

MATTHEW

Living for God

7

PASSAGE:

Matthew 6

SUMMARY:

Jesus defines and explains spiritual disciplines (giving, praying, and laying up treasures in heaven) and discusses the solution for worrying.

BIBLE TRUTH:

God promises to take care of us.

CHALLENGE:

Lay up treasures in heaven by finding specific ways to trust God's care.

Four essential elements for each week are:



Memory verse



Core Group



Wrap-Up Teaching



Prayer

PRAY for God-given creativity as you prepare and lead.



Opening

Open with prayer. Opening ideas include: Pledges, Ten Commandments or other Bible skills such as Attributes of God, Fruit of the Spirit, and Armor of God. These can be found in the **Teaching Helps Supplement (THS)**.

Introduce the Challenge: Where are My Treasures?

One day a seven-year old girl packed her father's lunch. Along with his sandwich, apple and coffee she put her favorite stone, a small toy doll, and a marble ... her treasures. Her father, thinking it was junk, threw it away after he ate his lunch. When he came home that evening, she asked, "Where are my treasures?" "What treasures?" he asked. "Oh, I forgot to put in a note to tell you I was sharing my treasures with you because I love you, Daddy," she said, hugging her father. He returned to his office quickly and retrieve his daughter's "treasures," for she was saying in her way, "Here is the best I've got and I am sharing it with you."

Ask students: What is your favorite "treasure"? With whom do you share it?

Adapted from: www.sermonsuite.com, "Treasures" from the book: Storytime at the Altar, Elaine M. Ward.

When we trust God, we will be free to give ourselves to serve Him with the singleness of purpose, placing the concerns of His kingdom first, rather than being anxious about lesser things. Jesus calls His followers to choose their master, either God or wealth, and to choose their outlook on life, either faith or worry.

Memory Verse

Verse: “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
Matthew 6:20-21

Tent Card Relay – Items needed: masking tape, spring clothespins and cardstock a supply of tent cards (# determined how many words on each card).

Before class: Write the memory verse (including the address) on tent cards, putting one word on each card. (A tent card is when you fold a piece of card stock or poster board so that it will stand, in a tent shape.)

Instructions:

- Read and say together Matthew 6:20-21.
- Divide class into two teams with each team having its own set of tent cards.
- Scramble the cards and set them out where they can be read at the other end of the room.
- Apply a strip of masking tape on the floor, in a completely different area, to designate where the cards will be placed as they are put in order.
- Give each team a spring clothespin.
- Relay begins when the first team member takes the spring clothespin and runs down to the tent cards. Student chooses the first word of the verse and picks it up only using the clothespin.
- Player then runs to their designated place on the masking tape line and sets the tent card at one end of the line.
- Player returns and tags the next team player, passing off the clothespin.
- Player then runs down to the tent cards to find the second word of the verse, picking it up with the clothespin, and placing it on the designated line to the right of the one already there.
- Play continues until the teams complete their verse.

Adapted from: [Hiding the Word in My Heart](#), Tina Houser, Warner Press, pages 43-44.

Music

Suggested Theme Song:
Additional Suggestions:

“In Christ Alone” (Avalon & Geoff Moore)
“Trust and Obey” (Public Domain)
“Forever God is Faithful” (Chris Tomlin)

Core Group

Core Leading Tip: If a student is distractible, state the student’s name before asking the question.

Introduce and explain the Memory Verse for the next lesson: **“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” Matthew 7:24**



Wrap-Up Teaching

Passage: Matthew 6

Summary: Jesus defines and explains spiritual disciplines (giving, praying, and laying up treasures in heaven) and discusses the solution for worrying.

Bible Truth: God promises to take care of us.

Challenge: Lay up treasures in heaven by finding specific ways to trust God's care.

Option #1 - Object Lesson: The Most Important Thing

Items needed: can of paint, mothballs, padlock

Can anyone tell me what I have here? What do you think these things have in common? They may not seem to have a lot in common, but actually they do. Each of them is used to protect something. Paint covers objects to protect them from rust and rot; mothballs protect clothing from moths, and the padlock can prevent thieves from breaking in and stealing. But even with all this protection, things still rust, get eaten by moths, and are stolen. Everything we have will eventually wear out, even with protection. Nothing lasts, that is, except for God and His ways.

God wants us to love and value things that will last—other people and our relationship with Him. When we trust God to provide for us, to be with us, and to help us become the kind of people who love others, then we are developing a treasure that will never disappoint us. God tells us: "You will seek me and find me. When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, declares the LORD..." Jeremiah 29:13-14a.

The best goal we can have in life is to trust, love, and serve God.

Adapted from: [Object Lessons for a Year](#), David J. Claassen, Baker Books, pages 24-25.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can we serve God in the way we give? (We give to serve God's people and honor God, not to impress others.)
2. How does Jesus teach us to pray? (We get alone with God and we speak openly, asking for his help and trusting Him to meet our needs. We can also ask Him to help us forgive, help us when we are tempted to do wrong, and to protect us from evil.)
3. How can understanding God's character help us when we worry about our needs? (He takes care of the birds and the flowers—two very fragile things. How much more will He take care of us.)

