

First the Kingdom

Lesson Objectives

- The students will state that God wants us to seek first his kingdom.
- The students will describe one result of seeking the kingdom first.
- The students will describe one way that they can seek first the kingdom.

Lesson Text

Luke 14:15-24
Matthew 13:44-46

Scripture Memory Work

Quarter Review

Lesson Plan

Greeting and Registration

Preclass Activity: First Words

Welcome and Singing

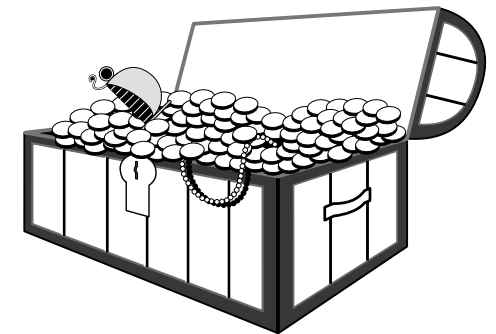
Centers:

Bible Story: Parable Players

Craft: Pearl of Wisdom

Scripture Memory: Treasure Hunt

NOTE: Allow time for a snack.



P R E • C L A S S

First the Kingdom

First Words

The students will preview today's lesson as they search for words from today's Bible Story.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

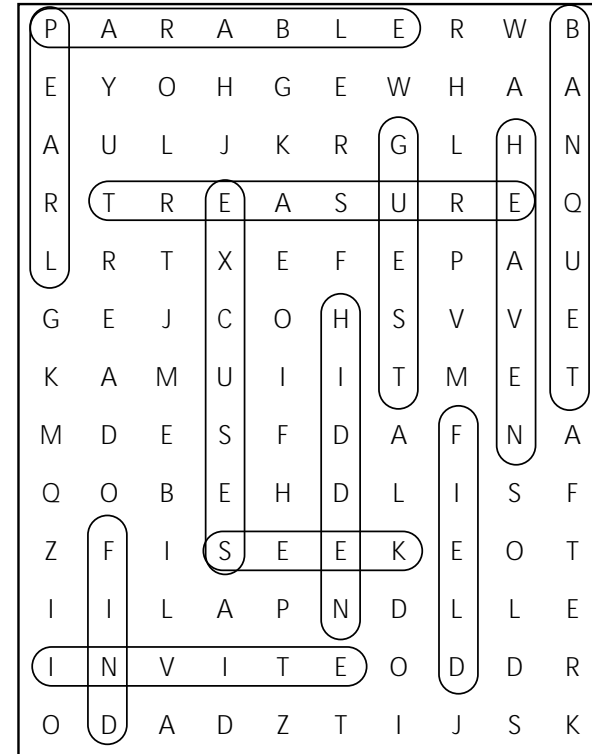
Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page A.

Instructions

1. Greet the students as they arrive. Tell them that in today's lesson they will be learning what it means to seek God's kingdom first. Explain that in today's Preclass Activity they will do a word search, looking for words from today's Bible Story.
2. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page A and pencils. Encourage the students to work with a partner or small group.
3. Circulate among the students to offer help and encouragement.
4. For students who finish early, have them look up Luke 14:15-24 and Matthew 13:44-45 and try to find where these words belong in the Bible Story.

Teacher Tips

- Encourage the students to make up additional word games using words from these Bible passages.



First the Kingdom

Parable Players

The students will participate in three of Jesus' kingdom parables as they think about what it means to seek the kingdom first.

Materials

For each student:

- 1 self-sticking name tag

For the teacher:

- marker
- large writing surface

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

1. On the large writing surface, write: The Master; the Servant; Guest #1; Guest #2; Guest #3; a poor person; a crippled person; a blind person; a lame person.
2. Write each of these titles on the name tags.
3. Practice leading this activity.

Introducing the Bible Story

Open your Bible to Luke 14:15-24. Tell the students that today's Bible Story comes from the New Testament books of Matthew and Luke. Explain that today the students will do a short play from one of Jesus' parables called the parable of the great banquet.

