

Use Week of:

Unit 23 • Session 4

Jesus Taught About Possessions

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Luke 12

STORY POINT:

Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs.

KEY PASSAGE:

John 14:25-26

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit ministrygrid.com/gospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

A very large crowd—thousands of people (Luke 12:1)—had gathered around Jesus as He taught His disciples. The people recognized Him as a rabbi (teacher), so it was not unusual that someone called out, asking Jesus to settle a financial dispute. But Jesus knew the man was motivated by greed, and He told a story.

In Jesus' parable, a rich man had so many crops that he decided to tear down his barns and build bigger ones. That way, he could store everything he had and take it easy. But the man was foolish and short-sighted. He didn't consider he could die that very night. The saying is true: "You can't take it with you." Rather than storing up treasures for ourselves, we should live to glorify God and live generously, using what we have on earth to make an eternal impact.

Jesus also addressed worry with His disciples. Jesus' followers should not be anxious about their basic needs. God takes care of the birds and the flowers. People are God's most valuable and beloved creatures; we can trust Him to provide for us!

Jesus contrasted the way the unsaved Gentiles lived with how believers should live. Unbelievers seek wealth and possessions as if that was the main goal in life. They act like God does not care about their needs. But our focus should not be on ourselves, our wealth, and our possessions; we should focus on God's kingdom. We do not need to worry. God will provide. He is glad to give us what we need!

God gives us good gifts on earth. We can steward these gifts for His glory. Earthly treasures will not last forever. When Jesus is our greatest treasure, we can live generously and trust God to provide what we need.

The BIBLE Story

Jesus Taught About Possessions

Luke 12

Thousands of people came together to listen to Jesus' teaching. Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, tell my brother to share our father's inheritance with me."

Jesus said, "Watch out and be on guard against all greed. True life is not found in what you own."

Then Jesus told the people a parable: "A rich man owned land that produced many crops.

He didn't have anywhere to store all of his crops, so he said to himself, 'I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then, I'll have so much stored up that I can stop working and relax.' But God told the man, 'You are a fool! You will die this very night, and then what good is everything you have stored up?'" Jesus told this story as a

warning for any person who stores up treasure on earth and is not generous toward God.

Then Jesus told His disciples, "Do not worry about your life or your body—what you will eat or what you will wear. Think about the birds: They do not plant or collect grain, yet God feeds them. Aren't you worth more than birds?"



Jesus also said, “Think about the wildflowers. They don’t work or make clothing, yet they are lovelier than a great and rich king in his fancy clothes. If that is how God takes care of grass—which grows today and is cut down tomorrow—how much more will He do for you?”

Jesus told His disciples not to worry about food or drink. **“Seek God’s kingdom,” He said, “and God will provide what you need.”** God is happy to give His children the kingdom.

Finally Jesus said, “Sell your possessions and give to the poor. A thief can take away treasure on earth, but treasure stored in heaven lasts forever. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Christ Connection: Jesus is our greatest treasure. Jesus left His place in heaven to live humbly on earth. Jesus obeyed God to set up His kingdom. We can give generously and trust God to provide everything we need.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Draw pictures:**

As you tell the story, draw simple illustrations like crops, barns, birds, flowers, food, drink, and so on.

- **Vary tone:** Draw kids’ attention by changing your tone when speaking dialogue. Slow your pace or emphasize key words.

INTRODUCE the Story



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KEY PASSAGE: John 14:25-26

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to share something they worry about.

SAY • Everyone worries sometimes. Did you know the Bible talks about worry? In fact, Jesus had some important things to say about worrying. We'll find out what He said in today's Bible story.

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "Treasure Box" on the activity page. Guide kids to list something they treasure for each letter. Allow volunteers to share their lists.

SAY • Much of what we treasure won't last. In the Bible story we will hear today, Jesus told about a kind of treasure that *will* last forever. Listen carefully to the story to find out what it is.

- "Treasure Box" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

LOW PREP

- chairs, 1 per kid
- soccer ball
- stopwatch or timer

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Indoor soccer

Arrange kids' chairs in a circle, facing the center. Instruct

each kid to sit in a chair. Kids should hold the sides of their chairs with their hands. Put a soccer ball in front of one player. Explain that kids may not talk during the game.

Challenge kids to see how many times they can pass the ball in one minute. Then challenge them to see how long it takes for everyone in the circle to get a turn passing the ball. Challenge kids to pass the ball around the circle with their feet, without letting the ball touch the ground.

SAY • What was hard about those challenges? You know, you all did a great job sharing the ball to accomplish each task. Imagine if one player had decided he wanted to keep the ball all to himself. Today we will hear a Bible story about the importance of not keeping possessions all for yourself.

