrifice sometimes, we must remember that Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice—his life—so that we could have salvation.

Memory Verse: “This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” Matthew 13:13 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Matthew 13:44-46; Matthew 4:18-20; Psalm 19:7-11



Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

"This is why I speak to them (Tap your mouth with your hand and then place hand flat in front of you; then point to everyone around the room)

In parables, (Open your hands like you're opening a book)

Because seeing, (Make your hands into binoculars)

They do not see, (Shake head "no" and cover eyes with hand)

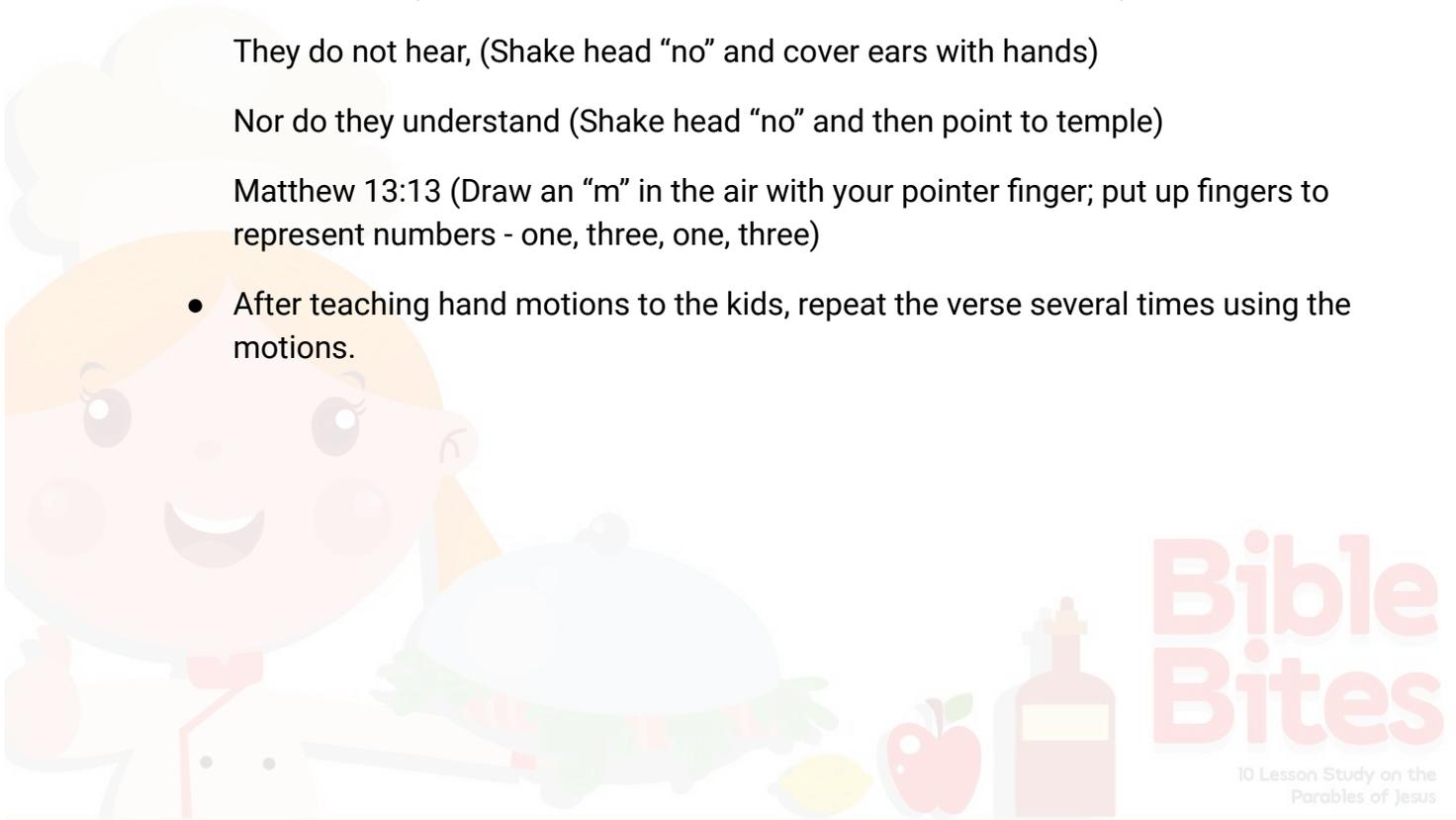
And hearing (Cup your hand around your ear like you're listening)

They do not hear, (Shake head "no" and cover ears with hands)

Nor do they understand (Shake head "no" and then point to temple)

Matthew 13:13 (Draw an "m" in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, three)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

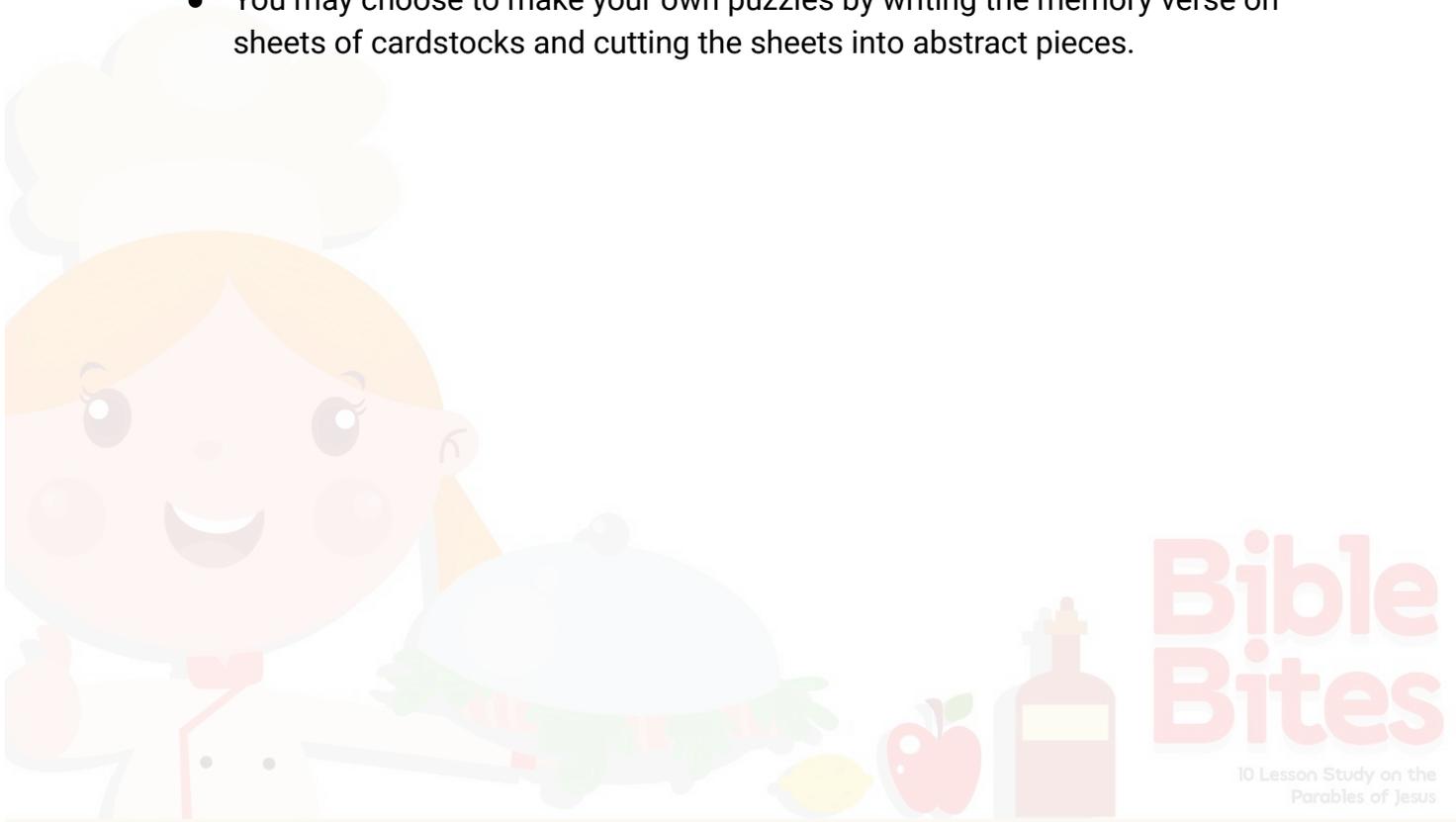
Don't Fall to Pieces!

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: 2 to 3 blank puzzles; permanent marker; plastic sandwich bags or envelopes; cardstock (optional); scissors (optional)

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verse across the pieces of the blank puzzles. Take puzzles apart and place in plastic sandwich bags or envelopes.
- Divide children into two to three teams and present them with a bag or envelope that contains the puzzle pieces.
- When the leader says "go," children will work together to put the puzzle together and put the memory verse in the right order.
- The team that puts their puzzle together the fastest gets to read it to the class.
- You may choose to make your own puzzles by writing the memory verse on sheets of cardstocks and cutting the sheets into abstract pieces.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Lesson 5 Recipe:

Buried Treasure Pudding

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Clear plastic cups; Plastic spoons; Plastic sandwich bags; Recipe ingredients (see below)

For Buried Treasure Pudding: Butterscotch pudding mix (one box per five children); Box of graham crackers; Jelly beans; Pull apart licorice candy

Instructions:

- Before the lesson, prepare the butterscotch pudding according to the package directions. You may place a dollop of pudding into each plastic cup, ensuring there is one cup per kid in your group.
- During the lesson, give each child a clear, plastic cup and a spoon. If you did not pre-fill the cups with pudding, distribute the pudding now.
- Give each kid a few jelly beans. Encourage them to bury their jelly beans in their pudding.
- Next, give each child a plastic sandwich bag with two graham crackers inside. Instruct them to use their hands to gently crush the graham crackers while they are still in the bag.
- Invite the kids to sprinkle their crumbs over their pudding to resemble dirt or gravel.
- Give each kid a strand from a pull-apart licorice candy. Demonstrate how to break the strand into smaller pieces and lay them on the pudding treat to create an X where the jelly bean treasure is buried.
- Once the kids finish making their treats, allow them to eat them, encouraging them to dig up the buried jelly beans. You may also choose to set them aside to send home with the kids at the end of the lesson.

LEADER: How many of you remember what parables are? [Allow responses.] That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories that Jesus used to teach important lessons about God and His kingdom. Today we made another treat to help us remember another

parable that Jesus told. Our treat had some little treasures buried inside it, because the parable we are studying is about buried treasure!

What do you think of when you hear *buried treasure*? [Allow responses.] OK, sure. Gold, jewels, money, expensive things. That's what I think of too! What would you do if you found a buried treasure? [Allow responses.] I think I'd probably do whatever I could to make sure I could keep it! Did you know that God's Kingdom is like a buried treasure? We'll learn more about why that is in our Large Group Teaching!



Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the fact that the kids found buried “treasure” in their snacks. Ask if finding treasure is exciting. Make a connection between the treasure of the sweet treats found in the pudding and the treasure we find in Heaven. The treasure we find in the kingdom of Heaven is worth giving up everything, just like the characters in the Bible story.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made “buried treasure.” It was pretty exciting to dig for the treats inside of our pudding. How do you think you would feel if you found a real buried treasure? *[Allow responses.]* If you found treasure like gold, jewels, or money it would probably change your life. Today, we will learn that knowing God and having a relationship with Jesus are the ultimate treasure. Finding this treasure will surely change our lives.

LEADER: In the Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value, Jesus showed that the kingdom of Heaven is priceless. The people in these stories gave up everything for the earthly treasures they found. Jesus wanted those listening to understand that the kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure. It is so valuable that even if we give up everything to get it, we are gaining much more than we give up.

READ: “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:44-46

LEADER: In the first parable, a man finds a treasure hidden in a field. How does he react when he finds this treasure? Did he just take what he could carry and never return to the field where he found this valuable treasure? *[Allow responses.]* No, he sold all he owned in order to buy the field so he could make sure that he got the treasure. He didn’t take any chances.

In the second parable, we read about a merchant. Who knows what a merchant is? A merchant would travel around buying different items to either bring them back to someone important or to sell them for more money. The merchant in this story found a pearl of great value. What did he do when he found this pearl? *[Allow responses.]* He basically quit his job and sold everything he’d collected in order to own the priceless pearl. That’s a pretty extreme reaction. But that is exactly the mindset we should have about being a part of God’s kingdom. We can give up anything for God because his

kingdom, his word and his truth are worth more than any treasure we could find on earth.

Now, let's consider the difference between the man in the field and the merchant. Was the man in the field specifically looking for treasure? [*Allow responses.*] Probably not. The parable doesn't say for sure, but in those days, many people worked in fields doing all kinds of jobs that involved digging, hoing, or plowing dirt. The parable says the man found the treasure, but not that he was searching for it. What about the merchant; was he searching for pearls? [*Allow responses.*] Yes! He was specifically trying to find valuable pearls, and came across one worth more than anything else.

These differences help us understand that God reveals His kingdom to all kinds of people: people who are searching for it, and people who come across it by accident. But in both cases, the reaction is the same: do whatever it takes to get the treasure! In fact, that's what Jesus' disciples did!

READ: While walking by the Sea of Galilee, [Jesus] saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Matthew 4:18-20

LEADER: For a fisherman, a net is basically the most valuable thing you own. It's the only way for you to catch the fish you need to eat and sell for money. Simon and Andrew immediately left their nets to follow Jesus. These men, who had never met Jesus before, knew instinctively that they were in the presence of God and something of great value. They left their professions, their families, and everything they knew to follow Jesus to an immeasurable treasure.

Thousands of years later, we know that Jesus is the son of God and that his words and teachings are worth more than anything. But in the early days of Jesus' ministry, no one knew who he really was. Even so, Simon and Andrew did not hesitate when Jesus called them. They "immediately" left the only job they'd ever known to follow Jesus. In our lives, we may need to walk away from certain things to follow Jesus too. But it's important to know that nothing we could give up will ever be worth as much as knowing and loving Jesus. He is the greatest treasure.

Jesus taught that life wouldn't always be easy for believers. Some people may dislike us because of what we believe. In some parts of the world, Christians give up their families, friends, jobs, and maybe even their lives to follow Jesus. But it's always worth it.

LEADER: We must be careful what we see, what we hear, what we say, what we do, where we go and who we trust. We must look at the decisions we make and the company we keep in order to maintain our obedience to God and his Word. His Word is trustworthy and blameless; worth more than gold.

READ: The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalms 19:7-11

LEADER: God's truth has been true forever, and is worth more than gold. This Psalm helps us to see that God's perfect Word can revive our souls, give us wisdom, and fill our hearts with joy. That sounds pretty great, right? I want my soul to be alive. I want to be wise. And I want to be joyful. But the Word of God is also a set of instructions for how to live. We cannot read God's Word and ignore it if we want to experience the wonderful benefits the Psalmist wrote about. When we love God, the Holy Spirit fills us with His power so that we can hear God's Word and obey Him.

