

MOTHS, RUST AND THIEVES

SERMON
on the Mount
LESSON 4

LESSON TEXT

Matthew 6:19-24

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will define earthy treasure and spiritual treasure.
- The students will explain the results of trying to serve both God and money.
- The students will decide to give up one earthly treasure and replace it with a spiritual treasure.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- 1 sheet of lined paper
- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- 1 sheet of construction paper for every 2 students
- glue
- scissors
- magazines and newspapers (check to make sure they have no inappropriate pictures)
- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- extra Bibles
- masking tape
- bag or hat
- markers
- 1 sheet of construction paper

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student
- Page B, 1 copy for each student
- Page C, 1 copy for the teacher
- Page D, 1 copy for the teacher
- Page E, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
 Teacher Focus
 Teacher Tips
 Preclass Activity: Trash or Treasure—
 Find the Hidden Truth
 Starting Up
 Welcome and Singing
 Opening Prayer
 Victories
 Good News from the Kingdom

Getting into God's Word

Story: "Cancer"
 Scripture Study
 Activity: Possessing Possessions

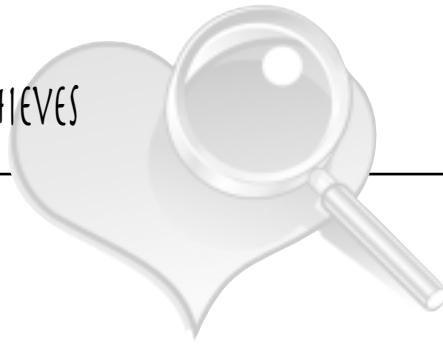
Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: Matthew 6:20
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
 Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 6:20



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read and meditate on Matthew 6:19-24. Meditate on how Jesus wants us to be spiritual, not to just act spiritually. Where is your treasure, really? Is this obvious to everyone around you, including your students? Do you view “things” in a spiritual or a worldly way? Preteens stand at a perplexing crossroads; they must learn to choose spiritual qualities in a world that is consumed by materialism. They must learn to value character over compromise and wisdom over worldliness.

TEACHER TIPS

Keep the class moving. There is a lot to do. One idea you can use from time to time in the Bible discussion is to have the class divide into two teams. As they answer the questions, have them back their answers with scriptures, usually from the passage that was just read. You could keep score and see which team backs up what it says with scriptures (where appropriate). You can also give points for participating, etc.

During the Bible story discussion, it will help for you to know the situations that your preteens are going through so you can use those examples as you illustrate storing up treasures on earth or in heaven.

Be sure you understand the directions for the Possessing Possessions game. Pick two of the larger preteens to be the game pieces. Because of the amount of contact required by the game, it is strongly suggested that the teams be made up entirely of boys or of girls, but not of both.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

TRASH OR TREASURE—FIND THE HIDDEN TRUTH

The students will rate a variety of “treasures.” They will also study advertisements that seem to offer happiness as a result of having or using material things, and they will expose the real truth about the product.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- 1 sheet of lined paper
- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

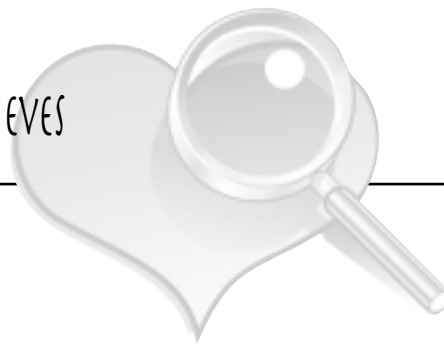
- 1 sheet of construction paper for every 2 students
- glue
- scissors
- magazines and newspapers (check to make sure they have no inappropriate pictures)

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

PREPARATION

1. Go through some magazines and newspapers to find advertisements that sell their products based on an exaggerated view of its positive qualities while ignoring some “hidden truth” about the product.
2. Cut out one ad for every two students and mount each of them, using glue, onto a sheet of construction paper. Some examples could include:
 - beer/liquor
 - candy
 - cigarettes
 - vacations
 - luxury car
 - real estate
 - fancy clothes



