

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.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(10–15 MINUTES)
PAGE 124



TEACH THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 126



APPLY THE STORY
(25–30 MINUTES)
PAGE 132



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

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



SESSION TITLE: 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.

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 talk about the most important thing they own.

SAY • We often own things that are very special to us. Today we will talk about Jesus' teachings about possessions. *Possessions* are the things we own. How do you think Jesus wants us to view the things we own?

Activity page (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete the "Fashion Statement" activity page. Encourage kids to use the space provided to design and draw their idea of a cool or beautiful outfit. If boys are struggling to find this interesting, remind them they can design armor or a sports jersey.

SAY • Those are some awesome outfits you designed! Today, we will learn about a time Jesus talked about what people wear. Did you know that He said flowers are more beautiful than even the best outfits people can wear? Why do you think Jesus compared our clothes to what flowers look like? We'll learn more soon.

- "Fashion Statement" activity page,
- 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Wants and needs

Designate one side of the room as *Wants* and the other side as *Needs*. You may choose to make signs and hang them for kids to see. Say the names of different objects the kids might own or wish to own. Instruct the kids to move to the side of the room that accurately describes the object you named. Allow kids to explain their reasoning. You may read from the suggested list below, or come up with your own.

- clothing
- healthy food
- junk food
- new toys
- pets
- school supplies
- clean water

SAY • Some of those were things we definitely need, and some of those were probably just things we want. Today, we will learn what Jesus taught about what we want and need. There's one thing we need most of all. What do you think that is?

OPTION 2: Bubble blessings

Allow the kids to blow bubbles. Challenge them to name a blessing God has given them for each bubble they blow.

SAY • No matter how great the blessings are that God has given you, none of them will last forever—none except the eternal life Jesus provides to everyone who has faith in Him. Today, we'll learn more about Jesus' teachings about possessions.

LOW PREP

- paper (optional)
- marker (optional)
- tape (optional)

Note: Be sensitive to kids whose families may struggle providing basic necessities.

- bubble solution
- bubble wands, 1 per kid

Note: Be sensitive to kids whose families may struggle providing basic necessities.

Transition to teach the story

TEACH the Story



SESSION TITLE: 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.

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

[Leader enters wearing sandals, cargo shorts, sunglasses, and a Hawaiian shirt.]

LEADER • Hello again. Welcome back to my classroom. We teachers take our jobs very seriously. That's why we spend so much time preparing for school even when school isn't in session. But even teachers need a break sometimes. That's why I'm dressed like this. I'm planning a dream vacation.

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

I love to relax by the beach with a good book and a huge glass of pineapple juice. When I do, all the worries of my job and my normal life seem to melt away. But you know, even though I sometimes feel like I need a vacation, the truth is, I only need one thing to deal with my worries. Would you like me to tell you what it is? *[Allow responses.]* I'd be glad to! It's Jesus! The lesson Jesus taught about possessions and dealing with our needs helps me de-stress.

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Let's review our big picture question and answer.

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him. Jesus wanted people to know God, so He told people all about the Father. Jesus also wanted people to understand that He is the Messiah, so He used the Old Testament to show that He is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets. All Scripture points to Jesus.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

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

· Giant Timeline

LEADER • When we started this unit, we heard the Sermon on the Mount. **Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom.** We learned that sin begins in our hearts and minds, so no one but Jesus can obey perfectly. Then we learned that **following Jesus is not easy, but He is worth it.** Last week, we studied prayer. **Jesus taught people how to pray.** He taught that we should have faith and trust God to do what is best for us. This week, we will learn what Jesus taught about our possessions.

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 • I think that most of us know what it feels like to want something really badly. Greed and selfishness are a natural part of our sinful hearts. We want

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

things we don't have, and sometimes we make those things into idols by focusing all our attention on what we want and how we will get it. Jesus explained that is not a good way to live. Sin always keeps us from feeling joy.

It's important to notice that Jesus doesn't promise that God will give us everything we want. God is righteous and loving. He always does what is best. He doesn't always give us what we want because often we want things that are bad for us. God wants to take care of us.

Jesus pointed to nature. He reminded people that if we can trust God to take care of all the plants and animals in nature, we can certainly trust Him to take care of us. He loves people more than any other part of creation. We can trust Him to meet our needs.

But what about the things we want? Well, Jesus' teaching helps us understand a very important truth: He is more valuable than anything else. The only way to experience real joy, peace, and love is to live for God's kingdom, worshiping Jesus as King. When we understand that Jesus is the greatest treasure, we understand that we can live without the things that we often think are so important.

God may still choose to bless you with cool toys or fun games, but people who treasure Jesus most will be transformed by His love. Believers can use all their possessions to bless other people and share God's love with their neighbors. When we say that it is better to give than to receive, we really mean it! We've received all we need through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, so we can give generously to others.

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. When we worry about what we do and do not have, it distracts us from worshiping Jesus and obeying Him out of love. Thankfully, Jesus' sacrifice on the cross makes the way for us to have new life, so we can put away the distractions and live for God's glory.

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

Questions from kids video (3 minutes)

Show the "Unit 23, Session 4" questions from kids video. Prompt kids to think about whether it is wrong to own many things. Guide them to discuss ways they can show generosity and love with the things they own.