In the world it can be hard to see past the glitter of things that seem like treasure. Some people think having a lot of money, being famous, or doing what you want to do are the most important treasures in life. But all those "treasures" will fade away or leave you feeling empty and alone. Only Jesus is a real treasure. When we have a relationship with Him, no one can take away that treasure.

So, what are some ways you can remember the true treasure?

- Read your Bible and memorize scripture
- Pray when you are making a decision (large or small) and ask for God's guidance
- Find other Christians to hold you accountable when you're struggling
- Share God's wisdom with others
- Enjoy the gifts God has given you

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- What did the people in the parables find?
- How did each character react to finding priceless treasure?
- Who is the ultimate treasure?
- Where can we learn more about God?
- What might you need to give up for Jesus?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord, for giving us your perfect Word.

We pray that you will guide us to seek your treasure.

We pray that we won't be fooled by the glitter and gold of this world,
and that we will give up earthly things and habits to follow you completely.

Thank you, Lord, for sacrificing your son
so that we could have a chance at the treasure in Heaven.

In Jesus name, Amen.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Buried Treasure! Most children love stories about pirates and buried treasure and trunks of jewels and riches. While those stories are great, we talked today about how the ultimate treasure is spending eternity with God in Heaven. We read the Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl and talked about how each character gave up everything in order to be in possession of a priceless treasure. Jesus gave up everything so that we could have the chance to spend eternity with God in Heaven, and sometimes it's necessary for us to give up earthly things and habits in order to be obedient to the God who gave us a chance at salvation. While our treasure in Heaven isn't tangible, like jewels and riches, it is worth more than anything. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Matthew 13:44-46, and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

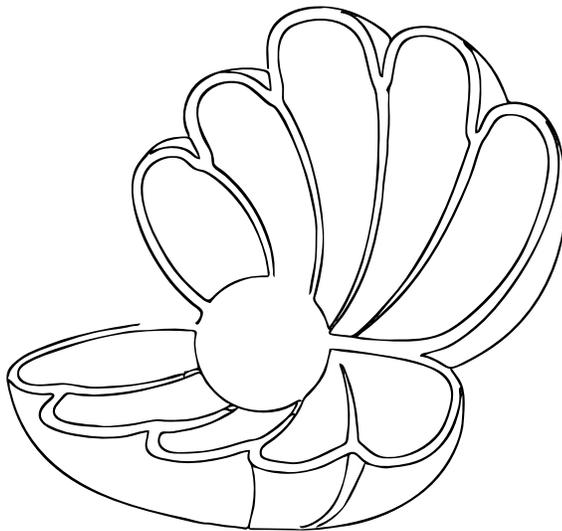
- Ask your child some questions like:
 - What did the characters in the parables find?
 - How did each character react to finding priceless treasure?
 - What is the ultimate treasure?
 - What is worth giving up for the ultimate treasure?
- Place a toy or treat inside a shoebox, and "bury" it somewhere around your home or in your yard. Draw a simple "treasure" map and let your kids try to find the item. After they've found the treat, talk to them about how letting Jesus be Lord of our lives is the best treasure we could ever imagine.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.



The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Matt. 13:44-46)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Unscramble and rewrite the correct words.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl (Matt. 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. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

MKDINGO _____

EVNEHA _____

DEIHDN _____

URATEERS _____

EPRAL _____

ATRNCEM _____

VLUAE _____

GOHTUB _____

Directions: Unscramble and rewrite the correct words.

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MKDINGO

KINGDOM

EVNEHA

HEAVEN

DEIHDN

HIDDEN

URATEERS

TREASURE

EPRAL

PEARL

ATRNCHEM

MERCHANT

VLUAE

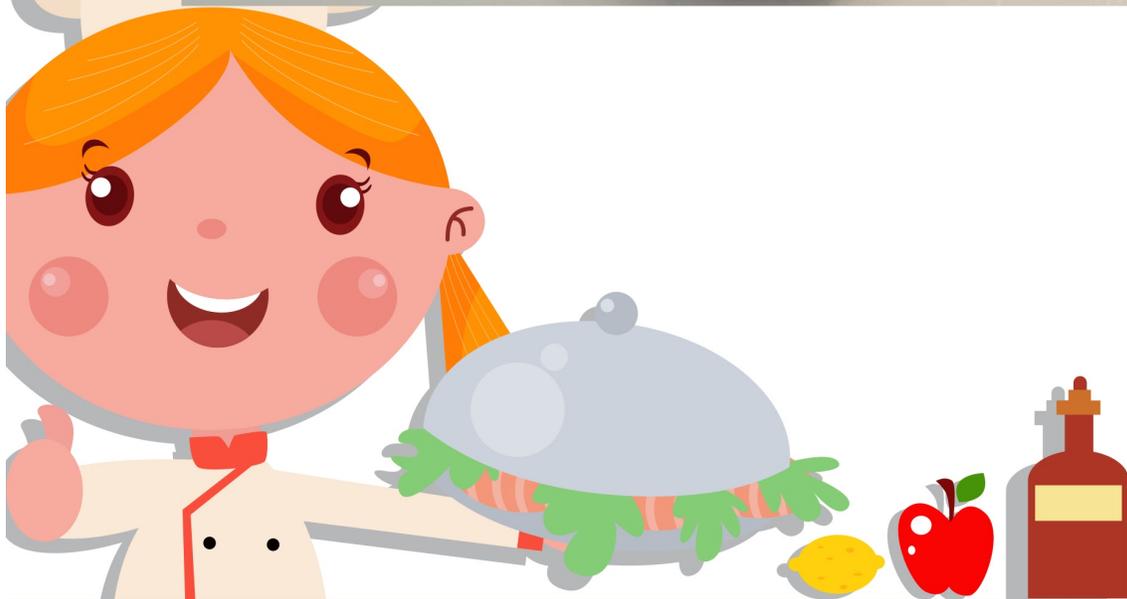
VALUE

GOHTUB

BOUGHT

Lesson 6: The Tenant Farmers

Snack: Sour Grapes



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Tenant Farmers

“Sour Grapes” Matthew 21:33-41

Summary: Jesus uses the Parable of the Tenant Farmers to show the religious leaders that their rejection of him is rejecting God’s plan for His people. This rejection will result in the judgment of those who don’t submit themselves to Jesus.

During this time in Jesus’ life, he was being questioned by the religious leaders of the time. They didn’t like that he was teaching religious truths that were different from what they had always taught the Jewish people. So, instead of defending himself and fighting with the leaders, Jesus told a story (a parable) to show the leaders they were wrong. Even though the Pharisees understood what Jesus was telling them, they didn’t respond in repentance. They were too proud to be corrected. They didn’t want to change their ways, and therefore, they were judged and condemned by God.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that Jesus’ teachings are God’s truth and he is the only way we can have a relationship with God.

Memory Verse: “Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.’”

Matthew 13:14 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Titus 1:16



Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

"Indeed, in their case (Point away from your body and then pretend to pick up a suitcase)

The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, (Draw and "i" in the air with your pointer finger and then open and close your palms like a book)

That says: (Tap your mouth with a flat palm and then lay it flat in front of you)

'You will indeed hear, (Point out in front of you with pointer finger and then cup hand around your ear like you're trying to hear something)

But never understand, (Shake head "no" and then point to temple)

And you will indeed see, (Point out in front of you with pointer finger and then shade your eyes with your hand like you're trying to see something far away)

But never perceive." (Shake head "no" and then point to temple)

Matthew 13:14 (Draw an "m" in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, four)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

Don't Fall to Pieces!

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: 8 envelopes; 8 slips of paper; marker; scotch tape

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verse across 8 small pieces of paper. Place the slips of paper inside the envelopes and secure them with a piece of tape.
- Choose eight children to hold each envelope and have them line up in front of the class.
- One at a time, have the children with envelopes open their envelope and show the class their part of the verse.
- When everyone has revealed their portion, ask the class to put the verse in the right order by having their classmates move around in different places in line.
- Once the verse is in the right order, recite the verse as a class.



Lesson 6 Recipe:

Sour Grapes

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Zip-top bags (sandwich size); 2 mixing bowls; Plastic spoons; Toothpicks; Paper plates, Recipe Ingredients (See below)

Ingredients: 3 cups of green grapes (seedless); 4 Tbsp lime juice; 4 Tbsp lemon juice; 3 Raspberry Jell-O packages (3 oz)

Instructions:

- Before Class, wash and separate the grapes. Dry them with a paper towel and place in a bowl. Mix the lemon and lime juices and pour the mixture over the grapes. Allow the grapes to soak in the liquid overnight. Then, divide the grapes into the zip-top bags (four or five grapes in each bag).
- During Class give each child a plastic bag with grapes, four to five toothpicks, and a paper plate.
- A leader or volunteer will go by each table and pour two tablespoons of the Jell-O powder into each child's zip-top bag. The child will seal the bag closed (a volunteer might need to help) and they will lightly shake the bag to cover the grapes with the powder.
- When the grapes are sufficiently covered in the powder, the child will open the bag and retrieve each grape by sticking it with a toothpick and placing it on their paper plate.
- These can be chilled for the end of class or eaten right away.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! What are we studying right now? *[Allow answers.]* Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories that Jesus used to teach his disciples and followers big, important lessons.

Has anyone ever heard of the phrase "sour grapes?" If someone has "sour grapes" that means they have a bad attitude about something when it doesn't go their way. Like if I lost a basketball game, and said "Basketball is a stupid sport anyway!"

In today's parable, some men did awful things because they wanted to keep a vineyard for themselves! Let's learn more about these men and their sour grapes.

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the fact that we made “sour grapes” and the tenants in the parable have sour grapes about not owning the vineyard. The tenants thought they could control the land and the landowner by killing the landowner’s servants and his son. Help the children make the connection between the tenants and the religious leaders that lived during this time in the Bible. They wanted to control the future of the Jewish people, and they thought by persecuting and killing God’s servants and his son that they would inherit God’s favor. But in reality, all they inherited was God’s judgment and condemnation. In order for us to inherit God’s favor, we must believe in Jesus and follow his teachings.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made “sour grapes.” What did they taste like? They were a little sweet and a lot sour, right? Well, that’s kind of how the religious leaders were at the time that Jesus lived. They worked really hard to try and earn God’s favor by doing all the right things (sweet), but they completely misunderstood God’s plan and thought they were much better than everyone else. (sour). Jesus knew that these leaders were not really honoring God with their lives, and he told a parable that he knew they would understand.

READ: “Hear another parable. There was a master of a house who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it and dug a winepress in it and built a tower and leased it to tenants, and went into another country.

Matthew 21:33

LEADER: Let’s start by making sure we understand all the parts of the parable. Who knows what a vineyard is? [*Allow responses.*] It’s where people grow grapes. Grapes grow on vines, so a vine-yard is like a field or an orchard for grape vines. Who knows what a tenant is? [*Allow responses.*] Good thoughts. A tenant is someone who lives somewhere, helps take care of the place, but doesn’t own it. In modern times, we usually use the word to describe someone who lives in a home, like a house or apartment, that they rent. In this parable, the tenants would be people who are paid to take care of the vineyard while the master is gone. They don’t own the vineyard, but they are responsible for it.

In this parable, who do you think the vineyard represents? That’s kind of a tricky question! To help us answer it, let’s start by figuring out who the master of the vineyard is. Any guesses? [*Allow responses.*] Good guess! The master of the vineyard represents God the Father. He is the king of all creation, so in many parables where there is a ruler

or a governor or a master, it represents God. So who might be the vineyard, the people that God “planted” and wants to grow and produce fruit? [Allow responses.] Another great idea. In this parable, the vineyard represents Israel, or, more generally, God’s chosen people.

Lastly, let’s figure out who the tenants are. Who did God leave in charge of caring for His people to help them grow and produce fruit? [Allow responses.] I think someone said it! It’s the religious leaders, like the priests and the pharisees. Let’s continue with the parable:

READ: When the season for fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit. And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another.

Matthew 21:34-35

LEADER: Uh oh! Sounds like the tenants aren’t doing the right thing. Who do you think the servants in the parable represent? [Allow responses.] Yep! The servants are like the prophets God sent to warn His people. When Israel was living in sin throughout the Old Testament, God consistently sent messengers, called prophets, to tell everyone to turn back to God. But the kings, priests, and other leaders of Israel at the time ignored the prophets, often mistreating and even killing them for speaking the truth. Let’s see what happens next:

READ: Again he sent other servants, more than the first. And they did the same to them. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’ And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

Matthew 21:36-39

LEADER: Wow! So if the owner of the vineyard is God the Father, who is the vineyard owner’s son? [Allow responses.] Exactly! Jesus is God’s Son! Jesus was explaining that the religious leaders, who hated Him and wanted to kill Him, that they were again mistreating and rejecting the One God had sent, just like the Old Testament leaders had mistreated and rejected the prophets. But Jesus did not explain the ending of the parable, instead asking the leaders to figure out the ending for themselves.

READ: When, therefore, the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable death and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons.”

Matthew 21:39-41

LEADER: Everyone hearing such a story can easily tell that the tenants were doing the wrong thing, but many people in Israel at that time thought the Pharisees were doing the right thing! They seemed so obedient and holy, surely they were God's favorite people... right? Well, God did love them, of course. God loves everyone, no matter how much they sin or how little they obey. But sin always has consequences, and those who ignore God will not live with Him forever.

READ: Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes"? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits. And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and when it falls on anyone, it will crush him."

Matthew 21:42-44

LEADER: A cornerstone was important in those days, as it would set the shape of the entire building's foundation. If the cornerstone wasn't perfect, the whole building would end up unstable and badly built. Who do you think Jesus is talking about when he says the stone that the builders rejected? He is talking about Himself. The religious leaders of the time rejected him, but He—His teaching, His life, His death, and His resurrection—became the foundation of God's kingdom.

READ: When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he was speaking about them. And although they were seeking to arrest him, they feared the crowds, because they held him to be a prophet.

Matthew 21:45-46

LEADER: This passage tells us that the religious leaders—the chief priests and the Pharisees—knew that Jesus was talking about them and that they were worried. They wanted to get rid of Jesus, but they were worried that the crowd around him would rise up against them if arrested Jesus. Even though they didn't believe he was the son of God, they were still nervous about what those who did believe in Him would do. These leaders wanted to seem godly, but did not want to listen to God's Son.

READ: "They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."

Titus 1:16

LEADER: Even after Jesus rose again and returned to heaven, religious leaders in some places were still causing trouble for Christians. It's important for us to stay aware. Anyone who says the right things about God, but shows by their actions they don't really believe in Jesus, is like the sour grapes we made. Jesus taught that everyone who

connects with Him and lives with Him would have a life that shows His goodness and love.