Presenting the Bible Story

Begin by reading Luke 14:15-24. Tell the students that Jesus used this parable to teach the people about seeking the kingdom first.

Show the students the large writing surface. Assign each student to a role in the play and give them the name tags. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page B to the students. Have the students act out this parable using their scripts, as you read the part of the Narrator.

When the students are finished, discuss the following questions:

- *Why didn't the invited guests come to the master's banquet?*
- *What were their excuses?*

- *Do you realize that these people thought that a field, some oxen, and getting married were all more important than God? These people were not willing to make the master's banquet—the kingdom of God—the most important thing in their lives.*
- *Who ended up coming to the banquet?*

Turn to Matthew 13:44-46. Read these two parables to the students. Ask the students: *What is the difference between the two men in these parables and the people in the great banquet?* (These two men were willing to give up everything they had to find the kingdom of God. The people in the great banquet were not willing.)

Ask the students which of the two kinds of people they are most like: do they make excuses for not going to church, or do they do whatever it takes to get there? Give the students who want to share a chance. Do not force a student to speak.

Encourage the students that God wants each one of them to enter his kingdom. God wants each of them to trust that he will take care of them and meet their needs.

Sharing with Others

Ask them if they know someone who is looking for a place to go to church. Encourage the students to share today's story with that person and invite them to church. Close with a prayer for God to help the students see how happy they can be for putting God first in their lives.

Teacher Tips

- In a large class, have two groups of students do the play for each other.
- In a small class, combine roles or have an adult assistant play the part of the master.
- Bring in simple props to enhance this activity.

First the Kingdom

Parable Players

The following play is adapted from Luke 14:15-24.

NARRATOR: When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'"

THE MASTER: [*He is very busy preparing a banquet.*] Come, for everything is now ready.

NARRATOR: But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said...

GUEST #1: I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.

NARRATOR: Another said...

GUEST #2: I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.

NARRATOR: Still another said...

GUEST #3: I just got married, so I can't come.

NARRATOR: The servant came back and reported this to his master.

SERVANT: None of your guests are coming. They all had excuses.

NARRATOR: Then the owner of the house became angry and gave his servant an order.

THE MASTER: Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.

THE SERVANT: [*He goes and gets the poor, lame, crippled, and blind people and brings them to the Master.*] Sir, what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.

THE MASTER: Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.

C

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F

T

First the Kingdom

Pearl of Wisdom

The students will make "oysters" containing the Scripture Memory Verse.

Materials

For each student:

- 2 small paper plates, 6"
- crayons or markers
- glue stick
- 1 cotton ball
- scissors

For the teacher:

- scissors
- stapler
- plastic wrap

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for every 5 students

Preparation

1. Cut out the scripture text boxes from the copies of Reproducible Page C. Each student will need one complete scripture text box. NOTE: You do not have to cut the boxes in half because the students will be doing this during the craft center.
2. Make a sample craft to show the students.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In today's lesson, you are learning about putting God's kingdom first.* Show the students your craft and read the scripture to them. Point out how the oyster opens up to reveal a pearl and God's promise to us. *In today's activity, you will make an oyster like this! This will help you to remember how valuable God's kingdom is and why you should put it first in your lives.*
2. Distribute the paper plates (two for each student) and crayons. Have them color both sides of both their plates.
3. Give each student a cotton ball, glue stick and small piece of plastic wrap. Have them wrap the cotton in the plastic wrap to make a "pearl." Have them glue the pearl to the front of one of their plates. See Figure A.
4. Distribute the scripture text boxes you prepared and scissors.

Have the students cut the boxes in half. Have them glue the first part of the scripture to the bottom of the empty plate. Have them glue the last part of the scripture next to the pearl on the other plate. See Figure B.

