

Lesson 16: Finding True Treasure

Key Takeaway

When we follow Jesus as our King, we receive the greatest treasure—life with him in God’s Kingdom.

Scriptural Basis

Matthew 13:44, Matthew 6:19-21

Bible Verse

“In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.” (Matthew 5:16, NLT).

Learning Objectives:

- Children will understand what God’s Kingdom is and how it changes our lives.
- Children will explain why life in God’s Kingdom is better than anything else.
- Children will name ways to live as citizens of God’s Kingdom.

Materials Needed for Small Group:

- ☐ A Bible
- ☐ Name tags
- ☐ A snack per child

Activity: Kingdom Treasure Match Game

- ☐ Printout 1 A&B (Matching Game), two copies per pair of students on cardstock.

Activity: Would you Rather

- ☐ Printout 2 (Would You Rather), one per group

Activity: Contrasting Pictures

- ☐ Printout 3 A&B (Contrasting Pictures), one per small group

Activity: The Greatest Crown – Door Hanger

- ☐ Printout 4, one per student
- ☐ Colored pencils or markers
- ☐ Ribbon or yarn
- ☐ Scissors

Materials Needed for Large Group:

- ☐ A Bible
- ☐ Small treasures (small candy), enough for each student
- ☐ More valuable treasure (King Size or large candy)
 - ☐ Option 1: One large candy
 - ☐ Option 2: Large candy, enough for each student
- ☐ Index Cards, ways people try to get into God's Kingdom

Materials Needed for Games:

Game: Kingdom Treasure Hunt

- ☐ A "treasure" (small box, wrapped candy, or trinkets)
- ☐ Clues or riddles based on the parables (e.g., "I grow small but mighty, find me by the light" for a mustard seed)
- ☐ Spaces to hide clues

Game: Treasure or Trash? Relay

- ☐ Index cards or paper slips labeled with actions/attitudes (some representing "treasure" like "trusting Jesus," "kindness," "forgiveness"; others representing "trash" like "selfishness," "lying," "pride")
- ☐ Two baskets labeled "Treasure" and "Trash"

Game: Treasure Tag Challenge

- ☐ Open space with clear boundaries (mark two sides of the room as **"This World"** and **"God's Kingdom"**)

Small Group Session 1

15 Minutes

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following activities to do together while children eat their snack.

Share and Listen

Option 1

Ask the children to share their highs and lows (the best and worst things that happened to them either today or from the past week).

Option 2

Ask the children to take turns sharing how they are feeling today using the [“How Are You Feeling?” chart](#).

Pray Together

Collect prayer requests from the students. The leader or a student can pray for the entire group, or a leader can pair up students and invite them to pray for one another.

Opening Questions

Younger Kids Questions:

- ***“What is your favorite thing you own?”***
- ***“Why is it your favorite?”***
- ***“How long have you had it?”***

Older Kids Questions:

- ***“What is your favorite thing you own?”***
- ***“Have you ever found something so special or important that you wanted to do anything to keep it?”***
- ***“What was it, and why was it special to you?”***

“In our first activity today we will be playing a matching game with items that may be important to you or others.”

Activity: Kingdom Treasure Match Game

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Print two copies of each Printout 1A and 1B so that students get into groups of 2-4 and play together. Cut out the matching cards prior to club.

How to Play:

1. Pair Up – Have students find a partner. Each pair gets a shuffled set of cards, placed face down in a grid.
2. Take Turns – Players take turns flipping over two cards at a time, trying to find a match.

3. If they find a match, they keep the cards and take another turn. If they do not match, they turn the cards back over, and the next player takes a turn.
4. The Most Valuable Match – One match is extra special: The Kingdom of God (crown symbol). Whoever finds this match automatically wins—showing how God's Kingdom is worth more than anything else!

Discussion:

Flip all the cards face up. Ask students to rank the matched items in order of what they personally find most valuable.

Discuss why The Kingdom of God is the most valuable of all, no matter how fun or exciting the other items may seem.

“Today we are going to hear a story Jesus told to show how being part of God’s Kingdom is better than anything else we could ever want. It is worth more than treasure—it is life with him forever.”.