READ: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:1-5

LEADER: We must go through Jesus in order to be connected to God. If we are connected to Jesus, our lives will change. If our lives never change to be more like Jesus, it suggests that we are not really living with Jesus.

We must remember that Jesus' teachings are the truth, and everyone who puts their faith in Jesus will experience God's love and forgiveness. True believers are transformed to live for God.



Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- Who did the landowner/master of the house represent?
- Who did the vineyard represent?
- Who did the tenants represent?
- Who did the landowner's son represent?
- How can we be a part of God's kingdom and experience God's love and forgiveness?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

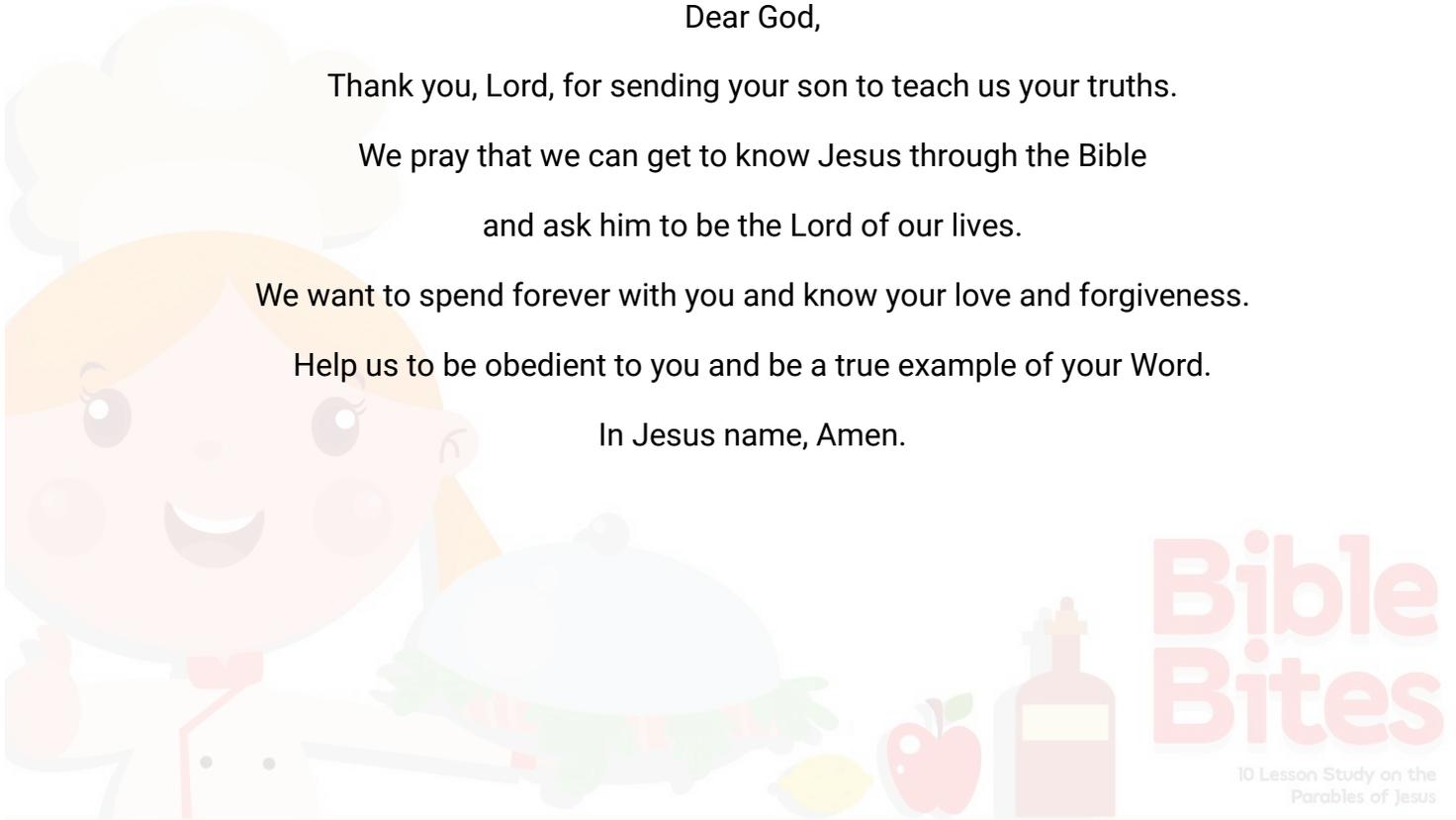
Thank you, Lord, for sending your son to teach us your truths.

We pray that we can get to know Jesus through the Bible
and ask him to be the Lord of our lives.

We want to spend forever with you and know your love and forgiveness.

Help us to be obedient to you and be a true example of your Word.

In Jesus name, Amen.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Sour Grapes! We can all have sour grapes sometimes. We might not think someone's good fortune is fair to us. In today's Bible story we talked about the Parable of the Tenant Farmers. These men were tasked with taking care of the landowner's vineyard and land. But because of their jealousy for his possessions and status, they decided to try to steal the landowner's profits by killing his servants and then his son. But instead of inheriting the fruit that the land produced and land they attempted to steal, all they received was God's judgment and condemnation. Jesus used this parable to warn the religious leaders of the time about their ungodly ways, and to teach his disciples and followers that obedience to God's truth is important to the Christian life. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Matthew 21:33-41, and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - Who did the landowner/master of the house hire to take care of his vineyard?
 - What happened when the landowner sent his servants to retrieve the fruit from the vineyard?
 - How did the tenant farmer treat the landowner's son?
 - Who was Jesus really talking about when he told this parable?
- Wash and eat some grapes with your child and talk about how grapes growing on the vine were a common occurrence in Biblical times. Freeze them for a special treat!
- Help your child make a list of things your child is thankful for and post it on the fridge. Remind your child of the list when they are tempted to have "sour grapes."

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



BIBLE BITES

The Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Matt. 21:33-41)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Matt. 21:33-41)

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

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

WORD BANK

LANDOWNER

PLANTED

FARMER

VINEYARD

RENTED

TENANT

Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Matt. 21:33-41)

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

L A N D O W N E R Z J V D E M I L R H P
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WORD BANK

LANDOWNER

PLANTED

FARMER

VINEYARD

RENTED

TENANT

Lesson 7: The Lost Sheep

Snack: Graham Cracker Sheep



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

“God Loves Ewe” Luke 15:3-7

Summary: Jesus tells the Parable of the Lost Sheep to his followers to let them know that God loves all people equally. Jesus is called the “good shepherd” because, like the shepherd in the parable, he lays down his life to save the sheep. God loved us so much that he sent the “good shepherd”—his only son—to die on the cross so that we could have everlasting life.

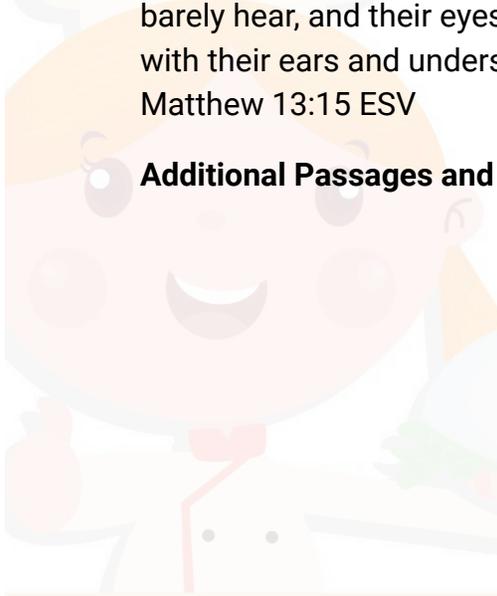
The people and religious leaders of the time thought that God only cared for Jewish people. The Hebrews were thought to be God’s chosen people. When Jesus arrived he told them that they were wrong. God didn’t just want to save his “chosen” people. He wanted to save all of mankind—including the Gentiles. This made many of the religious leaders—called Pharisees—angry because they didn’t want things to change. To make his point, Jesus tells the Parable of the Lost Sheep. The shepherd in the story leaves 99 sheep to find the one that got away. He is illustrating that God rejoices when anyone comes to know him, even if they were not born a Hebrew.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that God loves us all equally, and will come looking for us when we stray away from him. They will also come to understand that God loved us so much that he sent his only son to die so that we could be forgiven of our sinful nature and live with Him in Heaven forever.

Memory Verse: “For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.”

Matthew 13:15 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Luke 15:3-7; John 3:16; John 10:11; John 10:14-15



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“For this people's heart has grown dull, (Make a heart with your hands and then let your hands fall to your sides)

and with their ears they can barely hear, (Cup your hand around your ear and then lean over like you're straining to hear something)

and their eyes they have closed (Put your hands in front of your eyes)

lest they should see with their eyes (Remove hands from eyes)

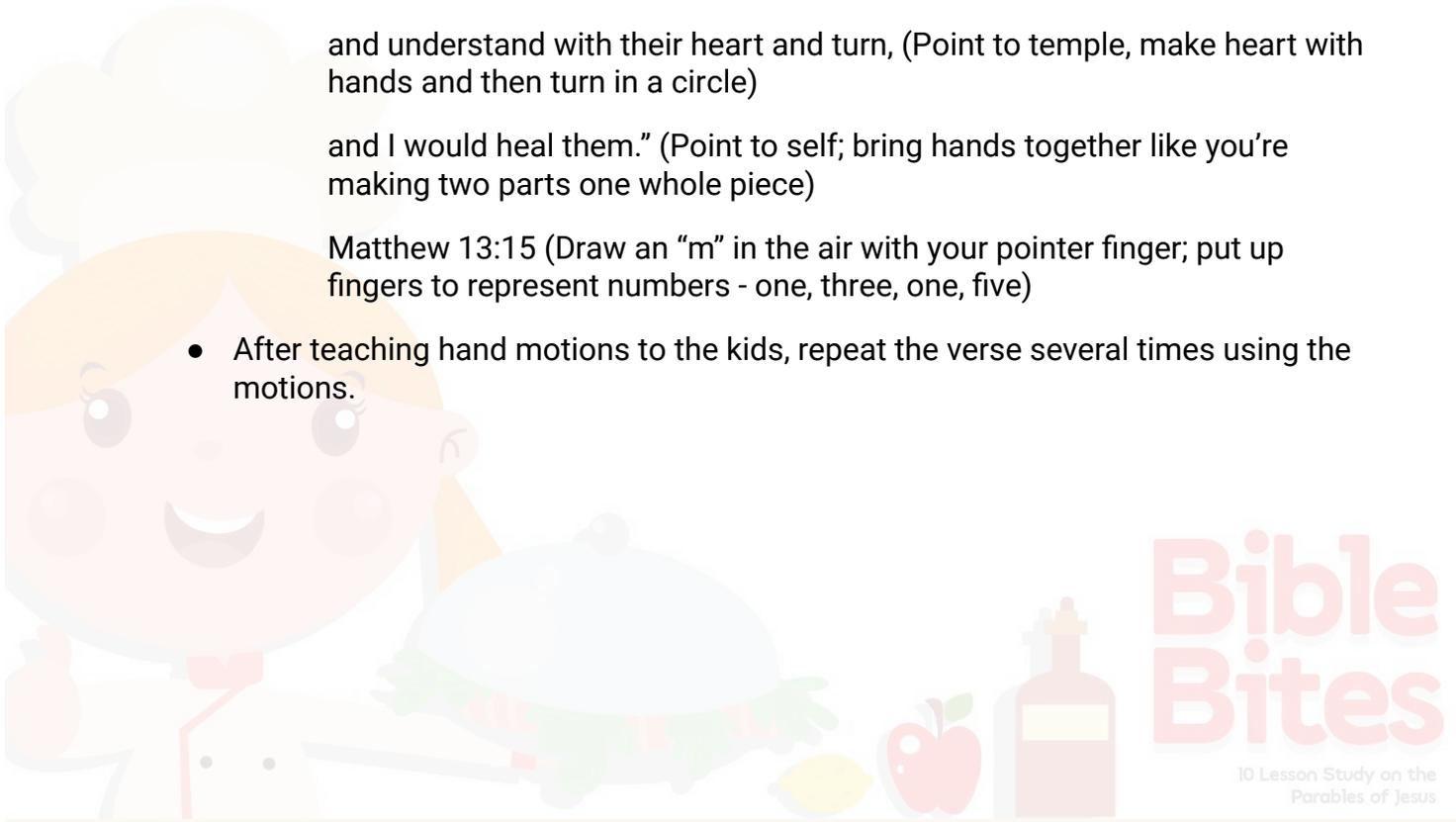
and hear with their ears (Cup hands around both ears)

and understand with their heart and turn, (Point to temple, make heart with hands and then turn in a circle)

and I would heal them.” (Point to self; bring hands together like you're making two parts one whole piece)

Matthew 13:15 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, five)