5. Have the students align their plates so the top plate is the one with the first part of the scripture and the bottom plate has the pearl. Be sure the scripture is aligned as well. Circulate around the room, and staple their plates together, near the top, as shown in Figure B.

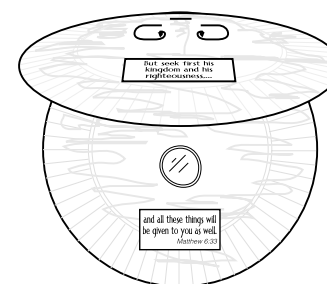
Conclusion

Read the parable of the pearl from Matthew 13:45-46. Discuss with the students how the kingdom is precious and valuable. Talk about why this can help us to put the kingdom first.

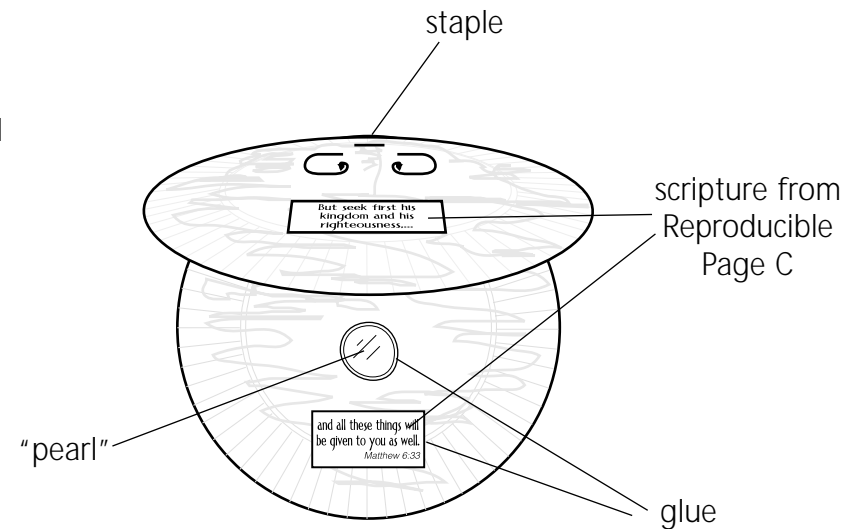
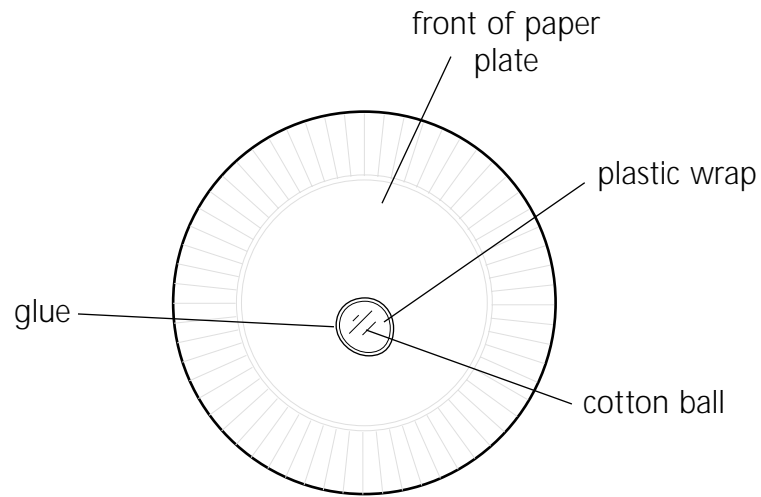
End the class with a prayer thanking God for his precious kingdom. Ask God to help the students to put the kingdom first in their lives.

Teacher Tips

- If possible, use imitation pearls found at most craft stores in place of the cotton balls and plastic wrap. This will make a more realistic craft.



First the Kingdom



First the Kingdom

Treasure Hunt

The students will review the Scripture Memory Verses from this quarter as they hunt to match the verse with its reference.