INSTRUCTIONS

1. As they arrive, give the students each a copy of Reproducible Page A (Trash or Treasure—Find the Hidden Truth) and a pen or pencil.
2. Ask the students to follow the directions to complete the worksheet. When they have finished, collect the worksheets and explain the second activity to them.
3. Have the students divide into pairs and give each pair one of the ads, two sheets of lined paper and a pen or pencil.
4. Have the students write down what their ad is selling.
5. Have them write down why the ads might convince them that they should have the products. (Examples could be that the ads make them feel like everyone is doing it; they will have many boyfriends/girlfriends if they have the product, or they will look better if they have it.)
6. Have them draw or write the truth about what the ad does not say about the product. For example:
 - beer/liquor: can lead to alcoholism, drunk drivers, juvenile court for minors, etc.
 - cigarettes: leads to lung cancer, death, bad teeth, nervous habits, addiction, bad skin, etc.
 - luxury car: high insurance rates, high car payments, etc.
 - expensive clothes: eventually go out of style, do not have money left to go anywhere in them
 - candy: (too much) can ruin your teeth, health, appetite
7. If there is time, have the pairs present the true ads to the class.

STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER

Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together? Select one or two students to pray for several minutes. Include special prayer requests for the preteens, the church and the kingdom.

VICTORIES

Take the time to have the students share about the challenge they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned this week?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

INSTRUCTIONS

Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom." Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and the victories of our brothers and sisters on other continents can inspire us and spur us on.





STORY

"CANCER"

The students will see that cancer starts quietly and continues gradually, yet it is extremely serious. The students will find the similarities between cancer and worldliness.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute copies of Reproducible Page B ("Cancer") to the students.
2. Ask the students to listen as you read the story.
3. Ask:
 - *Do you think anyone knows or feels the exact day when they get cancer?* (no)
 - *How does it spread?* (quietly, unnoticed)

Discuss how Mike felt some pain at different times, but even the doctors thought it had to be something else—like a pulled muscle. Talk about how Mike felt when he learned it was cancer. Talk about what he could have done: left the doctor's office and never gone back (denial), gotten angry with the doctor (blaming others), etc. (Let the students know that Mike had successful surgery the next day and his cancer is, after many months of tests and treatments, basically in remission.)
4. Tell the students that cancer is a physical disease that has killed millions and that Jesus talked about another "disease," spiritual disease, that has also killed millions spiritually and physically. *Let's turn to Matthew 6:19-24 and see if we can figure out what this disease is.*

SCRIPTURE STUDY

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

Have a few students take turns reading the passage. Ask the students the following questions and have them explain the passage to you. (This should not be a lecture. Give the students a chance to teach you!)

Discuss:

- *Why did he use the word "treasure"? what means the most to us / what we get excited about. Jesus is always concerned about our attitudes, not just our actions. He cares about the state of our hearts.)*
- *What are treasures on earth? (anything that ends with this life / anything that can be eaten by moths / anything that will rust or anything that can be stolen.)*
- *What have you ever owned or had that became rusty, moth-eaten or stolen? (Share from personal experience. We live in this world, so we will all possess things as we go through life—but Jesus' concern here is where our hearts are.)*
- *Are earthly things (caring about what others think of us, stylish clothes, the right hairstyle, the right friends, being the smartest, being the best ball player, etc.) the things we treasure and care most about?*
- *What are treasures in heaven? (things that can't become rusty, or be eaten or stolen!/our relationship with God and with other disciples)*
- *What lasts? (people's souls / a relationship with God / salvation, etc.)*
- *What could you do this week to help your relationship with God and others' relationships with God?*
- *If you were going to store up treasure in heaven in your family relationships, what would that mean? (helping, giving and sacrificing to make the relationships at home strong and pleasing to God. They may say, "Clean my room without my mom nagging me." "Letting my little sister have the last of my favorite cereal." "Getting up the first time my mom says it is time to wake up," etc.)*
- *If you were going to store up treasure in heaven with your friendships at school, what would that mean? (being kind, happy for others, forgiving, not critical or cold, giving and helpful. It means also talking about God, the Bible, church and letting them know about how much fun you have and all the things you do together.)*

There is a real power in the world and in worldly things. They affect our hearts and our minds. Loving the things of this world is like cancer. It seems harmless and starts innocently, but as it grows, it makes our eyes become "bad." They affect the way we see things, our view of life and our purpose. But the need for these things grips us. We become victims of treasures on earth. Those treasures rust, and moths or thieves come. We lose them, making us sad and



empty. Jesus warned us to not cling to the world—to have a detachment from worldly things and to not be absorbed by them.