- After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

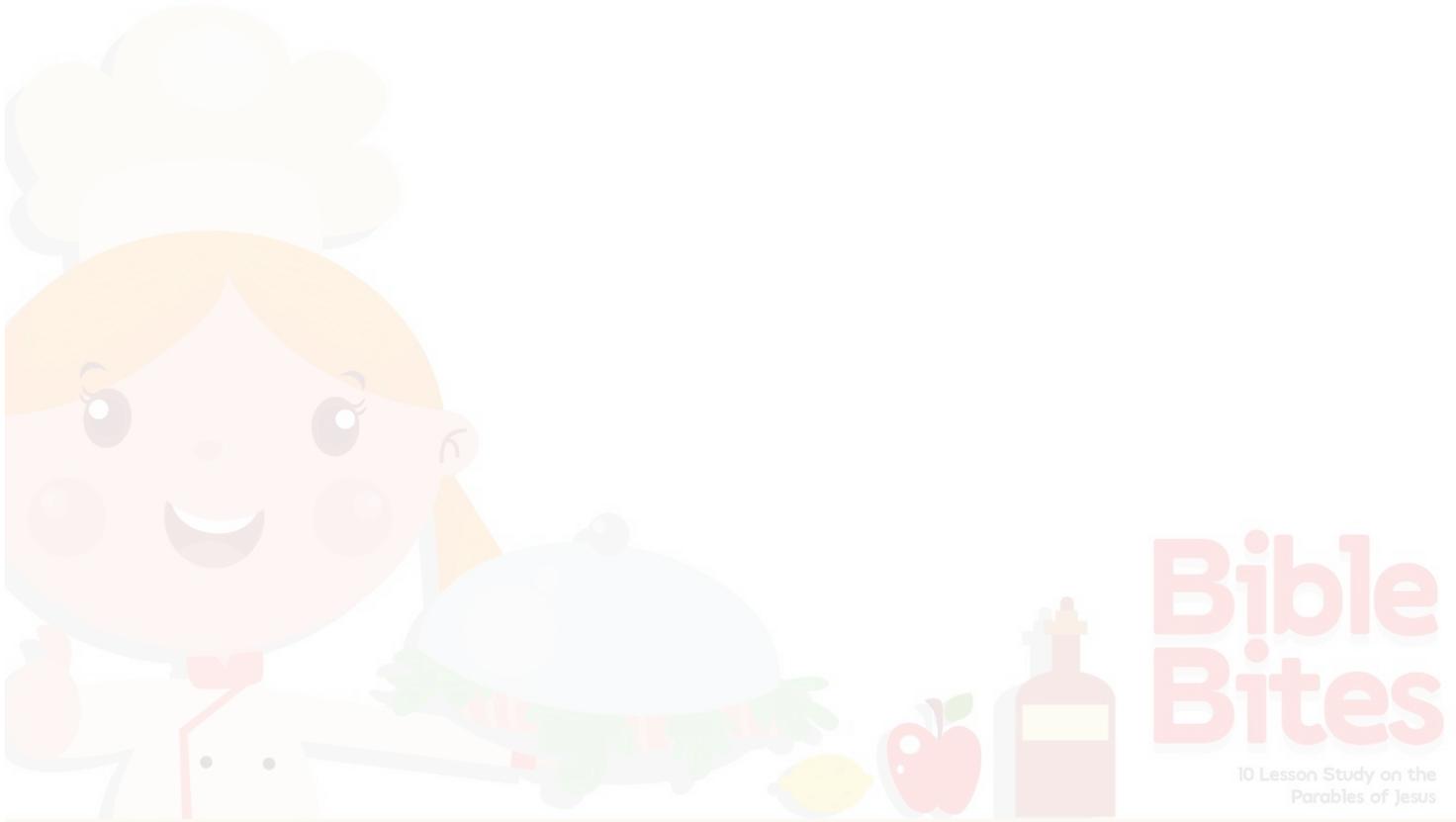
Use Your Noodle

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: 2 pool noodles; permanent marker; scissors/straight knife; 2 Bibles

Instructions:

- Before class, write the Bible verse, one word at a time, down the pool noodle with a permanent marker. Do this on both pool noodles. Cut in between each word with scissors or a straight knife to create slices.
- Place the slices in two piles. Mix them up to make the activity a little more challenging.
- Divide the children into two groups—one behind each pool noodle pile.
- Set a timer for one minute, and have the children put the noodle slices into the correct order to create the Bible verse.
- You can write the Bible verse call numbers on the board, or you can say it out loud for them to hear. Children may use the Bibles for reference.
- The team that puts their verse together the fastest wins!



Lesson 7 Recipe:

Graham Cracker Sheep

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Paper bowls; Plastic knives; Paper plates; quart-sized zip-top bags; Recipe ingredients (see below)

Ingredients: Graham crackers; White frosting; Mini marshmallows; Mini chocolate sandwich cookies; Candy googly eyes

Instructions:

- Before class, place two graham cracker halves on a paper plate for each child. Place a dollop of white frosting in a paper bowl for each child.
- During class, give each child a paper plate with graham crackers, a bowl of frosting, a plastic knife, a handful of mini marshmallows, two mini chocolate sandwich cookies, and four candy googly eyes.
- Help the kids spread their frosting over the surface of both graham cracker halves.
- Place each cookie half at the bottom of both graham cracker halves.
- Cover the rest of the exposed frosting with mini marshmallows
- Use the plastic knife to make two dots of frosting on both chocolate sandwich cookie halves. Then place the googly eyes on each dot of frosting.
- Eat and enjoy your graham cracker sheep, or place them in zip top bags for kids to take home and eat later.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? (allow for answers) Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories that Jesus told to teach his disciples and followers big important lessons. Our sweet treat today will help us remember another parable that Jesus told.

Can anyone tell me what a shepherd is? [*Allow responses.*] Exactly! A shepherd takes care of sheep. A shepherd watches over his flock to make sure they are safe. It was a pretty common job during Biblical times. As you may have guessed, our parable today has to do with sheep and shepherds. Let's learn more together.

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the idea that God loves everyone equally and wants us all to come to know Him, love Him, and worship Him. We can never stray far enough away from God that He won't come looking for us. Help children make the connection between the lost sheep in the parable and feeling distant from God. Help them to understand that God rejoices when we commit and recommit ourselves to Him.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made graham cracker sheep! Jesus told a story called the Parable of the Lost Sheep. He wanted his followers to know that God loved each and every one of them, and wanted to have a personal relationship with them. He also wanted them to know that God would always come looking for them, even those who seemed hopelessly lost in sin. Let's read the parable and see if we can see how Jesus made the connection between a lost sheep and our spiritual lives.

READ: So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?"

Luke 15:3-4

LEADER: In the Parable of the Lost Sheep, Jesus once again used a situation that his followers would be familiar with: shepherds caring for sheep. Shepherd would have been a common job and lifestyle for many of those listening to Jesus' words. Remember that Jesus used parables to make difficult ideas easier to understand.

Jesus posed a question to those who were listening. If a shepherd had 100 sheep, 99 of them safe, and one lost, what would the shepherd do? The safe sheep don't need the shepherd at that moment as much as the lost one, do they? So the shepherd leaves the safe sheep where they are safe, and goes to find the lost one.

Who do you think he is really talking about? [*Allow responses.*] He was making a connection between us and God. God does not want to lose even one person to sin. He wants us to all be a member of his "flock" and live with Him forever. That is why he sent his Son to die for our sins.

READ: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

John 3:16

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

LEADER: The lost sheep represents a sinner who is far away from God. God, like the shepherd, doesn't wait around hoping sinners will find their way to him; no, God sent Jesus, the Good Shepherd, to rescue lost sinners! God never looks at the number of people saved and says, "eh, what's a single lost person. I've saved 99 others." No! God sent Jesus to make the only way for us to be saved. Jesus calls us. He seeks us out. He draws us close to Him and saves us. Then, he rejoices just like Jesus said the shepherd rejoices when he finds his lost sheep.

READ: And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Luke 15:5-7

LEADER: You know, the Bible has quite a few places where God or Jesus is compared to a shepherd, and people are compared to sheep. Lets check out a few others.

READ: I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

John 10:14-15

LEADER: God created every one of us, and we are all valuable and important to him; he loves us all. When Jesus called himself the "good shepherd" and said that he knows "his own" like his father knows him, He is explaining that he and his Heavenly Father know each one of us, and God values us. He wants us to be saved so we can live forever with him.

READ: All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:6

LEADER: In this passage, Isaiah, a prophet living hundreds of years before Jesus was born as a human, wrote about us and how Jesus would save us. Isaiah compared people to sheep who wandered away and got lost in sin. Then Isaiah said that a suffering servant, who we know was Jesus, would have all our sin placed on him. That's exactly what Jesus did! Jesus took on our sin to make the way for us to be reunited with God.

READ: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Psalm 23:1-3

LEADER: In this passage, King David, who lived hundreds of years before Isaiah, and about a thousand years before Jesus, compared the Lord to a shepherd who takes good care of sheep. King David started out as a shepherd boy before God made him a king, so David knew what it meant to be a good shepherd and protect sheep. It's clear that God loves people, and wants to save us from sin so we can be well cared for by Him!

Just as heaven rejoices when a sinner turns away from sin and to Jesus, we should celebrate too! God wants us to play a part in spread the news about Jesus so more and more "sheep" can be found and rescued by Jesus.

What are some ways we can help others come to know Jesus?

- Read the Bible and set a good example
- Invite them to church
- Pray for them
- Show kindness to others, even when they do not show it to us
- Tell others about how Jesus has affected your life

Think about these things as you go about your week and remember that God loves you and will always seek to have a relationship with you. You are his precious child and a valuable part of his flock.



Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- Why did the shepherd leave the 99 sheep to go look for a single lost sheep?
- How does God feel about sinners?
- What happens when Jesus rescues a lost person?
- How did God show his love for mankind?
- How can we help others come to know Jesus?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord, for seeking us out when we wander away from your protection.

We pray that we would find our way back to you each time we wander
and that we help others find their way to you as well.

Help us to focus on you and remember
that you sent your son to die so that we could have eternal life.

We know how much you love us, Lord,
and we pray we can share that love with the world.

In Jesus name, Amen.

The logo for 'Bible Bites' features the words 'Bible' and 'Bites' in a large, bold, pink font. Below the text, there are faint illustrations of a girl with blonde hair, a green turtle, a red apple, and a brown bottle.

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

God Loves Ewe! Today we talked about the Parable of the Lost Sheep and learned how much God loves us. In the parable, the shepherd leaves 99 other sheep to find the one sheep that has gone astray. Every sheep is valuable and loved by the shepherd, and he can't afford to lose even one. God feels the same way about us. He wants us to all become a part of his "flock," and seeks us out when we wander away from Him. Talk to your child about their thoughts about God and his love for them and how they can help others come to know Him as well. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Luke 15:3-7, and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - How many sheep did the shepherd have?
 - Why did he leave the 99 sheep to go look for the one?
 - How does God feel when we have been astray and we come back to Him?
 - How did God show his love for mankind?
- Visit a nearby farm or search for videos about sheep and shepherds so your child can see firsthand how a shepherd lovingly cares for his flock.
- Help your child make a list of people in his/her life he/she can talk to about Jesus. Encourage them to speak to these people or write them a note.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:3-7)

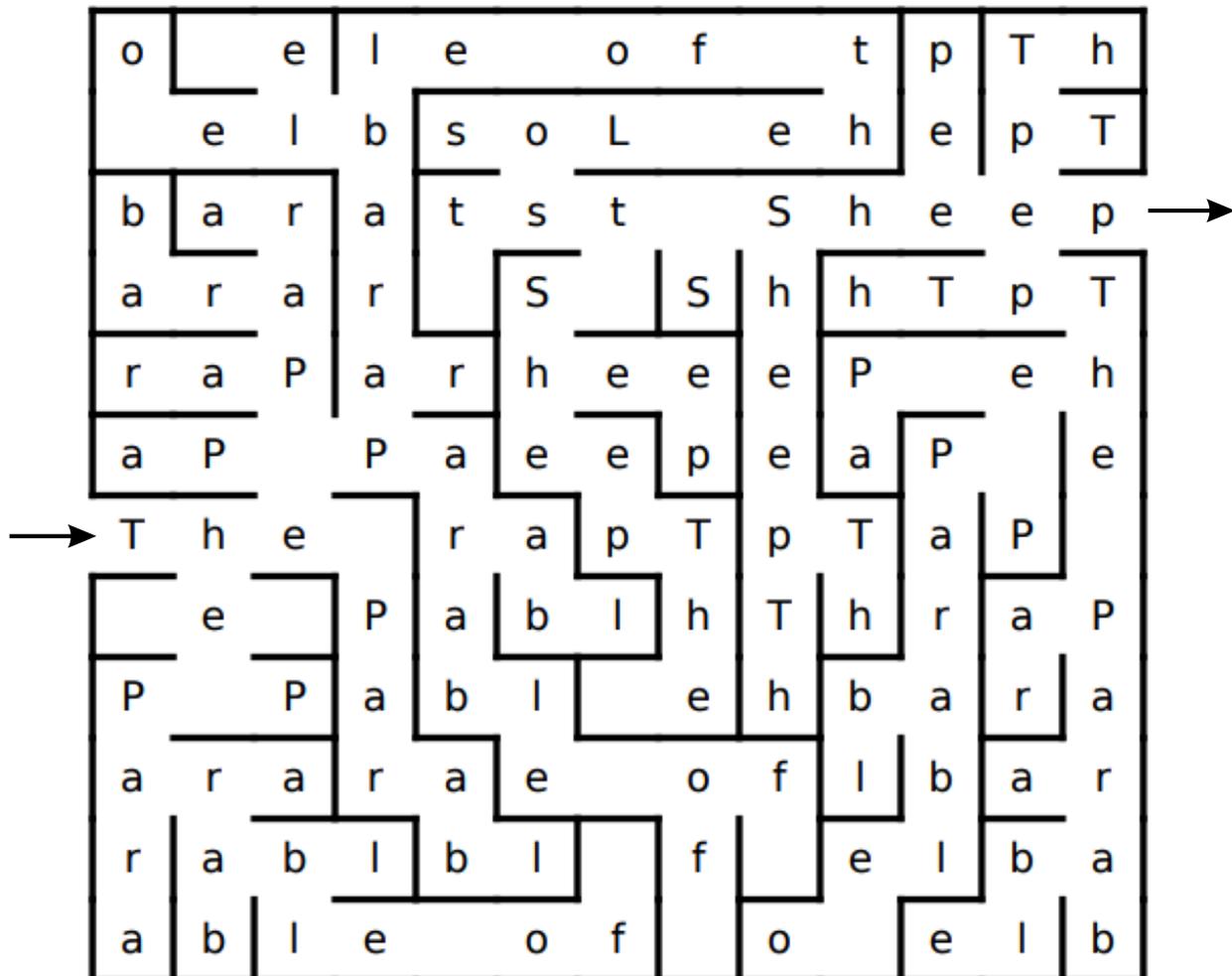
Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Find the words given in the word finder maze.

The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:3-7)

"Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep. I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.'"



Lesson 8: The Barren Fig Tree

Snack: Thumbprint Fig Cookies



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

“Summer is Near” Luke 13:6-9

Summary: There are several reasons that Jesus tells the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree. He wants to let his followers know that even though those who do not produce fruit will be cut out of the kingdom, that there is a period of grace. God won't just leave them to figure out how to be Christ-like. He will come alongside them and help them to become a part of his kingdom. Jesus uses this parable to help explain the idea that God brings unworthy people into His kingdom and makes them worthy, helping them bear fruit as they grow in Jesus.

Jesus also tells this parable to let the people know that doing “good things” isn't enough to get them into Heaven. They must repent and believe in Jesus as their savior. We are only given a short amount of time on this earth, and we must accept the opportunity to follow Jesus when we are given the chance. Some day Jesus will return and the old Heaven and Earth will pass away to form a new Heaven on Earth. When this happens, the only thing that will still be of value is the Word of God.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that God is there for them in every situation. He doesn't expect them to be perfect and holy all of the time. He is there to walk alongside them. It will also help children realize that faith in Jesus and a life deeply rooted in scripture is the only way to Heaven. Good works cannot buy an eternal life.