Scripture Memory Work

Quarter Review

Materials

For the teacher:

- 26 index cards, 5" x 7"
- marker

Preparation

1. On thirteen index cards, write out neatly the thirteen Scripture Memory Verses, without their references, from this quarter as they appear on the back of this Lesson Card.
2. On the other thirteen index cards, write the thirteen references.
3. Practice leading this activity.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *Today, you are learning what it means to seek the kingdom first. Jesus taught the people many things about the kingdom. He used parables—or simple stories—to help the people understand how much God wants his kingdom to grow. Jesus even died on a cross so that we would have a way to enter the kingdom. Jesus told the people that they must seek the kingdom first. That means that God wants our relationship with him and his church to be the most important thing in our lives. It should be what "comes first" in our lives.*
2. Tell the students that in today's activity, they will review thirteen Scripture Memory Verses from this quarter. Show them the cards you prepared. Explain that on thirteen cards are the Scripture Memory Verses, and on thirteen are the references. The object of today's activity is to match them together.
3. Divide the students into two groups. Shuffle the cards and divide them between the two groups. Tell the students to use their Bibles to look up the references so that they can find the matching verses. If a team holds the "reference" card, then they can take the matching scripture card to hold the match. Check their matches with your list on the back of this Lesson Card.

4. When all the matches are found, collect and shuffle the cards again. Repeat Step 3. This time encourage the students to try to match the cards from memory, and use their Bibles for the ones they are unsure of. Check their matches when they are finished.
5. For a third and final round, collect and shuffle the cards. Repeat the matching activity, this time entirely from memory, not using their Bibles. Check their matches.

Conclusion

Ask the students which of the Scriptures from this quarter are their favorites. Encourage the students that learning and memorizing scripture is one way to seek God's kingdom first. Close with a prayer thanking God for the gift of the Bible to teach us about the kingdom.

Teacher Tips

- Use the cards later as an extra Preclass or after-class activity.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

First the Kingdom

Quarter Review

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"— which means, "God with us."
Matthew 1:23

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
Matthew 3:17

"Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."
Matthew 4:19

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."
Matthew 5:8

Love one another deeply, from the heart.
1 Peter 1:22

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
Matthew 6:33

My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.
Psalm 121:2

Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."
Matthew 8:7

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.
Psalm 46:1

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies."
John 11:25

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.
Hebrews 12:28

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:38

"But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop."
Luke 8:15

Lesson Objectives

- The students will state that God wants us to seek first his kingdom.
- The students will describe one result of seeking the kingdom first.
- The students will describe one way that they can seek first the kingdom.

Lesson Text

Luke 14:15-24
Matthew 13:44-46

Scripture Memory Work

Quarter Review

Lesson Plan

Greeting and Registration
Preclass Activity: King's Crossing
Welcome and Singing
Centers:
Life Application: God's Table
Game: Treasure Stunt
Bible Skills: Seek and Find

NOTE: Allow time for a snack.

D
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King's Crossing

The students will review this week's lesson as they complete this crossword puzzle.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page D, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

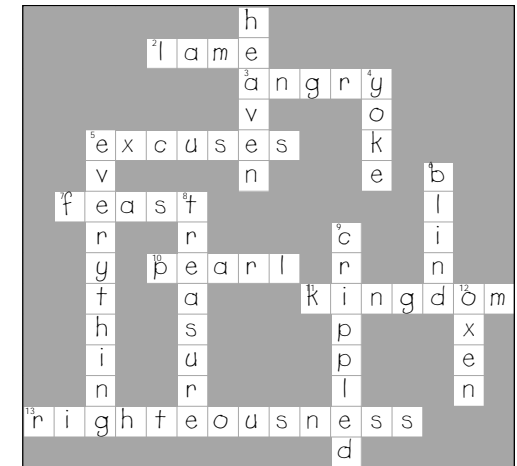
Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page D.