Large Group

10-15 Minutes

Welcome the students to Crossroads and tell them you are glad they came this week.

Optional Starters

Feel free to choose one, two, or even all of these ideas to start Large Group!

“Who is Jesus” call and response

Prayer Prompt: “God, I trust you because...”

(Think of a time God kept a promise or helped you. This helps you remember you can always trust him.)

Opening Song: “Jesus Loves Me!” by Go Fish

Opening Prayer

Tell kids that closing their eyes and folding their hands together can help keep them focused and not distract those around them.

Opening Questions

- ***“What is the most valuable thing you own?”***
- ***“Would you ever trade it for something even better?”***

“There are things that are important to us. As we get ready for our lesson we will talk about treasures!”

The Story – Two Builders

Read Matthew 7:24-27 aloud for the group.

“Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse because it is built on bedrock. But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn’t obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash.”

“Let’s think about something together. If you were going to build a house, where would you put it? On strong, hard rock—or soft, squishy sand?”

(Encourage kids to answer and explain their thinking.)

“When we build houses, the first thing they work on is called the foundation, which is what the whole house sits on. If the foundation is strong, the house can stay standing—even in storms. But if the foundation is weak, the house can break or fall down.

Jesus told a story about two builders who made very different choices.

One built his house on rock. When storms came, the house stayed strong. Jesus said this builder was “wise”—he made the right choice.

The other builder chose sand. When the wind and rain came, his house crashed down. Jesus said this builder was “foolish”—he did not make a smart choice.

But Jesus was not just talking about buildings. He was talking about our lives.

Our choices are like the things we build with. When we listen to Jesus and do what he says, it is like building our lives on strong rock. But when we ignore him, it is like building on sand—our lives will not stand when hard things happen.”

Option 1 – Activity: Treasure Hunt

Before the lesson, hide the small candy around the room. Choose one item to be the “most valuable treasure” (King Size candy) and hide it in a slightly harder spot.

Helpful Hint: You might choose to have students place any candy they find into their backpacks to take home, or ask leaders to hold onto the candy and distribute it as kids leave club. Alternatively, you could use small and large coins as treasure instead of candy.

“I have hidden candy around the room. Your job is to search and find a piece of candy. Keep looking until you find a piece of candy and then come back for Large Group—there is one extra special candy hidden, too!”

Instruct students not to eat it until you tell them. Once everyone has found a candy, have them come back to the Large Group area.

Ask:

- ***“How did you feel when you found candy?”***
- ***“How did you feel finding the big candy?”***
- ***“Have you ever found something really valuable?”***
- ***“What was it?”***
- ***“Was it exciting? Would you trade something for it?”***

“Today we’ll hear a story about a man who found something better than anything else—and gave up everything he had to have it.”

Option 2 – Activity: Treasure Box

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Small candy prizes (one per student)
- ☐ A hidden “mystery” prize (a large, better or more desirable candy, enough for each student)
- ☐ A box or bag to keep the hidden prize a secret

Give each student a small candy. Allow them a moment to look at it but not eat it yet.

After everyone has received a prize, tell them:

“I have a hidden prize, but you can only have it if you are willing to trade in your first prize. You will not know what the hidden prize is until after you decide to trade.”

Allow kids to decide if they want to keep their original prize or trade for the hidden one.

Once trades are finalized, reveal what the hidden prize is and give it to those who traded.

Ask the group:

- ***“Was it easy or hard to trade your prize for something you couldn’t see?”***
- ***“How did it feel when you found out what the hidden prize was?”***
- ***“Do you think trusting God is like this – knowing that he has something better for you even when you cannot see it?”***

The Story: The Kingdom of God Is the Greatest Treasure!

“Jesus told a story to help us understand how special God’s Kingdom is. We might not see it right now, but God’s Kingdom is worth trading for.”

Read Matthew 13:44.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field.

Ask:

- ***“What does Jesus say God’s Kingdom is like?”***
 - It is like a hidden treasure.
- ***“What did this man do when he found this treasure?”***
 - He sold everything he had to get this treasure.
- ***“How does this show us how valuable God’s Kingdom is?”***
- ***“What did the man give up to get it?”***
 - It was worth more than anything else he had.