Memory Verse: “But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.”
Matthew 13:16 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Isaiah 55:6-7; 2 Peter 3:9

Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“But blessed (Touch your forehead and then your heart)

are your eyes, (Point to your eyes)

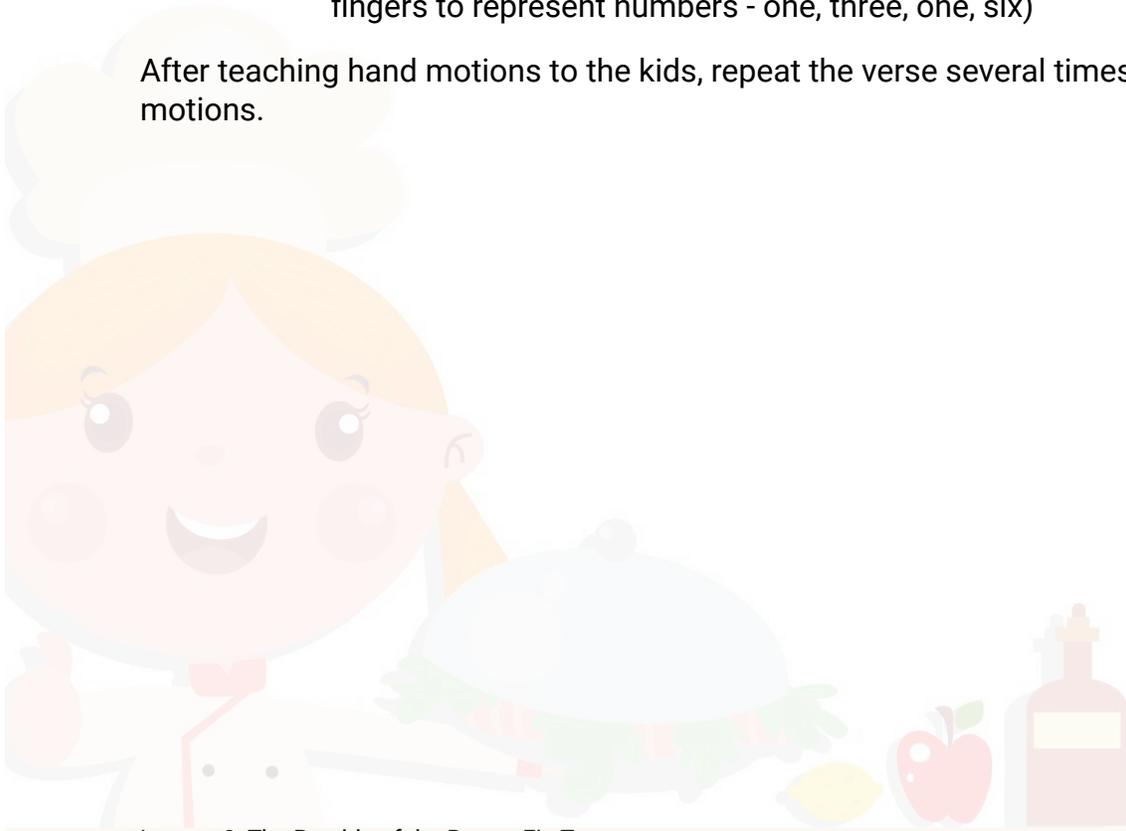
for they see, (Shade your eyes with one hand and look around)

and your ears, (Point to your ears)

for they hear.” (Cup your hand around one ear)

Matthew 13:16 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, six)

After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

Pass the Verse

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: Index cards, permanent marker

Instructions:

- Before class, write the Bible verse, a few words at a time with a permanent marker onto index cards. Try to spread the words out so each child has a card.
- During class, hand each child an index card and tell them not to show it to anyone else. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor, without showing their card to anyone. Designate one person to child “number one.”
- Tell the kids that you are going to set the timer for 1 minute and in that time they can trade their card with any other player. But they cannot look at their index card until the timer goes off.
- When one minute has lapsed, the children can look at their new cards without letting anyone else see it. Then they will decide as a group if they think their cards are now in memory verse order or if they want to trade again.
- They can have as many trade sessions as time allows, but they cannot look at the card they have until the one-minute has passed.
- Once they are satisfied with the order, you will have child “number one” read their card. Then the next person in the circle will read theirs until every child has read their card. It will be fun to see how right or wrong the verse comes out.
- After everyone has read their card, ask the children to put the verse in the right order.
- Read the verse as a class.

Lesson 8 Recipe

Thumbprint Fig Cookies

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Paper plates; Plastic spoons; Cookie sheets; Recipe ingredients (see below)

Ingredients: Tube of cookie dough (16.5 oz); Fig spread

Instructions:

- Before class, prepare the thumbprint cookies. Spoon out the cookie dough onto a cookie sheet. Use your thumb to make an imprint in the middle of each cookie before placing them into the oven. Bake the cookies according to the package instructions.
- During class, give each child a paper plate, a thumbprint cookie and a plastic spoon.
- A leader or helper should walk around the classroom and allow each child to scoop a tiny amount of fig spread out of the jar and place it into the center of their thumbprint cookie.
- When everyone has had a chance to receive fig spread, the children can taste their cookies.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? (allow for answers) Parables! That's right! Parables are stories that Jesus tells to teach his disciples and followers important lessons. Today we're going to be creating a sweet treat to help us remember another parable that Jesus told.

Has anyone ever heard of a fig? What is a fig? It's a kind of fruit. It was a very common fruit where Jesus lived. They were so common, the Bible mentions them over 200 times! That's one famous fruit. People of that time also thought of figs as a symbol of wealth and good health. So, if you had a fig, you were doing pretty well. Let's think about God's love and goodness while we make our snack today.

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the idea that God has invested a lot of time and work into giving His people all of the best, and he expects to see the fruit of His labor. We produce “fruit” by believing in Jesus and repenting our old ways. But even though we will ultimately face God’s judgment, he is a patient and loving God, and gives us many chances to change our lives and follow Jesus.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made fig cookies, right? We talked about how a fig is a type of fruit. Where do most fruits grow? In trees! That’s right. If you plant a fruit tree in your garden, what do you hope that it produces? Fruit! So, if your tree was fruitless for three years straight, how would you feel? You’d probably be pretty frustrated, right? Let’s read the parable of the barren fig tree and see how the gardener responds to this situation.

READ: And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.’

Luke 13:6-9

LEADER: In the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, Jesus talked about something that the people were familiar with. Gardeners and growing fruit trees were a common occurrence in Biblical times. Fig trees tend to take up a lot of space, and they often take years of growing before they produce fruit. In the parable, the land owner thought the time and space given to the fig tree was a waste. He wanted to cut it down! But how did the vinedresser respond? [Allow responses.] That’s right! He wants the fig tree to have a chance to produce the fruit it is supposed to; he wants to take good care of it and give it one more year. Since we know the parables are always about something more than they seem, let’s try to figure out what this parable is about.

Who do you think the Landowner is? [Allow responses.] It’s a little tricky isn’t it? The landowner is God the Father. But does that mean God is impatient? No, of course not.

Think about God's role as our Creator and King. Is it wrong for God to expect us to obey Him right away? [Allow responses.] No! God is good and right to expect us to obey Him, to "produce fruit." So then, who is the vinedresser? And is he wrong for showing mercy to the fig tree and giving it more care and time? [Allow responses.] Great thoughts! The vinedresser, or gardener, represents Jesus. He isn't wrong for giving the fig tree more time and care to help it produce fruit. God wants us to obey Him; He will punish sin, but He would much rather see a sinner repent and turn to Him.

So who is the fig tree? [Allow responses.] That's right! People are the fig tree. We owe God the fruit of our lives, but we cannot produce fruit on our own. We need help from Jesus, the vinedresser. That's why God sent Him to live a perfect life, die on the cross for our sin, and rise again. Without Jesus, we have no hope of producing fruit, that is, we can never obey God. God is just and righteous to punish sin, and he is gracious and merciful to send Jesus to give us more time and more care to help us.

During this time in history, God had given the people of Israel so many things. He had given them prophets and miracles and saved them again and again. But with the Pharisees leading the spiritual life of the people, they had come to believe that their good deeds would get them into Heaven. God had already worked so hard to give the Israelites everything. He had even sent his only son, but the people refused to repent and follow Jesus.

Even though God is patient with us and wants to see us turn from our old ways and put our faith in Jesus, we never know how long we have in this life. We must take the chance to follow Jesus when we have it.

READ: "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

Isaiah 55:6-7

LEADER: This passage reminds us that our lives are precious and won't last forever. If we hear about God and refuse to respond, there's no guarantee we will get another chance to do so. That doesn't mean we should all pray to Jesus even if we don't really believe the truth about Him, but it does mean that we should take the choice to love and follow Jesus seriously, not putting it off.

God is patient with us and loves us. He has compassion on us. What does compassion mean? *[Allow responses.]* Compassion means God understands what our lives on earth are like. He knows the difficult situations we face and that our sinful hearts often tempt us to make the wrong choices. Instead of cutting us down before we can bear fruit, God is patient and gives us more time to repent and come to know Jesus.

READ: The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

LEADER: But someday, Jesus will return; On that day, only people who have already put their faith in Him will live forever with God. God doesn't want us to waste time or assume we will have more chances to obey later. He wants us to trust in Jesus and allow the Holy Spirit to guide us to love and obey Him.



Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- Why did the landowner want to cut down the fig tree?
- What did the vinedresser want to do with the fig tree?
- How does God show us His love and compassion?
- What does it mean to "bear fruit"?
- Who helps us be "fruitful"?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord, for being patient with us, and loving sinners.

Thank you for having compassion for us as we navigate our lives on earth.

You know that our lives are not easy

and our human nature sometimes gets in the way of our obedience.

Help us to answer your call when we hear your voice.

Guide us into a Christ-like life so that we might bear fruit and walk in obedience.

In Jesus name, Amen.

A Note for Parents:

Summer is Near! We know what season it is by the signs that nature gives us. When summer is near, we see lush, green leaves and fruitful trees. Just like nature gives us signs for the changing of the seasons, God also gives us signs to first let us know that we should choose to follow Jesus and then to let us know that Jesus is coming back. Today we talked about the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree and how it was not changing. It was not producing fruit or doing what it was supposed to do. It helped us understand that when we don't follow Jesus and believe in him, then we can't be fruitful for God. But we also talked about how patient God is when he sees us struggling. He gives us many chances to repent and follow Jesus. Just like the vinedresser in the story, God gives us time to make the right choices. Talk to your child about their thoughts about this parable. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Luke 13:6-9, and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was part of the series we're covering over the next few weeks. We're learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - Who did the landowner, vinedresser, and fig tree represent?
 - What does "producing fruit" represent, and why can't we produce fruit on our own?
 - Who helps us produce fruit? How?
- Search for figs at your local grocery store. Taste them with your kids and discuss why Jesus told a story using a fig tree.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.



The Parable of The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)

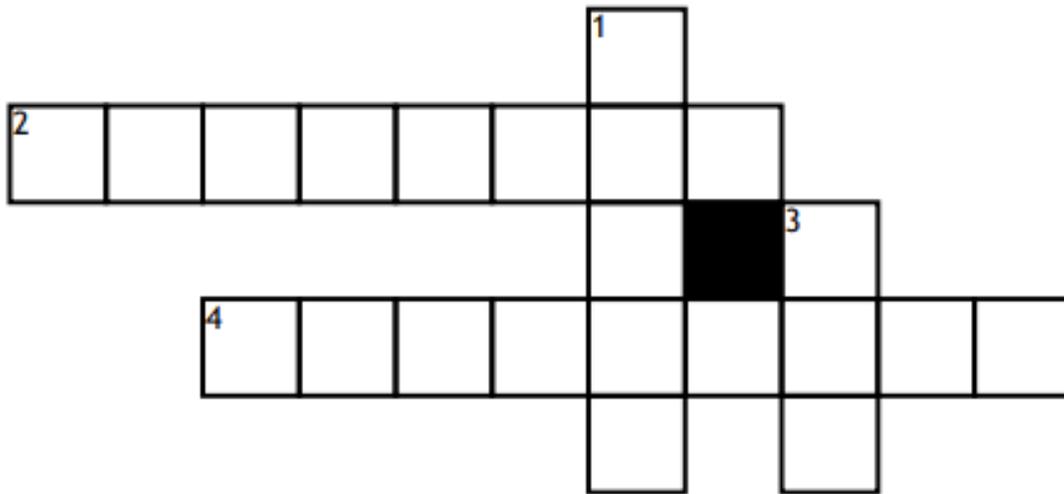
Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Let's solve the crossword puzzle.

The Parable of The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it [a]use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. [b]And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "



Across

2. A certain man had a fig tree planted in his _____.
4. Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and _____ it.

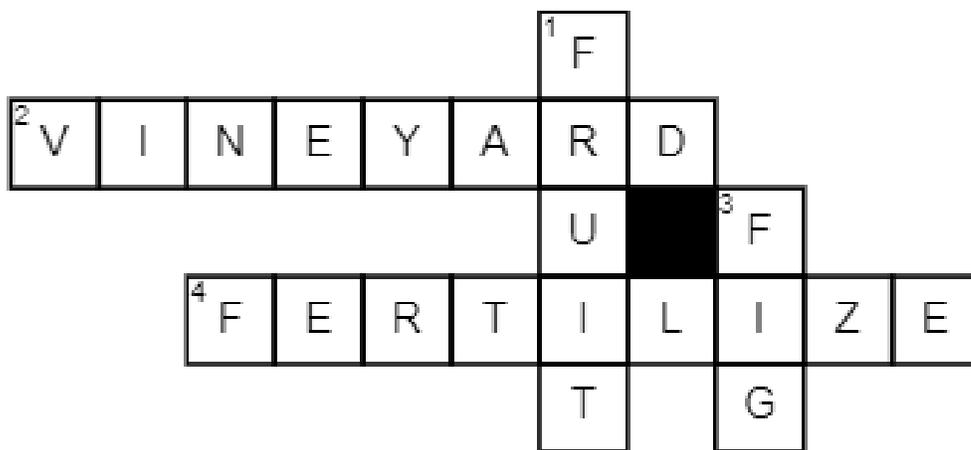
Down

1. And if it bears _____, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down. 3. Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this ____ tree and find none.

Directions: Let's solve the crossword puzzle.

The Parable of The Barren Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it [a]use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. [b]And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "



Across

2. A certain man had a fig tree planted in his _____.
4. Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and _____ it.

Down

1. And if it bears _____, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down. 3. Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this ____ tree and find none.

Lesson 9: The Friend at Midnight

Snack: Celebration Bread



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Parable of the Friend at Midnight

“What do you Knead?” Luke 11:5-9

Summary: Jesus tells the Parable of the Friend at Midnight to once again make his point with a story that would make sense to his audience. He knew that the disciples and the people listening to him would be familiar with the Israeli custom of feeding guests, no matter the hour. He used this common cultural practice to teach his audience about the way that God hears our prayers. God doesn't want to turn us away when we pray, just like the friend doesn't turn away the man who has come looking for food for his guests.