- *Why can we not serve two masters?*
- *What does it mean to serve God?*
- *What does it mean to be devoted?*
- *What does it mean to serve money?*
- *Do you think you can serve both God and money?*
- *Do you really think that the people who serve money hate God?*
- *Why or why not?*
- *Why did Jesus say that?*

Give back the preclass worksheets. Have the students look at how they rated the items on the sheet.

Have them share what this shows about where their treasure is. Ask them how they feel about where their hearts are. Listen and take mental notes for later discussions with them.

ACTIVITY

POSSESSING POSSESSIONS

In this game the preteens will feel what it is like to have earthly treasures that weigh them down as they seek spiritual growth.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- masking tape
- bag or hat
- glue/scissors/markers
- 1 sheet of construction paper

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for the teacher
- Page D, 1 copy for the teacher

PREPARATION

1. Cut out the “cards” from Reproducible Pages C and D (Identity, Possession Cards) and back them with glue to pieces of construction paper.
2. Cut out the questions on Page D (Directions for the game) so that they are in strips.
3. Make your classroom into a room-sized game board by using masking tape to mark off squares on the floor. (You can make the board simple or elaborate, but have at least ten squares and a clearly defined start and finish.)
4. Before the preteens arrive, put the identity cards and the possession cards in separate piles.
5. Put the direction slips of paper in a bag or hat.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To start, pick two students, one boy and one girl. They will serve as the “game tokens” around the board. Give each game token three possession cards.
2. Ask for six volunteers, three boys and three girls, to serve as possessions. Give each one an identity card. These are the cards with the description on them. Make sure the girls’ cards match those of the girl who is a game token. Do the same for the boys.
3. Instruct them to join the game tokens on the game board, following the directions on the card. (For instance, the “gold jewelry” will put her arms on the arms of the game token that has the Gold Jewelry possession card.)
4. Once all the “possessions” are distributed between the game tokens, line the game tokens up at the starting square. Let them take turns picking from the hat (or bag) and following the directions on it.
5. All the possessions must move with the game tokens. If a game token stumbles or cannot carry out the directions on the paper because of all the possessions he or she has, that game token may not advance during that turn. Make sure the possessions (and everyone else) encourage and cheer their game tokens on.
6. When one of the game tokens reaches the finish square, declare him or her the winner. Appropriately applaud. (When all the strips have been chosen, stop the game even if no one has reached the finish.)
7. After the game, ask:
 - *How did you game tokens feel during this game?*
 - *When you first got your possessions, did you think it was going to be positive or negative to have them?*
 - *Which possessions do you think would have the most cash value?*
 - *Which was the most valuable to you in this game?*
 - *How is this game like real life?*
 - *How could having a lot of stuff keep us from having a good relationship with God?*
8. If there is time, allow the students to play again now or at the end of the class.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 6:20

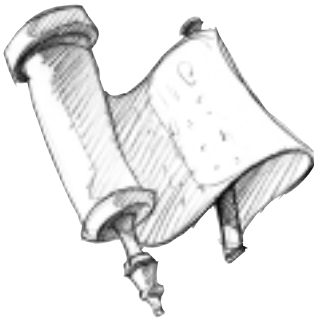
MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- Page E, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page E (Memory Verse).
2. Say the verse together aloud several times.
3. Ask four students to volunteer to come up front and stand in a line.
4. While looking at their sheets, have person #1 say the first part of the verse, person #2 the second part, person #3 the third part and person #4 the reference. Have them do it two more times.
5. Now tell them to recite their part of the verse by memory.
6. Ask for other volunteers if you have time.



WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you explain to them the challenge for the week.

The challenge this week is to give up or give away an "earthly treasure" and replace it with a heavenly treasure! Have the students talk about what they could do away with and have them pair up (or you as their teacher, knowing the students, pair them up) to help each other with it during the week. It could be that they decide that they are not going to make choices based on what others think. Or it could be that they are going to stop nagging their mom about buying the new shoes they want.

Then, they must replace it with a heavenly treasure. For example, instead of being controlled about what others think of them, have them decide to please God and make God happy this week. Instead of nagging Mom, have them find some new ways to serve Mom and have her use the shoe money to buy her something that she needs (or give the money to help with adoptions or the poor). Help them realize that they need to rely on God to help them not be worldly because almost everyone around them is very worldly. They cannot change this on their own.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, carry out your decision to give up an "earthly treasure" and replace it with a heavenly treasure. If you need suggestions or encouragement, ask your parent, your teacher or a classmate.

MOTHS, RUST AND THIEVES

LESSON TEXT

Matthew 6:19-24; Luke 12:13-21

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will explain why Jesus warned against selfishness and greed.
- The students will explain the results of worldly and spiritual solutions in various circumstances.
- The students will decide to give up one earthly treasure and replace it with a spiritual treasure.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- pen or pencil
- 1 sheet of construction paper or card stock

For the teacher:

- large writing surface
- marker or chalk
- magazines (check to make sure they have no inappropriate pictures)
- scissors
- glue
- markers
- extra Bibles
- 11 strips of paper
- bag, hat or small treasure chest
- 1 sheet of white paper for every 3 students

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
Teacher Focus
Teacher Tips
Preclass Activity: The Truth Ads
Starting Up
Welcome and Singing
Opening Prayer and Review
Great News Sharing

Getting into God's Word

Scripture Study
Activity: Where's My Treasure?

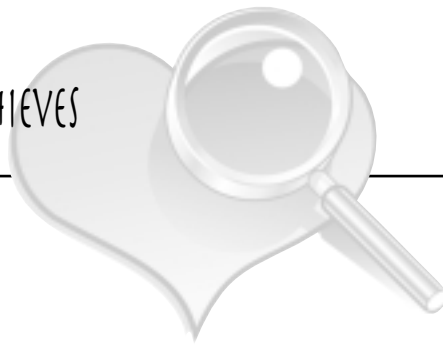
Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: Matthew 6:20
Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
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SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 6:20



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read and meditate on Matthew 6:19-24 and Luke 12:13-21. Meditate on Jesus' strong position against worldliness and greed. These sins are serious, yet we can fall into them so quickly and so easily that it is almost imperceptible. Are you on your guard against all kinds of greed? Do you focus on gaining spiritual treasures that are everlasting? Your students will spot any hypocrisy in your lifestyle that conflicts with the lessons you are trying to teach. Be sure that your life is worthy of imitation.

TEACHER TIPS

Be involved—make your own ad to sell a heavenly treasure. Show it to the class as an example so they get the point of the activity. Also, replace a worldly treasure that you are still clinging to in your own life with a spiritual treasure. Be ready to share the victory with the preteens to inspire them in their own challenge this week.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

THE TRUTH ADS

The students will create ads to “sell” heavenly treasures.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

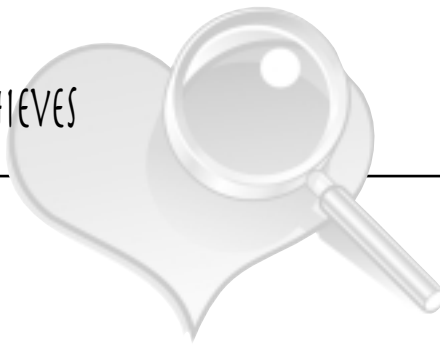
- pen or pencil
- 1 sheet of construction paper or card stock

For the teacher:

- large writing surface
- marker or chalk
- magazines (check to make sure they have no inappropriate pictures)
- scissors
- glue
- markers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tell the students that they will be “selling” heavenly treasures. They may work in pairs or small groups.
2. Start by asking them: *What are some heavenly treasures?* Write their answers on a large writing surface. If they get stuck, you can give them some hints (i.e., things that last, that cannot be stolen from you, etc.). Hopefully, they will say things like: friendships that help each other be like Jesus, obeying, being respectful of others, joyful because pleasing God, helping others get to heaven, viewing others with compassion, being confident in God, being forgiving (not vengeful), being self-controlled...
3. Offer the magazines with pictures to help them get started. For example, they could use a picture of friends having a fun time and then write a rhyme or catchy phrase about how God helps us have friendships that help each other, etc. Or they could use a picture of a happy person and advertise that the reason this person is happy is because he just denied himself to help someone else.
4. Then as the pairs are finished, have them present their ads to the class to see if they “sell.”



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students praying for each student to be spiritual and to desire what God wants in their hearts.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: Matthew 6:20.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so as many as possible can share.





SCRIPTURE STUDY

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

Start by having one teacher ask an assistant for money. This can be done semi-quietly, while only some of the class hears. The assistant should emphatically state, "No way." Have the teacher who wants the money tell the class to make this teacher give him/her some money. Let the class respond as they will. Have the teachers be set, though, on not resolving this issue! Then have a third teacher (if there is one) or one of the two "arguing" teachers say that this reminds them of a situation that Jesus faced. *Let's see how he handled it so we can learn about how to solve this dilemma.*

Have the students read Luke 12:13-21 silently while one student reads it aloud. Explain about inheritance money. Ask:

- *Why didn't Jesus talk to the other brother? (He addressed the heart of the man in front of him.)*
- *What did Jesus warn us about in verse 15? (all kinds of greed)*
- *What is greed? Does it only mean being really, really selfish? (never being satisfied with what you have / always wanting more)*
- *What other verse here would be a definition of greed? (v21)*
- *What is another way to say "a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions"? (life is much more than just what you have)*
- *Do people live like that today?*
- *How can you tell?*
- *How can you tell if you are worldly (greedy) or not?*
- *What was the matter with his plan of simply finding a bigger place to store all his grain?*
- *Who was he thinking about? (himself)*
- *Did he ever even thank God?*
- *How many times did he use the "me" words, like my, I, myself? (about fifteen times)*
- *Is there anything about this man that makes you think he thought about others?*

- *Okay, so exactly how selfish do you have to be to be as greedy as this man? (Remember, greed is like cancer. It starts slow and small but grows until it is so big that it has the potential to kill you spiritually!)*
- *Look at verse 21. Does it say that this is how it will be with some people, most people or all people who are not rich toward God? (anyone—so "all people" who are not rich toward God)*
- *If he was storing up heavenly treasure, how might this story have turned out differently for the man?*
- *How can you be rich toward God? (make spiritual things your priority: prayer, reading the Bible, being with friends who love God, sharing God with other people, seeking to be like Jesus at school and at home)*

In the following activity we will learn more about how to be rich toward God.





ACTIVITY

WHERE'S MY TREASURE?

The students will consider the results of both worldly and spiritual decisions in a variety of situations.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 11 strips of paper
- bag, hat or small treasure chest

PREPARATION

1. On the strips of paper, write out the following situations:
 - dating kids at school who do not come to church
 - not doing homework or studying
 - dressing in the latest, coolest stuff that you do not have money for
 - being unfriendly to the less popular or "uncool" kids
 - never asking questions in class
 - "mild" cursing
 - not writing down things that you are supposed to remember
 - having your mom nagging you again, in front of everyone
 - realizing you are wrong about something that you said or did
 - wanting to go to an 'R' rated movie with your friends
 - having your parents treat you like a six-year-old
2. Fold the strips up and put them into the bag, hat or small treasure chest.