OPTION 2: Beans relay

Form two or more teams of kids. For each team, fill a bowl with dry beans. Instruct players on each team to stand in a line. Give the first player the bowl of beans and a measuring cup. Set up a paper lunch bag across the room. Explain that when you say go, the first player will scoop a cup of beans, run to the bag and dump in the beans, and run back to her team. Then the next player will do the same. The first team to transfer all its beans or fill the bag wins.

- dry beans
- bowls, 1 per team
- measuring cups, 1 per team
- paper lunch bags, 1 per team

SAY • Every year, the United States produces 2 million acres of dry beans. What would you do if you had that many beans? In the Bible story you will hear today, Jesus told a story about a man who had so many crops, he ran out of room to store them. Was that a good thing or a bad thing? Let's find out.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as you transition to teach the story. Set it to end as the session begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• organizing containers
• labels
• marker

[Leader enters wearing business casual attire or a T-shirt for a local school with jeans. He or she also carries a Bible and several organizing containers.]

LEADER • Hello, everyone! Welcome back! If you're joining us for the first time, welcome! My name is *[Mr./Mrs.] [your name]*. I only have a couple of weeks left to get ready for my students. I want to use these containers to organize school supplies. *[Arrange the containers on a table and label them as you talk.]* In my class, we store all the school supplies together. That way, all kids have access to pencils when they need one or markers if theirs dry out. If we run out during the year, I let parents know and someone is usually very happy to step up and bring some more for all the students to use. I'm so thankful when others give generously.

[Hold up a Bible.] You know, God wants us to be

Tip: If you prefer not to use themed content or characters, adapt or omit this introduction.

generous with what we have. Let me share with you what Jesus taught about possessions.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • As you hear today's Bible story, keep our big picture question and answer in mind. I'll ask the question, and then you say the answer: ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?*** [Pause for kids to respond.] ***Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.***

Giant timeline (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

· Giant Timeline

LEADER • When we follow Jesus, we give Him complete control of our lives. When He was on earth, **Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom.** I'm so thankful for God's Word, the Bible, so we can know what Jesus taught. We learned that **following Jesus is not easy, but He is worth it.** Also, **Jesus taught people how to pray.**

Today's Bible story is called "Jesus Taught about Possessions." What do you think Jesus said about the things we own? Let's find out!

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Luke 12. Use the Bible storytelling tips on the Bible story page to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video "Jesus Taught About Possessions."

LEADER • Did anything Jesus taught about possessions surprise you? I'm sure it surprised some of the people in the crowd. Even today, many people believe that

· Bibles
· "Jesus Taught About Possessions" video
· Big Picture Question Poster
· Bible Story Picture Poster
· Story Point Poster

the most important thing about life is earning as much money as you can or owning the newest and the best things. But for believers, that is not what is most important.

In the story about the rich man, who was most important to the rich man? Look at Luke 12:19. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] The man cared more about himself than anyone else. Is that how we should live as people of God? No! Jesus warned that the man could have died that night, and his full barns would do him no good. We can be generous with what we have, using it to help others and tell them the good news about Jesus.

Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs. How do we know that God will provide? Look at Luke 12:24. [*Allow kids to read the verse and respond.*] God provides for even the birds and the wildflowers. You are worth more than birds and the wildflowers.

God created you in His image, and He cares about you. He will provide what we need. He has already provided for our greatest need—salvation from sin—by sending His Son.

Tip: Use Scripture and the guide provided on page 131 to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Christ connection

LEADER • Jesus is our greatest treasure. Jesus left His place in heaven to live humbly on earth. Jesus obeyed God to set up His kingdom. We can give generously and trust God to provide everything we need.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 23, Session 4” questions from kids video.

• “Unit 23, Session 4” questions from kids video

Prompt kids to think about whether or not it's wrong to own a lot of possessions. Guide them to discuss how they can use their possessions for God's glory.



Missions moment (3 minutes)

LEADER • Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs. God provides for the needs of missionaries through people who give to missions and who pray for missionaries.

We've been learning about Kesavan and Viji, who started a church in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. God takes care of their needs so that they can serve Him.

Let's hear more about how they live on mission.

Print the "More About the Balasinghams" printable and invite a volunteer to read more about this missionary couple. Then close in prayer for the Balasinghams and for other missionaries your church supports.

· "More About the Balasinghams" printable

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together John 14:25-26.

LEADER • *What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.*

When we forget what is true about God, we can ask the Holy Spirit to remind us of what Jesus taught about Himself. The Holy Spirit can help us understand God's Word. Let's sing our key passage song to help us remember these verses.

Lead kids in singing "I Have Spoken (John 14:25-26)."