Instructions

1. Greet the students as they arrive. Remind them that this week they are learning what it means to seek the kingdom first. Tell them that this crossword puzzle will review ideas from the parable of the great banquet in Luke 14:15-24.
2. Have the students each work with a partner and use their Bibles. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page D and the pencils.
3. Check the students' answers with the Answer Key.

Teacher Tips

- Make sure to offer extra help to new or visiting students.



3rd and 4th Grades

God's Table

The students will review this week's Bible Story as they consider their different needs that God can meet when they seek the kingdom first.

Materials

For the teacher:

- 10 index cards, 3" x 5"
- 10 paper plates, 8"
- 10 doilies, 6"
- table
- tablecloth
- marker
- large writing surface

Preparation

1. Write one of the following on each card: You will have great friends; You will know God; You will go to Heaven; You will receive forgiveness of sins; You will have fun; You will overcome problems; You can be honest; You will have a clear conscience; You will help others; You will make a difference in the world.
2. Place the doilies on the paper plates. Place each of the cards face down on top of a doily on the plate.
3. Cover the table with the tablecloth and place the plates on the table.

Reviewing the Bible Story

Open your Bible to Luke 14:15-24. *This week you learned about the parable of the great banquet. In this parable, Jesus wants us to see that God has prepared a great "banquet" for us in his kingdom. God has prepared lots of really good things for us in his kingdom. But to have those good things, we must be willing to make God's kingdom the most important thing in our lives. In this parable, the invited guests made excuses at the last minute. They lost their chance to go to the banquet—to be in God's kingdom. Instead, it was the poor, crippled, blind and lame people who got to come in to the banquet! They had a great feast—and they entered God's kingdom.*

You also learned about the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great value. Turn and read Matthew 13:44-46. What is the difference between the two men in these parables and the ones in the parable of the great banquet? (These two men were willing

to give up everything because they knew the kingdom was worth everything they had.)

Life Application

Tell the students to open their Bibles to Matthew 6:33. Ask them to read it together with you. Ask the students what they think "all these things" means? Explain that in the beginning of the passage, Jesus tells the people not to worry about things like food and clothes. Jesus wanted people to know that if they put God and his church first in their lives, God would take care of their everyday needs like food and clothes.

Bring the students to the table. Tell them that this table has been set to remind them of the great banquet in the kingdom of God. Have the students take turns turning over a card and reading it. For each card, ask the students: *Is this something that you need? Is this something you want? When God and his kingdom are the most important things in your life, God will meet this need.*

Conclusion

Ask the students to each choose one card to take home with them. Close with a prayer thanking God for the needs he wants to meet in our lives.

Teacher Tips

- Think of additional ways to set the table so that it looks appealing to the students.



3rd and 4th Grades

The Kingdom 14-4-10



Treasure Stunt

The students will review key ideas from this week's lesson as they do some treasure stunts.

Materials

For the teacher:

- a bag of candy or small prizes
- 1 piece of white construction paper, 9" x 12"
- glue stick
- scissors
- marker

Reproducible Pages:

- Page E, 1 copy for the teacher

Preparation

1. Cut out the picture of the treasure chest from your copy of Reproducible Page E.
2. Glue the picture to the piece of white construction paper.
3. Trim the edges and then cut out the individual puzzle pieces.
4. Number the backs of each puzzle piece from one to nine.
5. Hide eight of the puzzle pieces around your activity area. Keep one to show the students.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In your Bible Story this week, you are learning what it means to seek God's kingdom first. Jesus used parables to teach the people about God's kingdom. In today's game, you will review what you have learned in these parables about the kingdom of God.*
2. Read Matthew 13:44-46. Tell the students that they are going to have an opportunity to search for their own treasure. Explain that this treasure is one that they will have to work together to find.
3. Show the students your puzzle piece. Tell the students that there are eight more puzzle pieces hidden around the activity area. Make sure that the students know the exact area where they are hiding, so that they do not waste time looking in the wrong area. Tell the students to find all the pieces as quickly as possible and return them to you.