- ***“What would you do if you found something like this?”***

“The Kingdom of God is worth more than anything. The Bible says that God’s Kingdom will last forever! Not many people will enter God’s Kingdom but it is a place where there is no pain, or suffering, or sadness.

Jesus invites us to get into his Kingdom.”

- ***“How do you think we can get into the Kingdom?”***

Activity: Entering God’s Kingdom

Get two leaders to come up and help. Have them link arms and stretch out their arms (like the game London Bridges).

Have index cards with ways people try to get into God’s Kingdom. Get volunteers to come up and try to get through the door using their index cards.

The leaders won’t open the doors for any of the volunteers, except for the student who has the Faith in Jesus card.

- Being kind to others
- Being a good person
- By following all the rules and laws
- Being Rich
- By giving my money away
- Going to church
- Having faith in Jesus*

Helpful Hint: Make a sound effect when each student is not able to enter the gates of heaven (example: buzzing sound). Have a different sound effect when the student who can enter by faith in Jesus is allowed to enter heaven (Example: Dinging sound).

“To be part of God’s Kingdom, it is not about trying to earn your way in or doing enough good things to get there. Instead, it is about what Jesus did for you. Jesus gave everything—he sacrificed himself—so you could be part of God’s Kingdom. The only way to enter is by trusting in Jesus and believing in him.

As we go into small groups, we will learn more about what God’s Kingdom is, why life with Jesus is the best gift, and how we can live as citizens of his Kingdom every day.”

Close in Prayer

“The Kingdom of God is like treasure worth trading everything to get. Let’s thank Jesus for making a way for us to be part of his Kingdom.”

Pray and dismiss to game time or small groups.

Small Group Session 2

20-25 Minutes

Share the Key Takeaway: As we heard in Large Group, when we follow Jesus as our King, we receive the treasure of his Kingdom.

“Let’s talk more about what God’s Kingdom is like.”

Activity: Would you Rather

Using Printout 2, go through the Would You Rather questions with students.

Let students know that you will be asking them questions, they are to choose the answer they believe is the best.

After going through the Would You Rather questions, lead them in the following discussion questions.

Younger Kids Questions:

- ***“What happens to the things we have on earth—our toys, clothes, and even our homes—over time?”***
(They break, get old, or go away.)
- ***“How is God’s Kingdom different from anything we have on earth?”***
(It lasts forever, never breaks, and is perfect.)
- ***“What do you think makes heaven more exciting than anything we could have on earth?”***
- ***“If you found something amazing—like a treasure map—would you keep it to yourself or share it? How is this like telling others about Jesus?”***

“God’s Kingdom is better than anything here on earth. Food, toys, and treasure here on earth will not last forever but God’s Kingdom will last forever!”

Older Kids Questions:

- ***“What happens to the things we have on earth—our toys, clothes, and even our homes—over time?”***
(They break, get old, or go away.)
- ***“How is God’s Kingdom different from anything we have on earth?”***
(It lasts forever, never breaks, and is perfect.)
- ***“Jesus said the gate to life is narrow and only a few will find it (Matthew 7:13-14). Why do you think it is sometimes hard for people to choose to follow him?”***
- ***“How can we help others see how amazing God’s Kingdom is?”***
(Sharing the gospel, showing love, living for Jesus.)
- ***“If you found something incredibly valuable, like a treasure map, would you keep it to yourself or share it? How is this like telling others about Jesus?”***

“God’s Kingdom is better than anything here on earth. Food, toys, and treasure here on earth will not last forever but God’s Kingdom will last forever!”

Older Kids Activity: Contrasting Pictures

Objective: For students to understand that some things are more precious because they are more rare, or they last longer, or because of who owns them. All of these help us understand why God’s Kingdom is more precious—because it’s rare, lasts forever, and comes from God.

Using Printout 3 A & 3B, contrast each picture with the other showing how an item that is rare and an item that is owned by someone important makes it more valuable.

