

Jesus and the Journey to the Cross

Family Connection — WEEK 3

Week 3 – Giving Up to Giving Out

In Matthew 6, Jesus teaches against hypocrisy using prayer, fasting and giving as examples. From this, the church has established a tradition of “almsgiving” during Lent. In Jesus’ death on the cross, He gave all for us, and we are invited to give what we can as we walk in His footsteps. Fasting, putting aside something of importance in our lives, can be a way of providing resources to give on behalf of others.

Family Time with God

Activity

If possible, plan this devotional for a mealtime. Purposely delay your normal mealtime and engage your children in this Bible time first. Invite your child to set the table – help them make a big deal out of getting ready for this special time together as a family.

Open the Bible

Read or tell the story of Matthew 13:44-45.

Think about It and Respond

Jesus tells this story to help us think about something very important. What is it? (the kingdom of heaven – being part of God's family) How did the man and the merchant respond to finding the treasure and the pearl? (focus on both the emotion and the action)

What is God helping us to think about in this scripture? (how important is being a Christian to us)?

We delayed having our meal so we could think about this. We put aside something good for something even better.

Spend some time as a family praising God for who He is and what He has done. Encourage each member to also express how important He is to him or her individually.

** Sentences in italics can be read as written, put in your own words or adapted for your family.*

More Spiritual Conversation Starters

Here are some additional conversation starters that you can use during your Family Time with God, Family Experience, or just in your day to day conversations.

- ◆ Spend some additional time with the story this week – ask your child to tell you their own modern-day version!
- ◆ What can I put aside for something better this week?
- ◆ How can I put myself last and someone else first this week?

KEY VERSE

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Family Experience

Supplies needed: Assorted note cards that are blank inside, envelopes, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, stickers, and stamps

Experience: Writing notes to people who need encouragement. Gather all the supplies together and take some time sharing three (3) people that you would like to send a card to. Before you begin the activity, stop and pray for each individual.

List the names of the people you will be writing card to ...

Take time to decorate your card and then to write uplifting message such as:

- ◆ Stay strong
- ◆ You are awesome
- ◆ Never forget how amazing YOU are
- ◆ You rock
- ◆ I hope you have a great day today
- ◆ You shine brighter than the sun
- ◆ You inspire me
- ◆ Be Brave
- ◆ I believe in YOU
- ◆ God loves You and I do too!
- ◆ God bless You!



You can choose to hand deliver your card or mail it. Before you mail the cards, spend some more time praying over them and for the individuals who will receive them.

Prayer for Encouragement

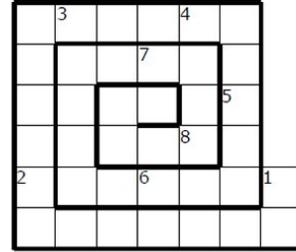
Lord, instill in me a new spirit so I may be encouraged to persevere. Give me the confidence I need to approach every event in my life with fearlessness. As the path gets tougher help me adapt so I can get through even the most difficult situations. Give me the encouragement I so desperately need. Please hear my prayer.

Amen.

Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

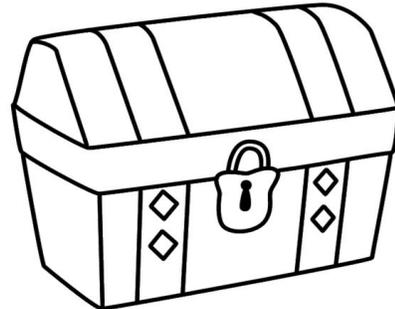


When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. Matthew 13:46 (NIV)
Look at the numbered clues, determine the correct word, and write that word in the spiral puzzle. Each numbered square will begin a new word.



1. Something of great value; gold, silver, or jewels, for example
2. A small, shiny, hard ball that forms inside some oysters
3. A feeling of great happiness
4. To put in a place where something cannot be seen or found (past tense)
5. Gave something in exchange for money
6. A territory or country ruled by a king or queen
7. An adult male human
8. The worth of something in money

VALUE	PEARL	HID	KINGDOM
TREASURE	MAN	SOLD	JOY



Consider ways that your family can lay up more treasure by giving up to giving out? Here's just a few ideas...

Give up a meal out or outing and

- ◆ give the money to missions
- ◆ use the money to buy something for someone in need

Give up time to

- ◆ Do an extra act of service at church
- ◆ Volunteer at a community organization
- ◆ Visit someone who needs a hug

Give up your comfort zone

- ◆ Get to know a new family at church or in your neighborhood
- ◆ Tell someone about Jesus

What ideas do you have?