• "Unit 23, Session 4" Questions from Kids video



Missions moment (3 minutes)

Print the "More about the Balasinghams" printable and invite a volunteer to read the statements about the Balasingham family.

• "More about the Balasinghams" printable

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, Canada. God faithfully takes care of their needs so that they can serve Him.

Pray for the Balasinghams and for other missionaries your church supports.

- Key Passage Poster
- “I Have Spoken (John 14:25-26)” song

Key passage (5 minutes)

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

LEADER • Jesus’ promise to send the Holy Spirit was fulfilled two thousand years ago. That means everyone who has faith in Jesus receives the Holy Spirit right away. The Holy Spirit is God, and He helps us remember God’s Word and obey out of our love for God.

Sing (4 minutes)

- “Just As I Am” song

LEADER • It’s normal to feel worry and concern about the things we want and need. Thankfully, we can go to Jesus just as we are. He can transform our lives and make us into new creatures who love and obey God. Sing together “Just As I Am.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to apply the story.

LEADER • God, thank You for caring about us. We know that we do not deserve Your love. Thank You for loving us anyway. Help us trust You and live generously with all the blessings You have given us. 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



SESSION TITLE: 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.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- adhesive name tags,
1 per kid
- markers

Write each word or phrase of the key passage on an adhesive name tag. Place one name tag each kid's back and challenge kids to work together without talking to arrange themselves in the correct order.

SAY • Our key passage comes from the Book of John. Jesus spoke these words to His disciples before He went to die on the cross. Jesus knew that it would be hard for them to remember the wonderful things He taught them about God and God's kingdom. Thankfully, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us. He helps us remember the truth that Jesus taught so we can love and obey God.

Discussion & Bible skills (10 minutes)

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

Distribute a Bible to each kid. Help kids find Luke 12. Remind the kids that Luke is a part of the Gospels division of the New Testament. Help the kids draw a connection between the Gospel of Luke and the Gospel of Matthew by showing them how Matthew 6:25-34 contains a very similar teaching. Help kids see that the authors of all the Bible were inspired by God to write exactly God's Word.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

1. What happened to the rich man who stored up his possessions? (*He didn't get to use them because he died, Luke 12:20*)
2. What did Jesus say about the birds? (*They don't plant or harvest food, but God feeds them; Luke 12:24*)
3. What treasure did Jesus tell people to seek? (*the kingdom of God; heavenly treasure; Luke 12:31-33*)
4. What does "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" mean? *Guide kids to see that when we value something a lot, we think about it. Whatever we treasure most, we will spend our time and energy trying to get or protect. Help them see that greed distracts us from loving God and obeying His commands to be generous.*
5. What do you think treasure in heaven will be like? *Talk to the kids about what they think. Encourage them to be honest. Gently guide them away from the traditional ideas of gold, silver, or jewels. Help them see that heavenly treasure has more to do with enjoying God's perfection and living in a perfect, restored world.*
6. How can we avoid greed and selfishness? *Help kids understand that to overcome greed we must understand Jesus' generosity displayed on the cross. As we better understand the extravagant generosity of Christ, our love for Him will move us to show generosity as Jesus did.*

SAY • Jesus taught people not to worry because God provides for our needs. It is not sinful to own possessions, but those who love Jesus seek ways to show generosity and glorify God with our stuff.

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

LOW PREP

· foam ball

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

· construction paper
· markers or pencils
· plastic gems and play money (optional)
· glue (optional)

Activity choice (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Ball toss blessings

Invite kids to sit in a circle. Select a kid to start the game by tossing a foam ball to another kid. She will name a blessing that God provides (such as food, home, clothes, toys, and so forth). The kid receiving the ball must think of a way that he could use that blessing to show the love of Jesus (such as bringing a meal to someone, inviting friends over to play, giving away outgrown clothes, sharing toys with a new friend, and so forth). Encourage kids to help one another with the answers and to throw the ball to different kids each time so everyone has a turn. Be prepared with ideas to share with kids who can't think of an item or an answer.

SAY • Kesavan and Viji know that the things that 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. Every blessing God provides can be used to show His love and goodness to others. We live on mission by blessing other people with the blessings God gives us. That includes the gospel!

OPTION 2: Treasure troves

Provide the kids with construction paper. Encourage them to draw pictures of things they consider to be treasures. Ask them to think of ways they can use those treasures to glorify God. You may provide plastic gems and play money for the kids to glue around the border of their drawings as decoration.

SAY • Jesus taught people not to worry because God

provides for our needs. Jesus said that when we seek God's kingdom, He will give us what we need. That doesn't mean we will always have everything we want or that our lives will always be easy. However, the spiritual blessings we get through Jesus are much better and more important than anything we might not have.

Seeking God's kingdom means living in a way that puts God and His plan first. We can do that by sharing the gospel and using our time, talents, and possessions in ways that glorify God.

Reflection and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper to each child. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or about the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Whom can I tell about this story?

Make sure to send the sheets home with kids alongside the activity page so that parents can see what their kids have been learning.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session. Pray for your group.

- pencils and crayons
- paper
- Bible Story Coloring 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.