- ***“What is the most expensive painting in the world?”***
 - Picture of that you made yourself or Painting by Leonardo da Vinci (Savior of the world)

“The owner or maker of the painting can increase the value of that item. Savior of the World painting is worth \$450 million.”

- ***“Which rock is worth more?”***
 - A common rock or a diamond?

“Diamonds are more rare and more durable than a common rock.”

- ***“Which basketball is more valuable?”***
 - A normal basketball or one signed by Michael Jordan?

“The items are the same but the owner or signer of the one basketball is famous and increases the value of the signed basketball.”

- ***“Which Hotwheels car is worth more?”***
 - One you can buy in any store with toys or a rare one never sold in stores?

“The pink van is rare and was never sold in stores. There are only a few of them and they are worth a lot of money.”

- ***“Which penny is worth more?”***
 - Any penny you can find or rare ones?

“A penny is worth 1 cent, but rare pennies can be worth thousands of dollars.”

- ***“Which pair of chairs is worth more?”***
 - A pair you can buy at the store or a pair used by the president of the United States?

“A chair is useful but one used or owned by someone important increases the value.”

“When something is rare it is worth more than common items, like the diamond, rare pennies, and Hotwheels car.

There are also other items that are worth more because of who owns them or made them. Like the painting made by Leonardo de Vinci, and the basketball signed by Michael Jordan.

God’s Kingdom is worth more than anything because it comes from God, lasts forever, and brings us life with him. It is not about how many people are part of it—it is about how good and true it is.

God’s Kingdom is worth more than anything we have right now because it lasts forever!”

Read Matthew 6:19-21:

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Ask:

- ***“What does this verse teach us about what is truly valuable?”***

“We can all be part of God’s Kingdom when we follow Jesus as my King. This means that we listen to what God says and do our best to obey.

Everything that Jesus says is good. When we follow him we read the Bible and learn what Jesus wants and then do it.”

Younger Kids Activity: The Greatest Crown – Door Hanger

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Crown-shaped template on Cardstock (Printout 4)
- ☐ Stickers, glitter, gems (optional)
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Ribbon or yarn (to hang)
- ☐ Scissors

Cut out crown shapes from foam or cardstock. Write “God’s Kingdom is my greatest treasure!” at the top.

Allow students to decorate the crowns with markers (optional: stickers, gems, and glitter).

Punch a hole and attach a ribbon so they can hang it on their bedroom door.

Encourage kids to place it somewhere visible to remind them to follow Jesus as King every day.

“Imagine a friend told you about a great treasure and where to find it, would you go try to find that treasure?” (Allow several students to answer).

“When we follow Jesus and are a part of God’s Kingdom it’s also important that we tell others how to be part of God’s Kingdom so that they can also get the greatest treasure!”

Going Deeper

- ***“If someone asked you why life in God’s Kingdom is better than anything else, how would you explain it?”***
- ***“How can someone be a part of God’s Kingdom?”*** (by believing and following Jesus)
- ***“The man in Jesus’ story gave up everything to get the treasure. What are some things people might need to give up to follow Jesus?”***
- ***“What are some ways people chase after treasures in this world instead of God’s Kingdom?”***
- ***“If heaven lasts forever, what does that mean about the choices we make now?”*** (What we choose to follow matters for eternity.)
- ***“If you found the greatest treasure in the world, would you keep it a secret or share it? Why?”***
- ***“How can you tell a friend about God’s Kingdom this week? What would you say?”***

Ending Together

5-10 Minutes

“Just like the man in our story gave up everything for the treasure, we can give our time, love, and hearts to God’s Kingdom because it is the most meaningful thing we can give our lives to.”

Ask:

- ***“What is one thing you can do this week to show God’s Kingdom is important?”***
- ***“How can you share with others about how amazing God’s Kingdom is?”***

Response and Reflection

Younger Kids

Encourage students to be kind and loving. Tell them to show God’s love by being kind to friends, family, and classmates. This week, share a toy or say something kind to a friend.

Invite a Friend to Church or Club so that they can hear about Jesus. This is a way to spread God’s Kingdom.