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tell the students that in the bag are situations similar to those they face every day. (Some may have already been in the position to make choices about these things.)
2. Divide the class into two teams. Have students from each team come up, choose a strip of paper and read to their teams the situations that they chose.
3. For the situation that its member chose, have each team come up with a worldly solution and a spiritual solution (without the help of the reader).
4. Give each team two minutes to come up with their two solutions. Then have them share their solutions with the other team. (For example, if they picked the situation "dating," they may decide that the worldly solution is to go ahead and have a boyfriend/girlfriend, but just to keep it a secret so their parents never find out. The godly solution would be to invite the person they are attracted to or who is attracted to them to church or one of the activities and then to invite the whole family for dinner, after asking Mom. They should definitely talk to Mom or Dad about what's going on and how they are feeling.)
5. With some of the other situations, help the preteens to see that they need to help others around them not be so worldly and to be confident about being spiritual. They need to have the attitude that "Yes, I am going to do what's right because I want to please God more than anything else." One of the main things to instill in your students is the confidence that they need to have in storing up heavenly treasures in a materialistic, unspiritual world. Teach the preteens to stand strong against Satan and the world because Satan is bold and will stop at nothing to turn us from God.
6. Of course, it is possible to come up with more than one worldly or godly solution.
7. Play as long as time allows, and then congratulate both teams on their work.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 6:20

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

For the teacher:

- 1 sheet of white paper for every 3 students
- markers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students get together into groups of three and sketch a series of pictures that say the memory verse. For example, they could draw a grocery store for "store." Treasure could be a treasure chest.
2. After they have had about eight minutes to sketch quickly, have them use the pictures to say the memory verse in front of the class.
3. The pictures may not necessarily convey the heart of the verse, yet this will be a fun and different way for your students to memorize this verse.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

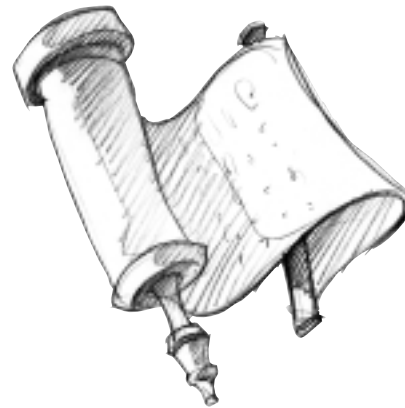
If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat while you remind them of the challenge for the week.

Have them follow up with each other on how they are doing with the weekly challenge. The challenge was to give up an "earthly treasure" and replace it with a heavenly treasure!

Have them talk about how it is going so far this week. They should know what each other decided to give up. It could be that they decided that they are not going to make choices based on what others think. Or it could be that they are going to stop nagging their mom about buying the new shoes they want.

CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.



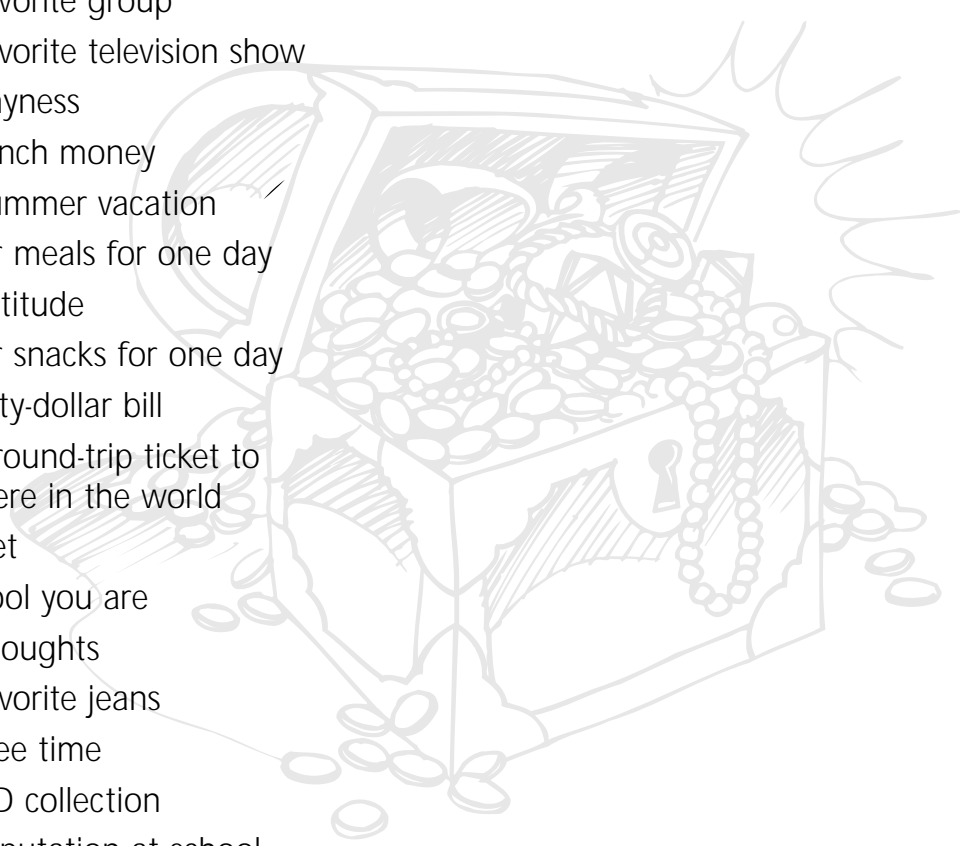
WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, carry out your decision to give up an "earthly treasure" and replace it with a heavenly treasure. If you need suggestions or encouragement, ask your parent, your teacher or a classmate.