4. Once they have returned with the puzzle pieces, tell them to listen carefully as you read them nine Treasure Stunts (from the back of this Lesson Card) that they will have to do as a group.
5. After each stunt is successfully completed, place the corresponding puzzle piece down to form the puzzle.

Conclusion

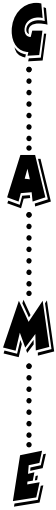
Encourage the students for their participation. Let each one choose a "treasure" (candy or a small prize) to take home. Ask the students what they consider to be the best thing about God's church. Close with a prayer thanking God for his church.

NOTE: Do not have the students eat the candy in the class without parent's permission. Otherwise, give it to them at the end of class when their parents come to pick them up.

Teacher Tips

- To save time, do not hide the puzzle pieces. Simply place them in a bag and have the students draw them out one at a time.





Treasure Stunts

Read each of the following treasure stunts and have the entire group do them together. Make sure the students have their Bibles.

1. Say, "God wants me to put his kingdom first" ten times.
2. Get on your hands and knees, as if you were searching for a tiny diamond on the floor.
3. Name three different parables that Jesus taught about the kingdom.
4. Tell God one thing that you really appreciate about him.
5. Find the book of Matthew.
6. Say Matthew 6:33 five times fast.
7. Tell one need that you have that God can take care of.
8. Find the book of Luke.
9. Name one thing that you would be willing to give up to enter God's kingdom.



3rd and 4th Grades

The Kingdom 14-4-12

B I B L E S K I L S

Seek and Find

The students will practice looking up verses and scriptures that are focused on seeking God.

Materials

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

- Page F, 1 copy for each student

Preparation

Complete the activity on your copy of Reproducible Page F.

Instructions

1. Introduce today's activity: *In your lesson this week, you are learning about what it means to seek God's kingdom first. The Bible is full of verses that teach us about seeking God and his kingdom. Today, you will get to seek out some of those verses and match them with their references.*
2. Have each student find a partner. Distribute the copies of Reproducible Page F and pencils. Tell the students to look up the references and match them to their verses.
3. Circulate among the students to offer help and encouragement. As soon as a pair finds a match, have them stand up and say, "We found a match!" Then have them read their verse and reference to the rest of the group.
4. Use the Answer Key on the back of this Lesson Card to check the students' matches.

Conclusion

Have the students sit in a circle and ask them what they think it would mean for them to make God the most important person in their lives. Ask them if they have a favorite scripture from the verses they matched today. Encourage them that the best way to seek God and his kingdom is to read their Bible and pray every day and come to church. Close with a prayer thanking God for the Bible.

Teacher Tips

- Make sure to help the students find partners that will help them be successful.

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Seek and Find

*Moses answered him, "Because the people
come to me to seek God's will."*

1 Chronicles 16:11

Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.

JEREMIAH 29:13

O God, you are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you,
my body longs for you,
in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.

Exodus 18:15

"YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN
YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART."

Psalm 63:1

"Ask and it will be given to you;
seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you."