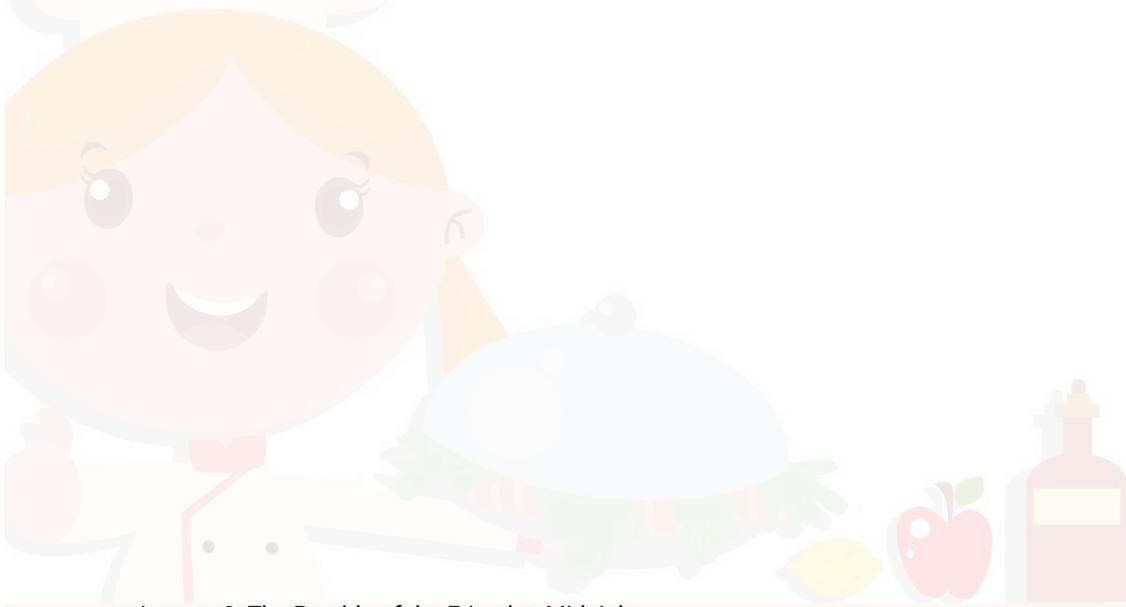
This lesson also shows the children that God has promised to answer when we seek Him. Although he is not a genie that will grant all of our human desires, He is an all-knowing, loving, patient, compassionate Heavenly Father who wants to give us good things.

Gospel Connection: This lesson will help children understand that God hears every prayer and responds. Believers in Jesus can be assured that God will be involved in every aspect of their lives and answer their prayers according to His will.

Memory Verse: “For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”

Matthew 13:17 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: 1 John 5:14-15; Romans 8:26-28



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Memory Verse Activity:

Hand Motions

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: None

Instructions:

- Help the kids memorize the verse by creating motions to go with it. Consider adapting sign language, or use the suggested movements provided below:

“For truly, I say to you, (Point to yourself and then in front of you)

Many prophets and righteous people (Put your hands in front of you like you’re praying and then bow)

Longed to see what you see, (Spread your hands out like you’re holding a long piece of string; point to one eye and then the other)

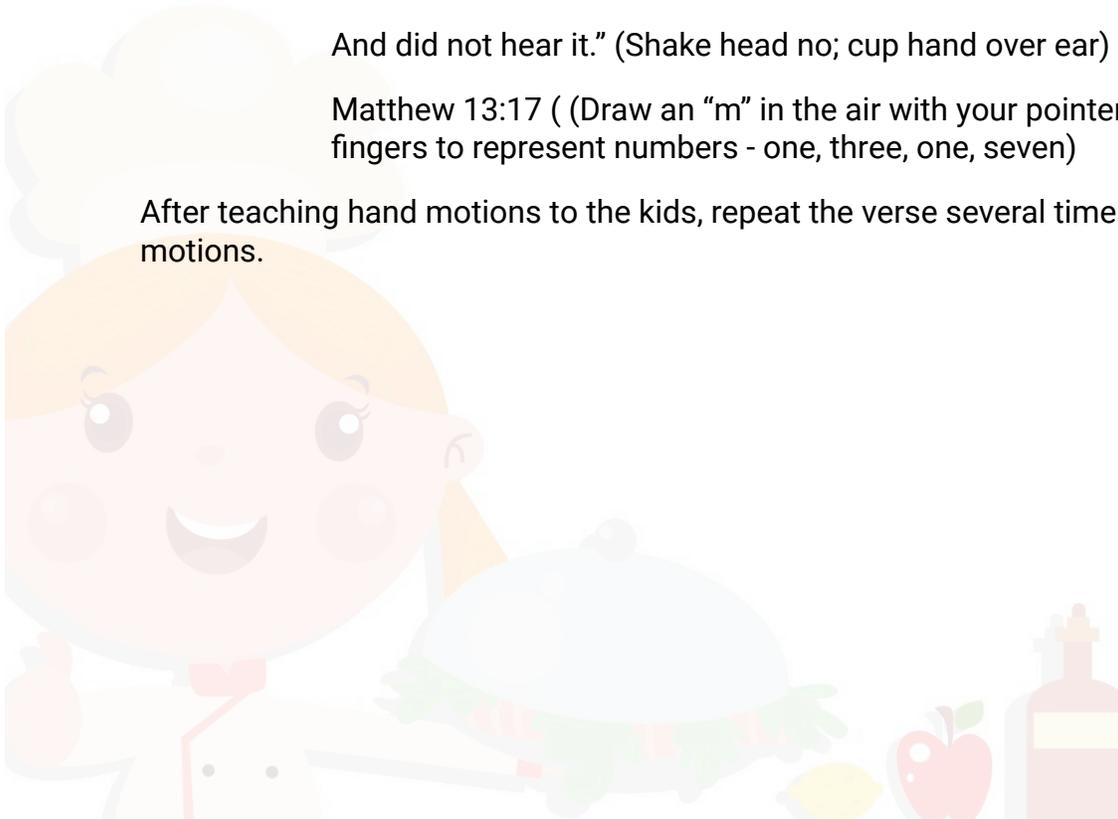
And did not see it, (Shake your head no; shade your eyes with your hand)

And to hear what you hear (Point to one ear and then the other)

And did not hear it.” (Shake head no; cup hand over ear)

Matthew 13:17 (Draw an “m” in the air with your pointer finger; put up fingers to represent numbers - one, three, one, seven)

After teaching hand motions to the kids, repeat the verse several times using the motions.



Bible Bites

10 Lesson Study on the Parables of Jesus

Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

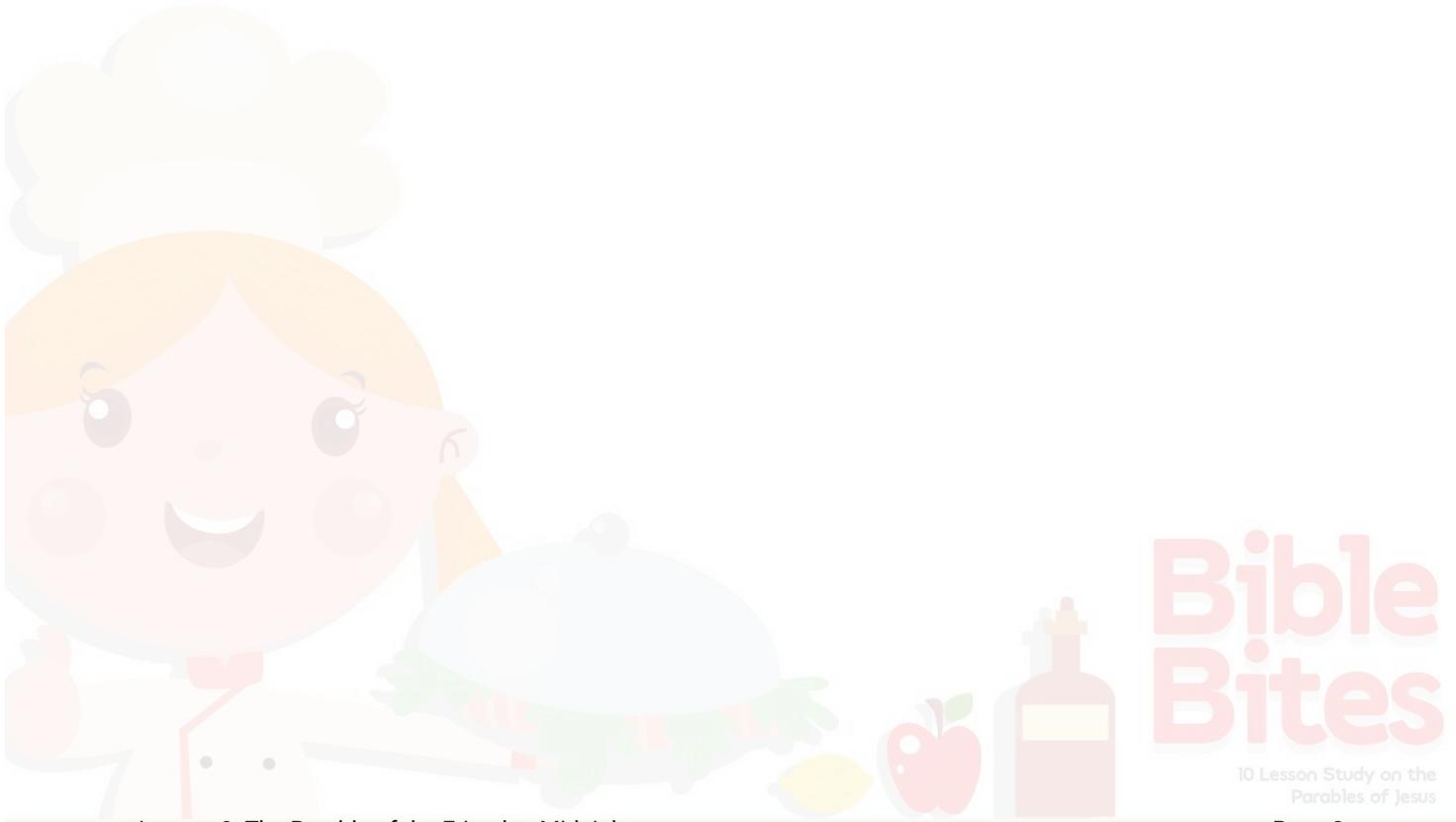
Memory Verse Hopscotch

Suggested time: 5 - 10 minutes

Supplies: Sidewalk or six feet of butcher paper, chalk or markers, bean bag(s)

Instructions:

- Before class, draw out a hopscotch board outside on the sidewalk or inside on six feet of butcher paper. Inside the squares right the memory verse a few words at a time.
- During class, line the kids up behind the hopscotch board and tell them they will each take turns throwing the bean bag onto the board. Then they will jump down the hopscotch board and fill in the words that the bean bag covers.
- If the bean bag doesn't quite cover a word, you might nudge it in the right direction.
- When everyone has had a chance to jump through the game you can try adding additional bean bags.



Lesson 9 Recipe:

Celebration Bread

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Paper plates; Plastic spoons; Disposable bowls; Recipe ingredients (See below)

Ingredients: White bread, Rainbow sprinkles, Spreadable butter

Instructions:

- Before class, lay out a slice of white bread on a paper plate for each child. Spread a thin layer of butter on each slice. Fill a disposable bowl with a small amount of sprinkles for each child.
- During class, give each child their slice of butter bread.
- A leader or helper should give each child a disposable bowl with sprinkles and a plastic spoon.
- Instruct the children to use their spoon (or fingers) to gently cover their piece of bread with their sprinkles.
- When everyone has decorated their slice of bread, they may eat and enjoy it.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? (allow for answers) Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories that Jesus used to teach his disciples and followers important lessons about God. Today we're going to be creating a sweet treat to help us remember another parable that Jesus told.

Has anyone ever asked for something for their birthday or Christmas that you really, really wanted? What did it feel like when you got it? It was pretty amazing, right? I know I would feel pretty loved if I was given something I really wanted. Well, did you know that God says that when we pray, we can ask for anything and it will be given to us? Today's parable talks about the power of our prayers. We're making Celebration Bread today because we want to celebrate the fact that God answers us when we call Him. Let's create our treat and then dive into scripture.

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the reasons why we ask for things and what we ask for. Talk to the kids about whether or not everything we want is always good for us. Have any of the kids ever done something they wanted to do, but it ended up being bad for them? Help them see that always getting exactly what you want isn't usually good for you.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? We made celebration bread! We were celebrating the fact that God loves us enough to hear our prayers and respond to us. We're going to read about the Parable of the Friend at Midnight and talk about how God responds to us when we come to him with a request.

READ: And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything'? I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence^[a] he will rise and give him whatever he needs.

Luke 11:5-8

LEADER: In many parts of the world, including Israel in those times, hospitality is a big deal. Hospitality is the practice of treating your guests like family, showing them love, and taking good care of them. In Jesus' day, even if guests arrived at midnight like the man in the parable, people were expected to show them hospitality.

Jesus' listeners knew that if a friend came to their door and asked for a loaf of bread they would eventually give the bread if the friend did not give up. Jesus used this experience the people would have been familiar with to help them understand how God responded to them when they prayed. The friend in the parable was *impudent*, which means he somewhat rudely ignored what was good for his neighbor in order to get the bread he needed. If a sinful human neighbor will give you what you need if you don't give up, then a loving God will also certainly give you what you need, and do so generously.

READ: And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

Luke 5:9-10

LEADER: Jesus told the disciples that when they ask for something, it will be given to them. When they seek something, they will find it. God hears our prayers and responds to them.

READ: What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Luke 5:11-13

LEADER: Jesus liked to ask his disciples questions, even if the answers were silly. These kinds of questions, with super obvious answers, are called *rhetorical* questions. The point is to show how obvious a truth is. Jesus asked the listeners if a father would give his son something dangerous if the son asked for something good. This idea helped get their attention. He wanted them to realize that, because God is even better and more loving than a human father, we can fully trust Him to give us the good things we ask for. But what happens if we ask God for something that isn't good?

READ: And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

1 John 5:14-15

LEADER: What do you think it means to ask something according to God's will? [Allow responses.] Great answers. Sometimes our human desires don't match with God's plan. Sometimes we want things that aren't good for us. In the same way loving parents might say no to a kid who asks for something dangerous, God doesn't just grant wishes no matter what we ask for. God hears all our prayers, and God answers every single one. But sometimes, the answer God gives us is "no." Other times, God's answer might be "not right now." We may not always know the difference between God saying "no" and God saying "not right now," because we cannot see the future; that's why it's good to keep praying and tell God what we want honestly and often.