TRASH OR TREASURE—FIND THE HIDDEN TRUTH

Using the numbers 1–10, rate each of the items below for how easy it would be for you to give away. “One” means “the easiest to give up,” and “ten” means “the most difficult to give up.”

- _____ your brother or sister
- _____ a five-thousand-dollar savings bond that you can convert to cash when you are fifty
- _____ all your shoes
- _____ front row tickets to a concert by your favorite group
- _____ your favorite television show
- _____ your shyness
- _____ your lunch money
- _____ your summer vacation
- _____ all your meals for one day
- _____ your attitude
- _____ all your snacks for one day
- _____ a twenty-dollar bill
- _____ a free round-trip ticket to anywhere in the world
- _____ your pet
- _____ how cool you are
- _____ your thoughts
- _____ your favorite jeans
- _____ your free time
- _____ your CD collection
- _____ your reputation at school
- _____ your Bible
- _____ your best friend(s)
- _____ late nights
- _____ your allowance
- _____ your cool shoes



On the back of this paper, write why the things you rated a “ten” are hard to give away. List each and write a reason for each item.

CANCER

As I stood atop Africa's tallest mountain, I felt like an "iron man." I was in great shape; I was still young at thirty-four years old, and I still clung tightly to the illusion that youth goes on forever, much like the Tanzanian plains of Africa. Death was something I never thought about. Old age was farther away than the nearest star, and my health was as sure as tomorrow's sunrise.

Then I started down the mountain...in more ways than one. Yes, I descended the three vertical miles to the plains below. But soon my health as well would be going downhill. Soon I would have my own brush with death. The iron man was about to become the trembling man of mere flesh.

The pains had begun during my training for Kilimanjaro. On one occasion I noticed severe pain in my lower abdomen after a stressful workout. In the next eighteen months, I had two or three other episodes of pain. All I could do then was lie down until the cramps passed. They always went away within twenty-four hours, but the pain was alarming. I spoke informally to doctors twice; each time they suggested that I had probably only pulled a muscle.