Matthew 7:7



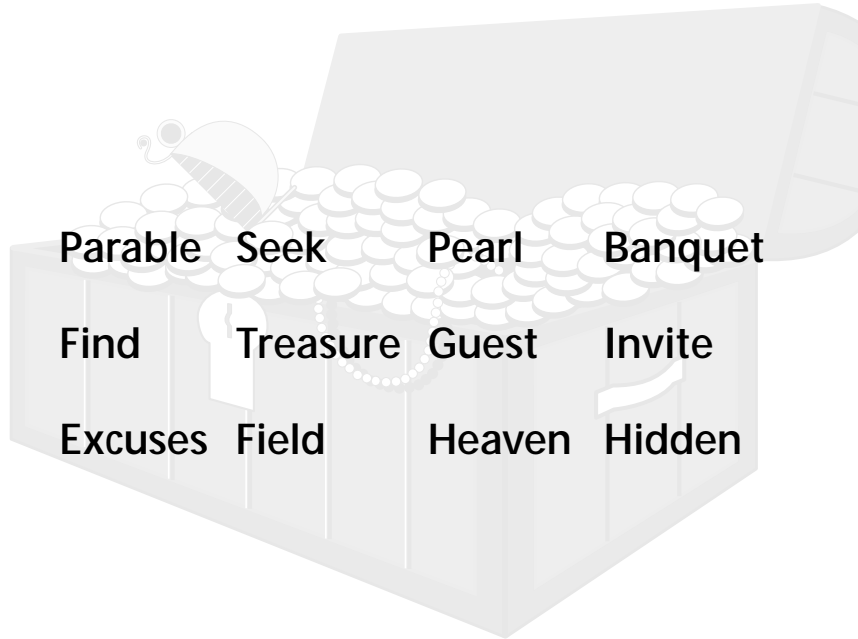
3rd and 4th Grades

The Kingdom 14-4-14

First Words

Name _____

In the box below, there are twelve words from today's Bible Story.
See if you can find all of them in the word search and circle them.



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

Core/Bible Story

1 copy for each student

Parable Players

The following play is adapted from Luke 14:15-24.

NARRATOR: When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, "Blessed is the man who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."

Jesus replied: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'"

THE MASTER: [*He is very busy preparing a banquet.*] Come, for everything is now ready.

NARRATOR: But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said...

GUEST #1: I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.

NARRATOR: Another said...

GUEST #2: I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.

NARRATOR: Still another said...

GUEST #3: I just got married, so I can't come.

NARRATOR: The servant came back and reported this to his master.

SERVANT: None of your guests are coming. They all had excuses.

NARRATOR: Then the owner of the house became angry and gave his servant an order.

THE MASTER: Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.

THE SERVANT: [*He goes and gets the poor, lame, crippled, and blind people and brings them to the Master.*] Sir, what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.

THE MASTER: Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.

Core/Craft

1 copy for every 5 students

<p>"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,...</p>	<p>...and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33</p>
<p>"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,...</p>	<p>...and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33</p>
<p>"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,...</p>	<p>...and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33</p>
<p>"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,...</p>	<p>...and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33</p>
<p>"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,...</p>	<p>...and all these things will be given to you as well." Matthew 6:33</p>