God can see the big picture from the beginning of time to the end and he will answer our prayers so our lives fit in with His perfect plans. This can be hard to understand. What is God's will? We don't always know. But what we do know is that God is our Father and he

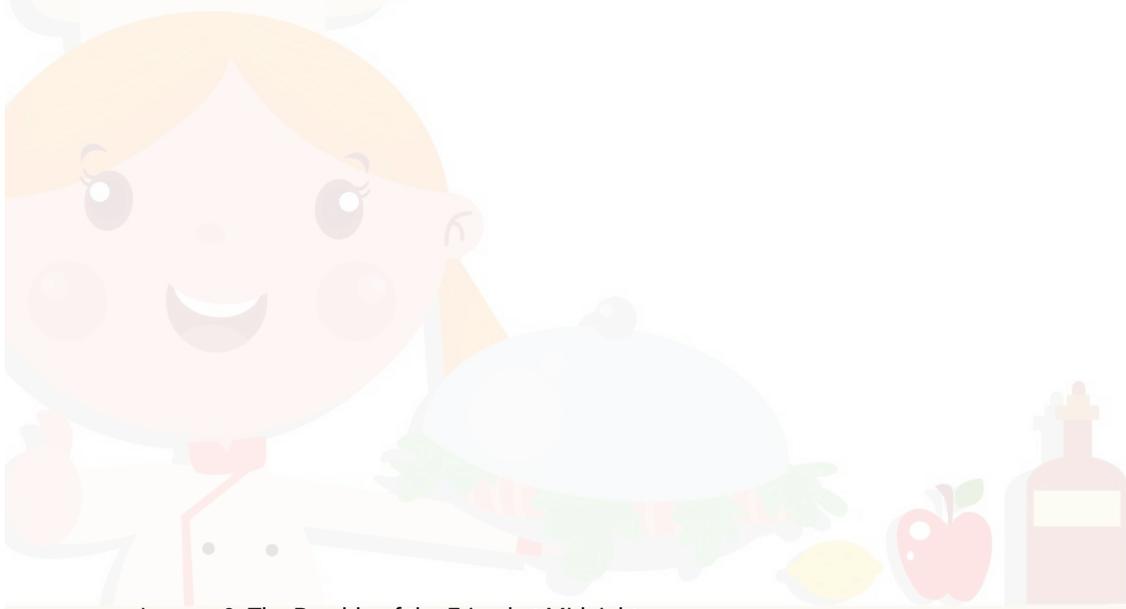
loves us. He wants only good things for us and he will be there to listen to our prayers every time we speak to Him. That means that we can trust His answers and His timing to be what is best.

READ: Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:26-28

LEADER: Isn't God the best? This passage reminds us that God loves us so much, even when we don't know what to ask for, or can't imagine what God knows is best, He is still looking out for His children. God the Spirit intercedes for us. Intercede means to go between two people or groups to help them come to an agreement. This passage also reminds us that, even when our lives feel difficult, scary, or sad, God is working things together for our good. That doesn't always mean we will see things turn out how we want them to, but it means that even the hard things in our live will glorify God and be used in His perfect plans.

So the next time you pray, remember to pray boldly to God, because He is a good father who wants to give us all the good things we need, and will always use hard times in His wonderful plans.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- Why did the neighbor give bread to the man who asked?
- How is God better than an earthly father?
- What are some ways God might answer our prayers?
- What does it mean to pray according to God's will?
- When might God say "no" or "not yet" in response to our prayers?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

Thank you, Lord, for listening to our prayers
and hearing what is on the hearts of your children.

We pray that we can listen and be patient for your response,
even if it isn't as soon as we'd like.

Help us to remember how much you love us
and that you only want good things for us.

Guide us in our prayer life so that our prayers
would help to further your kingdom.

In Jesus name, Amen.

The logo for 'Bible Bites' is written in a large, bold, pink font. To the left of the text is a faint illustration of a girl with blonde hair, wearing a white shirt and a red bow, holding a blue plate with a green leafy vegetable and a red apple. There is also a faint illustration of a brown bottle with a yellow label and a red cap, and a yellow lemon.

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

What do you “knead!” In today’s lesson we talked about the Parable of the Friend at Midnight. The man in the story went to his friend to ask for bread to feed his guests. The friend gave him what he asked for after the man was quite persistent. We talked about how God hears our requests like the friend in the story and wants to respond according to his will. God loves us and wants only good things for us. He might not always respond the way we want Him to, but he will always answer his children’s prayers. Talk to your child about their thoughts about this parable. If you haven’t read this parable in a while or it’s new to you, take a look at Luke 11:5-13 and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was part of the series we’re covering over the next few weeks. We’re learning how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. As we go through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what will be discussed, and putting them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

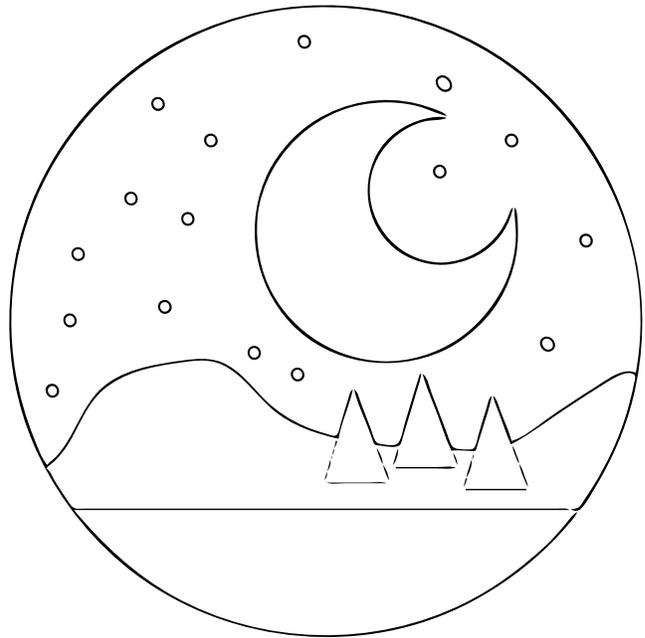
- Ask your child some questions like:
 - Who always hears our prayers?
 - Who prays on our behalf, in our place, when we aren’t sure what to pray?
 - When should we pray?
 - What are some ways God might answer our prayers?
 - How can we know God is good?
- Look up a recipe to make bread and make it with your child. Talk to them about how God answers our prayers like the friend answered the man’s request in the parable.
- Start a prayer journal with your children. Encourage them to write down prayer requests from others and their own thoughts and prayers.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn’t have to be formal. You can speak about God’s truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.



The Parable of The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10)

Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT

Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10)

"Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity[a] he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."

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

WORD BANK

MIDNIGHT

KNOCKS

BREAD

FRIEND

LOCKED

DOOR

Directions: Find the words given in the word search.

The Parable of The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-10)

"Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity[a] he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."

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WORD BANK

MIDNIGHT

KNOCKS

BREAD

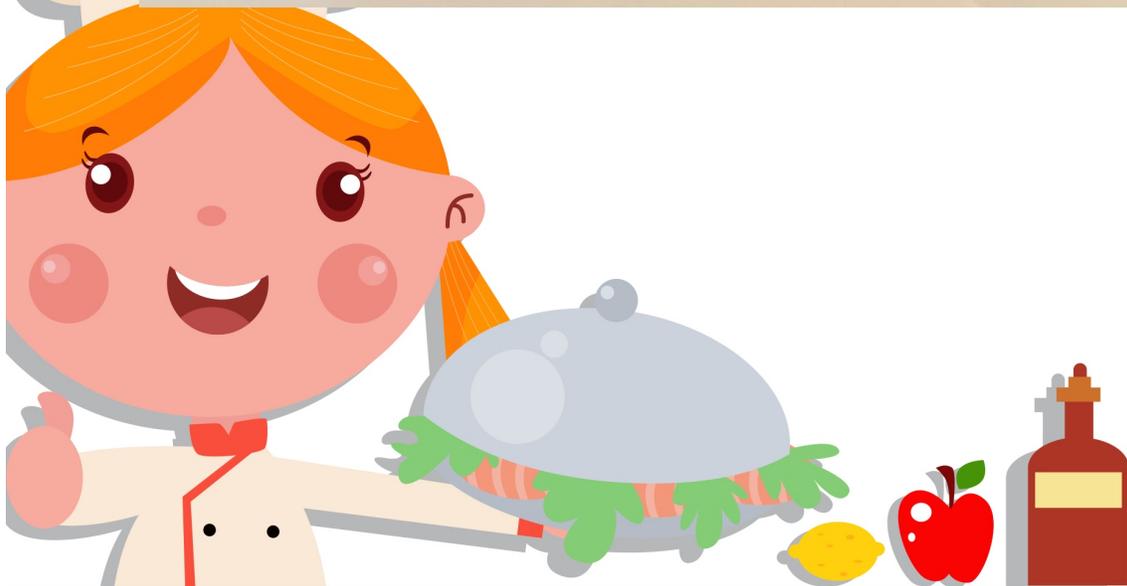
FRIEND

LOCKED

DOOR

Lesson 10: The Two Servants

Snack: Fruit Leather Watch



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

The Parable of the Two Servants

“Watch Out” Matthew 26:45-51

Summary: The Parable of the Two Servants is told differently than the other parables. It is still a story that helps his audience relate to the topics he covered, but it is much more intense. Jesus compares the servants to those who are waiting for His return. While some will be obedient and mindful of Jesus’ return, others will take advantage of the fact that the master isn’t home and give-in to sin.

Jesus also wants the disciples to know that part of waiting for his return means continuing his ministry—to bring the good news to the world—until he comes back. But because they don’t know the day or the hour, they must always be prepared for his return.

Gospel Connection: In this lesson, children will understand that someday Jesus will come back in glory. As believers we must live like that day could be tomorrow. We must have faith and continue Jesus’ ministry to bring the good news to all the world.

Memory Verse: “Then the disciples came and said to him, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” And he answered them, “To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ‘You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive.’ For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ear and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”

Matthew 13:10-17 ESV

Additional Passages and Stories: Matthew 26:45-51; Mark 13:32-36; Romans 13:8

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Memory Verse Activity:

Teach the Class

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Supplies: Bibles, various craft supplies (as needed)

Instructions:

- Divide the class into four groups. Assign each group two verses from the memory verse.
- Hand each group a Bible to use for the activity.
- Tell the children that each group will be responsible for teaching the class their two verses. They can do this in any way they want - a song, a dance, hand motions, a poster.
- Give each group at least 10-15 minutes to complete this task.
- Once the time has passed, give each group the chance to present their verses.
- When everyone is finished, recite all the verses together as a class.



Bonus Memory Verse Activity:

Memory Verse Fill-in-the-Blank

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Large poster/foam board, poster marker, variety of colorful sticky notes

Instructions:

- Before class, write out the memory verses on a large poster or foam board. Make sure to leave space between the lines because you will be using sticky notes to cover up certain words.
- Once you have written out the verses, use colorful sticky notes to cover some of the words on the poster board. I suggest covering one word up for each student in the class.
- During class, have each student take a turn guessing what the word or phrase says under the sticky note.
- When everyone has had a turn, you can do another round or recite the verse together as a class.



Lesson 10 Recipe:

Fruit Leather Watch

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Supplies: Paper plates; Plastic knives; circle cookie cutter (1" in diameter); Recipe ingredients (see below)

Ingredients: Fruit leather strips (one for each child)

Instructions:

- Before class, use one fruit leather roll to cut out enough circles so each child can have one.
- During class, distribute a paper plate, a plastic knife, a roll of fruit leather, and a circle of fruit leather to each kid.
- Tell the children that they are going to use the ingredients and supplies on their plate to create a fruit leather wristwatch.
- Give children at least 10 minutes to come up with their creations, then let them show off what they've made.
- When everyone has shared, they may eat and enjoy their fruit leather watches.

LEADER: Good morning, everyone! Who remembers what we're studying right now in our lessons? [Allow answers.] Parables! That's right! Parables are "bite-sized" stories that Jesus used to teach his disciples and followers important lessons about God. Today we're going to be creating a sweet treat to help us remember another parable that Jesus told.

How do we know what time it is? (allow for answers) Many people use watches that they wear on their wrist. That's what we're going to be making today. Except our watches won't tell us the real time because they will be made out of fruit leather! Our fake watches will help us to remember something important. What do you think it is? Think about that question while we make our snack.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Large Group Teaching:

Suggested Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the idea that Jesus is coming back one day to bring Heaven to earth. Everyone who believes in Jesus will live with God forever, but those who do not believe will be judged for their sin. While we wait for his return, we must be faithful and obedient to spread the gospel.

LEADER: What did we create today with our recipe? [Allow responses.] We made fruit leather watches! Did our watches show the real time? No, of course not. But they were yummy. We created those watches to remind us that we don't know the hour or the day that Jesus is coming back. He promised to come back and there is proof all throughout the Bible that says he will return. Since we don't know when that will happen, it's very important to always be ready.

READ: "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants^[d] and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 13:6-9

LEADER: In Jesus' day, the idea of servants working for a master would have been a familiar concept to the people of Israel. They understood the relationship between a master and his servants and they would have understood that the master's orders were to be obeyed, and that his authority was upheld even if he was away.

Jesus talked about two servants—the wise servant and the evil servant. Which one was ready for the master when he returned? The wise servant. He was rewarded with more responsibility for his faithfulness and obedience. What happened to the evil servant? He was thrown into a place where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. This means he would have been put into a place of great misery and sadness. That doesn't sound like a fun place to be, does it?

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

Jesus told this parable to set some expectations about what life would be like while they waited for Jesus to return. Jesus wants His followers to continue His ministry. God wants us all to be a part of His mission on earth to spread the good news of Jesus.

In Mark, a similar version of this parable is recorded.

READ: "But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake."

Mark 13:32-37

LEADER: In this passage, it says "not even the angels, nor the Son" know when Jesus will return. God is the only one who knows the hour and the day that Jesus will come back. What do you think it means to be "awake" for his return? [Allow responses.] Obviously, our human bodies need sleep and rest. This parable isn't teaching that we should never sleep until Jesus comes back. Instead, the lesson here is that we should not assume we have plenty of time to turn back to God.

In the Bible, sleep is often used as a metaphor for death. Those who do not trust in Jesus are spiritually asleep, that is, dead in sin. Some people may hear the gospel and think "If Jesus were really coming back, He'd already be here!" Others may think "Jesus has been gone for over two thousand years. He's not going to be coming any time soon." In either case, those people may think they can go on living in sin, living selfishly for themselves, and turn back to God later on. But that is a foolish idea!

READ: Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.

Romans 13:11

LEADER: This passage was written by Paul to believers in Rome. Paul helped to establish the early Christian church. He visited many countries and wrote many letters to Christ followers who needed encouragement and motivation. In this passage Paul warned early Christians that the coming of Christ might not be as far away as they thought.