Object Lesson #2: First Things First – Items needed: table, large clear jar with labels removed or large clear bowl, walnuts in the shell, gravel, and sand.

Before class: Measure out the exact amount of walnuts, gravel, and sand needed to fill the jar to the top. Ideally, everything should fit if you put in the walnuts first, then the gravel, and then the sand.

Explain that this jar represents a normal day in our lives.

- *(Pour the sand into the jar.)* This sand represents activities such as talking on the phone, texting friends, watching TV, playing video games and so on.
- *(Pour the gravel into the jar.)* This represents schoolwork, homework, and eating, sleeping, spending time with family and so on.
- *(Try to shove some walnuts into the jar.)* This represents the activities we do to build our relationship with God, such as praying, doing our CBS lesson, serving others, or telling them about Jesus.

When the jar is nice and full, though still lacking most of the walnuts, pass it around and point out how stressed the jar is—nearly to the point of cracking. Explain that it is important to decide what to put first in our lives. If we start by putting the less important things ahead of the more important, it doesn't all fit and we become stressed, or not everything gets done.

Jesus says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" Matthew 6:33.

(Now fill empty the jar and reverse the order—first place all the walnuts into our lives.) Here are the things that nurture our relationship with God. *Take student suggestions of how we do this. Next pouring in the gravel, take suggestions for the healthy activities that fill our lives and relationships). Pour the sand into the jar.* These are things we enjoy but they don't build our relationships with God and others. Now everything fits comfortably. In everything we do, our lives should reflect that we put God first.

Adapted from: [Uncommon Object Lessons & Discussion Starters](#), Jim Burns, Gospel Light, pages 37-38.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some things we treasure?
2. What are some ways we can treasure our relationship with God more than we treasure other good things?
3. Where do you see activities in your life that might crowd God out?
4. What happens when we make our relationship with God our first priority? What could you change in order to put God first?
5. What are some good qualities (Kindness, purity, God's word, and so on.) What can we lock into our hearts as treasured possessions?



Prayer

The Treasure of Trusting God

Instructions:

- Brainstorm ways and times, it will be helpful to trust in God.
- Explain when you're facing something hard, when you need boldness, when you face a fearful situation, pray *and ask God to help you trust Him*.
- Open and lead students in prayer asking for us to trust Him when _____.
Also, thanking Him you that you can trust Him.

Snack

Please check allergies.
Serve a simple snack.

Craft

Tri-Crayon Picture: God Cares for the Flower – Items needed: crayons, white paper, colored construction paper, decorative-cut scissors, tape, and glue.

Instructions:

- Students tape three crayons together and draw a flower picture using the taped-together crayons.
- Cut paper with decorative scissors and then glue to construction paper.
- Read Matthew 6:27-30: And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?



Long-range craft ideas are found in the **Appendix** of this Teacher Guide.

Activity/Game

Option #1: Treasure Thanks — Items needed: Bible, 100 pennies.

Prior to class, hide the pennies throughout the room. Tell students that you've hidden pennies around the room. Count to three and then ask the students to begin searching for the pennies. After three minutes, stop the game and ask the class to form a circle. Ask them each to name one thing they are thankful for, either physical or spiritual, for every penny they found.

After students have shared, read Matthew 6:19-21 and ask:

- What are the things you are thankful for?
- What does the verse mean by 'where your treasure is, there your heart will be also?'
- How does keeping our eyes on Jesus and all His blessings help us to be thankful?

Adapted from: [The Humongous Book of Games for Children's Ministry](#), Group Publishing, page 170.

Option #2: Seeking God Scavenger Hunt – Items needed for each student: brown lunch bag, and a list of nature items.

Explain to students that Matthew 6:33 teaches that we should seek the Kingdom of God and that everything else we need will be given to us. Seeking the Lord means that we are constantly trying to learn more about Him and always trying to do what He wants us to do.

Take students outdoors and give each a brown lunch bag and the list of items they are to search for. Items on the list might include: flower, leaf, stick, bark, rock, feather, and pinecone. Adapt the list to what might be available in your area. Give students an allotted time limit and define boundaries where students are allowed to venture.

When time is up, gather students together. Allow contents of the bags to be shown, and then remind students that if God cares for all of these things in nature, then He will take care of you as well.

Adapted from: www.Ministry-to-Children.com, Lesson entitled: Jesus Says: "Do Not Worry"

For older students, add to the list:

- Find something soft, smooth, rough
- Find something that is a circle, square, and triangle.
- Find something green, brown, and red.
- Allow more time for these students to find the items.

Closing

What's in the Chest?

Items needed: Fill a "treasure chest" (box) with the following items: toy horn, hand or finger puppet, a large paper heart with praying hands drawn on, a slice of bread, a slip of paper with I.O.U. written on it, toy bird, cloth flower and a Bible.

Place the items from the treasure chest one by one to review the lesson. For each item ask, "What does this item have to do with our lesson?"

Close in prayer asking God students find specific ways to trust His care.