scripture text boxes



3rd and 4th Grades

The Kingdom 14-4-17

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Supplement/Preclass

1 copy for each student

King's Crossing

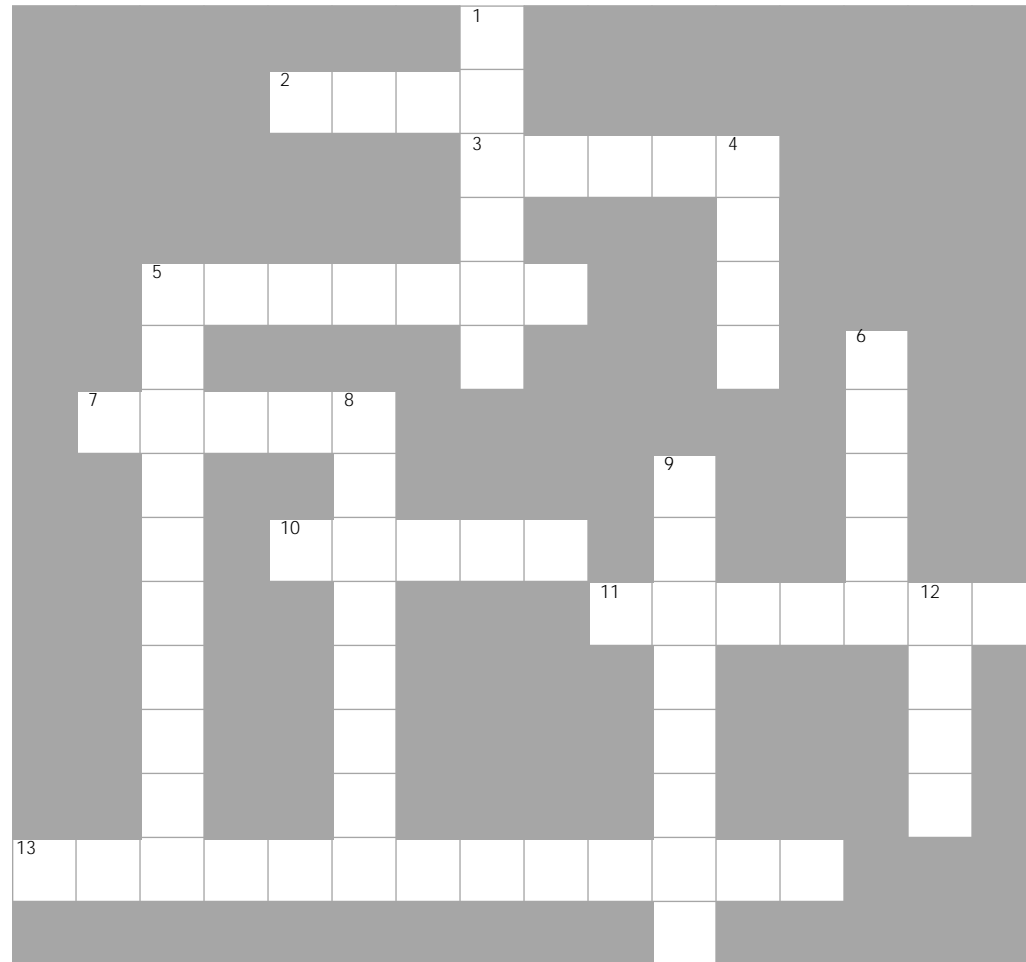
Name _____

ACROSS

- 2. When the host found out that no one was coming, he ordered his servant to bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the _____. (Luke 14:21)
- 3. The host of the banquet got _____ when he found out his invited guests weren't coming. (Luke 14:21)
- 5. When the servant told those who were invited that the banquet was ready, they all began to make _____. (Luke 14:18)
- 7. "Blessed is the man who will eat at the _____ in the kingdom of God." (Luke 14:15)
- 10. When the merchant found a _____ of great value, he sold all he had to buy it. (Matthew 13:45-46)
- 11. The great banquet represents the _____. (Luke 14:15)
- 13. Seek first God's kingdom and his _____. (Matthew 6:33)

DOWN

- 1. The treasure hidden in a field represents the kingdom of _____. (Matthew 13:44)
- 4. One guest said that he couldn't come because he just bought five _____ of oxen. (Luke 14:19)
- 5. When the man found the pearl of great value, he was willing to give up _____ he had to buy it. (Matthew 13:45-46)
- 6. When the host found out that no one was coming, he ordered his servant to bring in the poor, the crippled, the _____, and the lame. (Luke 14:21)



- 8. The kingdom is like a _____ hidden in a field. (Matthew 13:44)
- 9. When the host found out that no one was coming, he ordered his servant to bring in the poor, the _____, the blind, and the lame. (Luke 14:21)
- 12. One guest said that he couldn't come because he just bought five yoke of _____. (Luke 14:19)

"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."
Matthew 13:44

Seek and Find

Name _____

Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will."

.....

Look to the LORD and his strength;
seek his face always.

.....

O God, you are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you,
my body longs for you,
in a dry and weary land
where there is no water.

.....

"YOU WILL SEEK ME AND FIND ME WHEN
YOU SEEK ME WITH ALL YOUR HEART."

.....

"Ask and it will be given to you;
seek and you will find;
knock and the door will be opened to you."

.....

1 Chronicles 16:11

JEREMIAH 29:13

Exodus 18:15

Psalm 63:1

Matthew 7:7