· Key Passage Poster
· "I Have Spoken (John 14:25-26)" song

· “Just As I Am” song
· Bible

Sing (4 minutes)

Open your Bible and read aloud Psalm 68:4-5.

LEADER • Do we need to worry? [*Allow kids to respond.*] No! Instead of worrying, we can trust God. **Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs.** He loves us and cares for us. Let’s sing. Sing together “Just As I Am.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • Lord God, we confess that we don’t always trust You to meet our needs. Free us from worry and striving. Help us rest in You. We believe You are good. Every good gift comes from You. Help us be generous with what we have and use our possessions for Your glory. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to apply the story

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus. Provide *I'm a Christian Now!* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.

APPLY the Story



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Key passage activity (5 minutes)

• Key Passage Poster

Display the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud John 14:25-26 together. Form two groups of kids. Instruct the groups to stand, facing each other.

The first group should read the words of the key passage, pausing when they get to the first punctuation mark (a period). Then the second group will begin reading until they come to a punctuation mark (a comma). The first group will resume and pause at the next comma. Play passes back and forth until kids say the entire key passage.

Then prompt the second team to start and repeat the activity so both groups say all parts of the key passage. Allow volunteers who have memorized John 14:25-26 to recite it.

SAY • Great job! We only have one more week to learn our key passage together. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring these words to mind this week if you forget what is true about God and about yourself.

• Bibles, 1 per kid
• Story Point Poster
• Small Group Timeline and Map Set (005802970)

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide boys and girls to open their Bibles to Luke 12. Explain that Jesus had traveled to Jerusalem,

and a large crowd had gathered to listen to Jesus' teaching. Point out Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Israel Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 12:22-24.

SAY • Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. In what ways has God been generous toward you and your family? *Guide kids to recognize ways God has provided for their family—physically and spiritually. Steer kids away from bragging about any possessions or wealth they may have. Point out ways God provides by giving us friends, neighbors, and teachers. Acknowledge His greatest provision, Jesus.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 30:18.)

2. How can we fight against greed? *Lead kids to recognize that we can fight greed by humbly relying on God and giving generously. We can ask God for what we need and trust that He will answer and provide in the way that is best for us. We can pray for the Holy Spirit's help in seeking God's kingdom first.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read James 4:1-2.)

3. Share about a time you were selfish or felt tempted to act selfishly. How can generosity lead others to Jesus? *Invite kids to share their experiences. Point out that the world teaches that we should look out for ourselves. In Jesus' kingdom, the opposite is true. We can put others first because God meets all of our needs. When believers live generously, others may ask why and we can share how God has been generous to us by providing eternal life through Jesus.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Cor. 10:24.)

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

LOW PREP

· inflatable or foam ball

Tip: Use this activity option to reinforce the missions moment from Teach the Story.

- Allergy Alert
- note cards
- envelopes
- markers or crayons
- paper bags
- small treats

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: God provides!

SAY • Kesavan and Viji know that the things God has provided for them should be used for His glory. They use things God provides, like their home, to build relationships and share the gospel. They invite people over for meals, Bible study, fellowship, and even to live for a while.

What is something that God has provided for you, and how can you use that for Him?

Invite kids to sit in a circle. Explain that they will toss the ball to a friend. The friend tossing will call out something that God provides (food, home, clothes, toys). The person receiving the ball will think of a way that she could use that to show the love of Jesus (bring a meal to someone, invite friends over, give away outgrown clothes, share toys with a new friend).

Encourage kids to help one another with the answers and to throw the ball to different kids each time until everyone has had a turn. Be prepared with ideas to share with kids who can't think of an item or an answer.

OPTION 2: Make a care package

Remind kids that **Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs.** Explain that sometimes God provides by working through other people.

Invite kids to make a care package for a family member, friend, or neighbor. Provide paper bags for kids to decorate. Allow kids to put small treats inside the bag.

Suggest kids include an encouraging note with the care package, perhaps with the phrase *God provides for our needs* or a promise to pray for that person. Encourage kids to

deliver or send the care package to another person this week and share God's love with that person.

SAY • Sometimes a visit, a note, or a small treat from a friend can make a person feel very loved! Putting others first is one way we can show that Jesus is our greatest treasure. Jesus left His place in heaven to live humbly on earth. Jesus obeyed God to set up His kingdom. We can give generously and trust God to provide everything we need.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas. Then pray, thanking God for providing for our needs. Pray that kids would recognize that everything they have is a gift from God. Ask God to give them generous hearts and an attitude toward possessions that brings Him glory.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "Bible Story Blanks" on the activity page. Kids should fill in each blank word with the correct word from the word box.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Bible Story Blanks" activity page, 1 per kid

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.