Older Kids

Challenge students to set aside time to pray, read the Bible, or memorize verses this week. Try reading one Bible verse each day and thinking about how it applies to your life.

Encourage them to reflect God’s love by helping or encouraging others. Look for one way to help someone at school or home this week.

Discuss ways they can share Jesus with their friends. If someone asks why you go to church, tell them about how much Jesus loves them.

Close in Prayer

Print out the Bible verse.

Practice the Bible verse for this unit (Matthew 5:16). Take a look at the [Memory Verse Game Ideas](#).

Pray with the students and dismiss them.

Games

25 Minutes

Game: Pass the Message

(A Gospel-Sharing Version of Telephone)

Objective: To help kids understand the importance of sharing the message of Jesus accurately and how the Good News can change lives.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ None! Just a group of kids.

How to Play:

- Have kids sit in a line or a circle so they can whisper to the person next to them.
- Choose a Message: Start with a simple but meaningful message about Jesus. Some ideas:
 - Jesus loves you and wants you to be part of God's Kingdom.
 - Following Jesus gives you the greatest treasure—eternal life!
 - Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.
- The first person whispers the message to the next person. Each child whispers what they heard to the next child.
- The last person says the message out loud. Compare it to the original message to see if it stayed the same or got mixed up!

Discussion Questions:

- How did the message change as it was passed along?
- Why do you think it's important to share Jesus' message clearly and correctly?
- What are some ways we can make sure we tell others about Jesus in the right way?
- Who is someone in your life that you can share the message of Jesus with this week?

Lesson Connection: Just like in this game, when we tell others about Jesus, we want to share the true message, not a mixed-up version.

Game: Kingdom Treasure Hunt

Objective: To emphasize the value of the Kingdom of God from the Parables of the Hidden Treasure.

Materials:

- ☐ A "treasure" (small box, wrapped candy, or trinkets)
- ☐ Clues or riddles based on the parables (e.g., "I grow small but mighty, find me by the light" for a mustard seed)
- ☐ Spaces to hide clues

How to Play:

- Divide kids into small groups.

- Hide the treasure somewhere in the room and leave a trail of clues leading to it.
- Each clue should relate to one of the parables (e.g., about seeds, soil, treasure, or pearls).
- Once the treasure is found, discuss how God's Kingdom is the greatest treasure of all.

Game: Treasure or Trash? Relay

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Index cards or paper slips labeled with actions/attitudes (some representing "treasure" like "trusting Jesus," "kindness," "forgiveness"; others representing "trash" like "selfishness," "lying," "pride")
- ☐ Two baskets labeled "Treasure" and "Trash"

How to Play:

- Place all the slips in a pile.
- Divide kids into teams.
- One at a time, kids race to the pile, pick up a card, decide if it's a treasure (Kingdom value) or trash (worldly/selfish value), and place it in the correct basket.
- After all cards are sorted, review them together.

Connection to Lesson: Reinforces the idea that following Jesus means choosing His Kingdom values over the world's.

Game: Treasure Tag Challenge

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Open space with clear boundaries (mark two sides of the room as **"This World"** and **"God's Kingdom"**)

How to Play:

- Divide the room into two zones:
 - One side is **"This World"**
 - The other side is **"God's Kingdom"**
- Choose 2-3 players to be **"Treasure Blockers"** in the middle (they represent **distractions, temptations, or false treasures**).
- All other players start in **"This World."**
- On the leader's call, players try to run across to **"God's Kingdom"** without getting tagged by the Treasure Blockers.
- If a player is tagged, they immediately stop and do a **Rock, Paper, Scissors battle** with the person who tagged them.
 - If they **win**, they are free to continue running to **"God's Kingdom."**
 - If they **lose**, they join the Treasure Blockers in the middle.
- The game continues until only a few players remain trying to reach **"God's Kingdom."**
- You can reset and repeat multiple rounds.

Connection to the Lesson: Rock, Paper, Scissors represents the daily battles we face—choosing between distractions and the true treasure of God's Kingdom.

When we make wise choices (like following Jesus), we can stay on the path toward God's Kingdom.