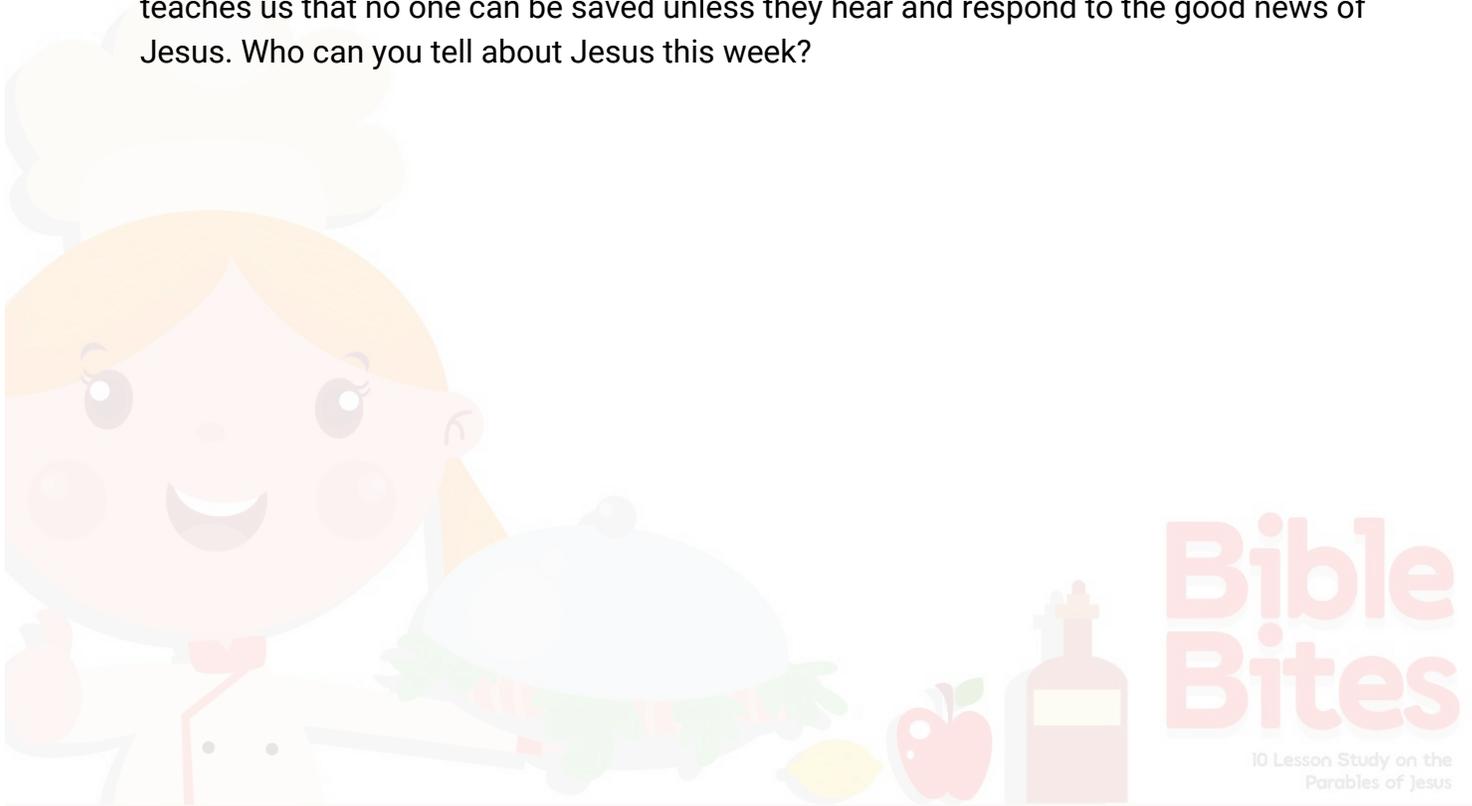
Paul told the Romans that they must “wake from sleep.” He said this so they would know that they must be ready and waiting for Jesus to return. They shouldn’t be giving in to temptation or straying from the work of Christ. He ended the passage with “salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.” That was a warning to the early Christians that Jesus could be coming back any day. They should treat their spiritual life with as much passion as when they first believed in Jesus.

When Jesus went back to heaven, He left us with an important job: sharing the gospel with anyone we meet.

READ: And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

LEADER: If you already know and believe the truth about Jesus, if you love Jesus and know that He is your Savior, that doesn’t mean you get to relax and just wait around for Him to return. The reason God saves us and allows us to remain on earth for now is so we can carry the good news to others. God wants everyone to be saved, and the Bible teaches us that no one can be saved unless they hear and respond to the good news of Jesus. Who can you tell about Jesus this week?



Small Group Discussion and Prayer Suggestions:

Suggested time: 10 - 15 minutes

Discuss the following questions. Choose questions that are most appropriate for your group's age and attention level.

- What did the wise servant do, and what was his reward?
- What did the evil servant do, and what was his punishment?
- Who knows when Jesus will return?
- How can we be ready for His return?
- What do you think the words 'stay awake' mean in the parable?

Prayer time: This could be an "echo prayer" in which kids repeat a line a time, or simply a prayer led by the teacher/leader:

Dear God,

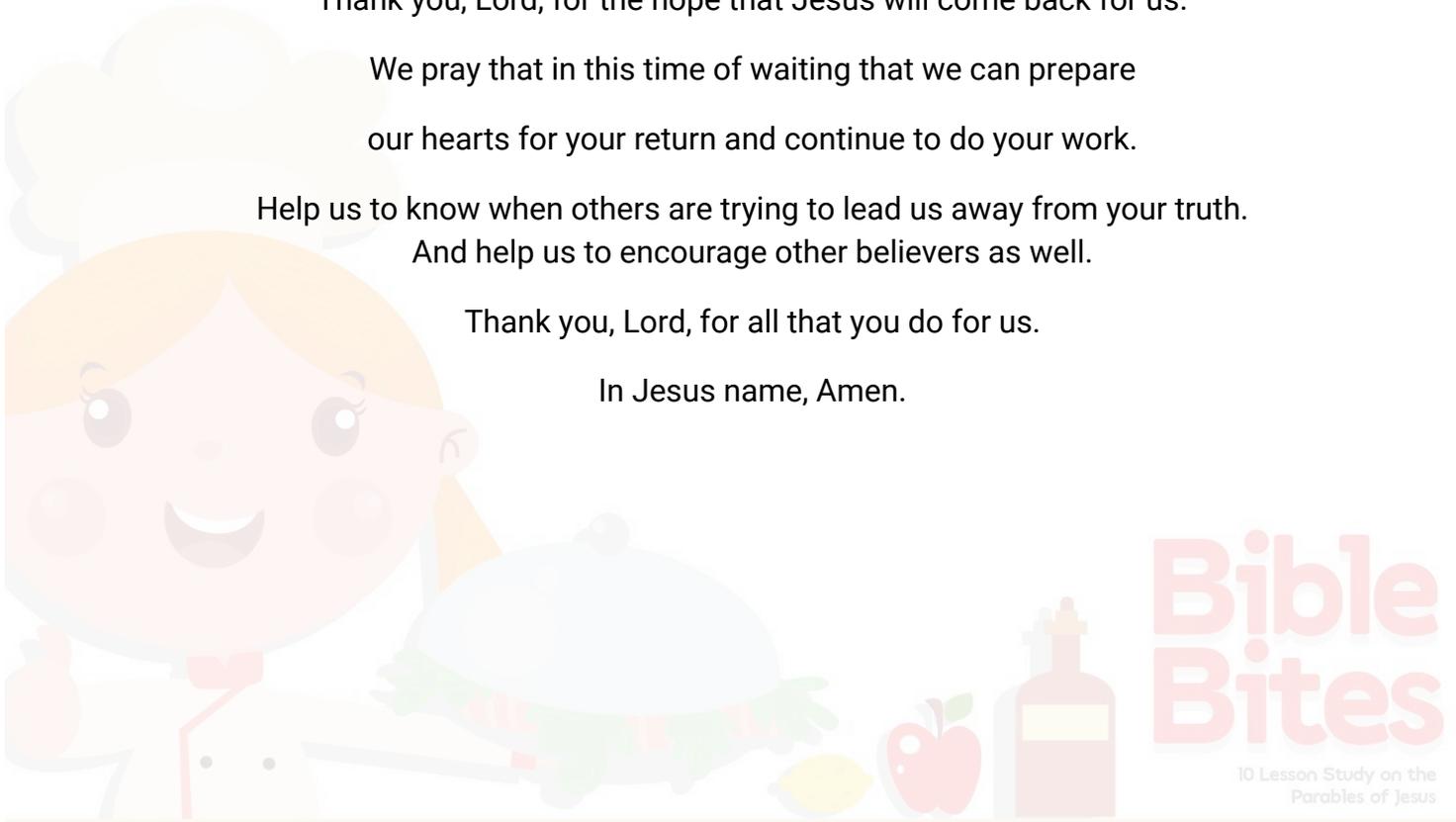
Thank you, Lord, for the hope that Jesus will come back for us.

We pray that in this time of waiting that we can prepare
our hearts for your return and continue to do your work.

Help us to know when others are trying to lead us away from your truth.
And help us to encourage other believers as well.

Thank you, Lord, for all that you do for us.

In Jesus name, Amen.



**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus

A Note for Parents:

Watch Out! Today we made fruit leather watches and talked about how we don't know the day or the hour that Jesus will return, but we have hope in the fact that he will return. We went through the Parable of the Two Servants and talked about how each servant prepared (or didn't prepare) for the return of their master and the consequences of their choices. We discussed ways that we can prepare for the second coming of Jesus and how we can continue Jesus' ministry while we wait. Talk to your child about their thoughts about this parable. If you haven't read this parable in a while or it's new to you, take a look at Luke 13:6-9, and see how it applies to your life.

This parable was the last in a 10-week series about Jesus' parables. We've learned how Jesus used simple truths and examples to explain big concepts. Now that we've gone through these lessons, spend some time at home talking about each principle and what kids discussed, and put them into practice. Some possible suggestions for conversation or activity include:

- Ask your child some questions like:
 - What happened to the wise servant?
 - What happened to the evil servant?
 - When should be ready for Jesus' return?
 - Who can we share the gospel with?
- Help your child create some encouraging notes for friends at church or even church leaders.
- Read a few verses or chapters of the Bible with your child on a regular basis and help them memorize verses.

Review and discuss the lessons with your children regularly. You might already have a dedicated prayer or Bible time in your home. If so, great! If not, perhaps it is the time to start one. It doesn't have to be formal. You can speak about God's truth on the way to activities or around the dinner table. Remember that training a child is a constant task, but it is also the most significant and rewarding one we can undertake.

**Bible
Bites**

10 Lesson Study on the
Parables of Jesus



The Parable of the Two Servants (Matthew 24:45-51)

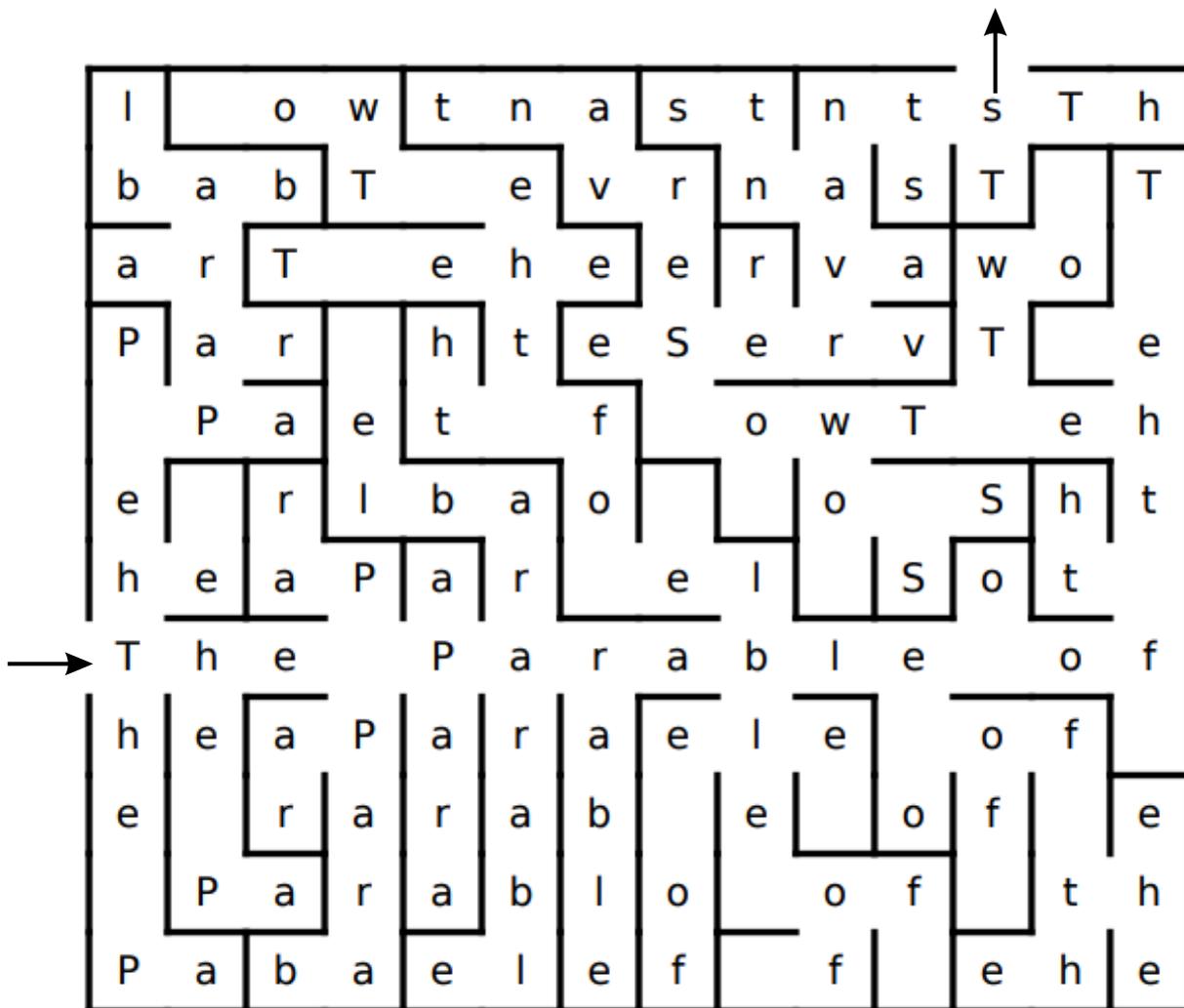
Directions: Complete the coloring activity.



Directions: Find the words given in the word finder maze.

The Parable of the Two Servants (Matthew 24:45-51)

Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. 47 Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. 48 But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,' 49 and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. 50 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. 51 He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.



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