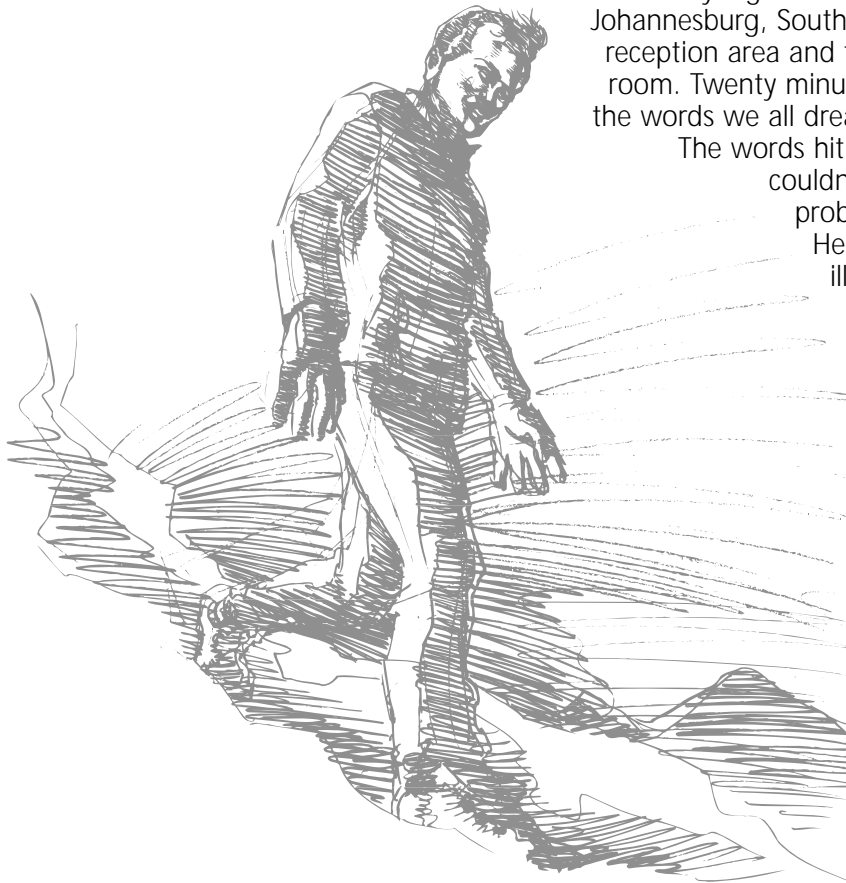
On November 9, 1995, I had another attack. I had worked out ferociously the day before and was lying in pain on the bed, unable to function. I knew I needed to go to a specialist and get some answers. Previously I had resisted this, but on that day I was urgent. The pain was simply too much. The doctor told me I could come in later that same day.

That Friday night I walked into Olivedale Clinic in Johannesburg, South Africa. I met the doctor at a reception area and followed him into an examination room. Twenty minutes later he looked at me and said the words we all dread hearing: "You have cancer."

The words hit me like a bolt of lightning. I couldn't believe it. I simply stared at him, probably with my mouth wide open.

He began to explain the details of my illness, but I wasn't listening. I had only heard the first three words. I sat on the bed with a blank look on my face.

I understand denial very well. Every cancer patient does. No one wants to accept the fact that he's carrying a tumor which could kill him. In fact, I carried the tumor for over two years, never wanting to believe it could be serious.



Mike Taliaferro, *The Killer Within* (Woburn, Mass.: DPI, 1997), 52-53, 57.



IDENTITY CARDS

Leather Jacket

Your game token must wear you on his/her shoulder, so place your arms on his/her shoulder.

New Shoes

Take off your shoes and stand on your game token's feet. You must stay on even when they are moving.

Gold Jewelry

Hang your arms on the arm of your game token. (You'll be like a bracelet.)

Good Friend

You don't have much cash value, but you're ready to support (help them stay balanced).

Pocket Gameboy

Okay, you don't really fit in a pocket. So your game token must hold your hands.

Walkman

Your hands are earphones. Put them over your game token's ears.

POSSESSION CARDS

Leather Jacket

New Shoes

Gold Jewelry

Walkman

Pocket Gameboy

Good Friend



DIRECTIONS FOR THE GAME

1. Hop two squares forward on your right foot.

2. Hop two squares forward on your left foot.

3. Move ahead as far as you can in one leap.

4. Take one of your opponent's possessions.

5. Get rid of one possession of your choice.

6. Leap over the next square into the one beyond it.
If you miss, go back one square.

7. Jump three squares forward, then two squares back.

8. Trade one of your possessions with your opponent.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

MATTHEW 6:20

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, carry out your decision to give up an "earthly treasure" and replace it with a heavenly treasure. If you need suggestions or encouragement, ask your parent, your teacher or a classmate.