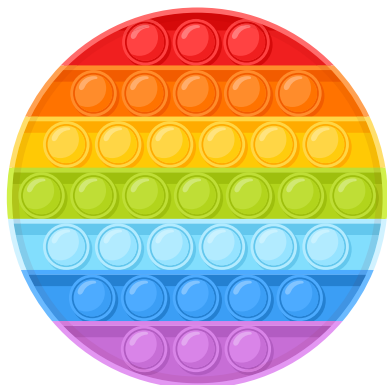
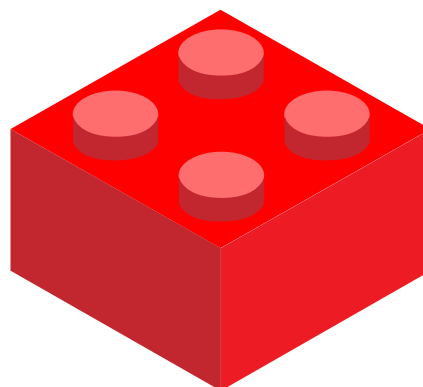
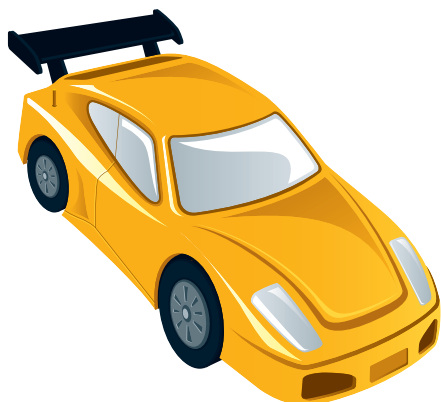
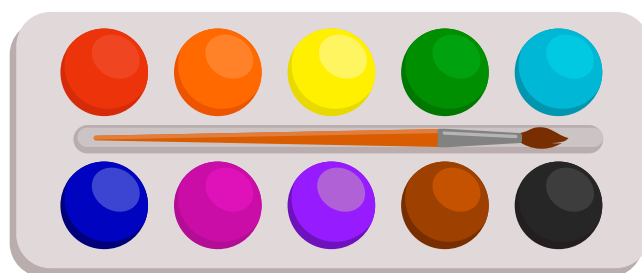
Printout 16.1A

MATCHING GAME



Printout 16.1B

MATCHING GAME



Printout 16.2

WOULD YOU RATHER

Go around your Small Group and ask each student one of the “Would You Rather” questions. For older students, consider asking them to look up and read the Bible verse connected to each question.

WOULD YOU RATHER ... live in the biggest, fanciest house on earth that will eventually break down, or live in God’s perfect home in heaven that never gets old or ruined?
(John 14:2-3)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... eat the most delicious meal but be hungry again the next day, or be in heaven where you will never be hungry or thirsty again?
(Revelation 7:16)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... have all the money you want for a week or have joy that never runs out?
(John 15:11)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... be famous but forgotten in 100 years or be loved by God forever?
(Psalm 136:1)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... have all the toys you ever wanted but they break over time, or have the joy of heaven that never fades away?
(1 Peter 1:4)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... have perfect health on earth for 100 years, or live forever in heaven where there is no sickness, pain, or death?
(Revelation 21:4)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... have the best doctor in the world take care of you when you’re sick, or be in heaven where no one ever gets sick again?
(Revelation 22:2)

WOULD YOU RATHER ... own a treasure chest full of gold that disappears in 10 years or have a treasure that lasts for eternity?
(1 Peter 1:4)

Printout 16.3A

RARE ITEMS



Common rock



Diamond



Hot Wheels car sold in all toy stores



Rare Hot Wheels car never sold in stores



Penny you can find anywhere



Rare penny from collection

Printout 16.3B

OWNERSHIP ITEMS



Painting you made yourself



Painting by Leonardo da Vinci — *Savior of the World*



Normal basketball



Basketball signed by Michael Jordan



Chairs you can buy in the store



Chairs used by the U.S. President — *Monroe Armchairs*

Printout 16.4

DOOR HANGER



God's Kingdom is my greatest treasure!