



OCTOBER THEME

**USE IT OR
LOSE IT**

Don't Waste What You've Got

BIBLE STORY

MATTHEW 25:14-30

Parable's Got Talents | Parable of the Talents

Spark Story Bible | Parable of the Talents, pg. 316-317

BOTTOM LINE

Use your things wisely

MEMORY VERSE

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."
Luke 16:10a, NIV

LIFE APP

Stewardship | Taking care of what you have because it all belongs to God

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice and with God's help, I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **STEWARDSHIP** and God's character, as shown through God's big story.

This WEEK: Key Question: How can you best use your things? If you asked the kids you know, most would tell you that what they own is super important to them. But if you pressed them long enough, you'd probably discover that they leave their LEGOs on the floor, their bikes out in the rain, or their video game controllers lost somewhere in the couch cushions. But we want kids to remember that what they have actually belongs to God, that God made it possible for them to have those things. Along with that comes a responsibility to use your things (*or your time, talents, and money*) wisely.

This was something important to Jesus as well. Jesus talked about stewardship through several of his parables, including one recorded for us in **Matthew 25:14-30**. This is a familiar parable about a businessman who went on a journey and left three of his workers in charge of some of his money. Two of the workers turned a profit while the third buried his portion, did nothing with it, and wasted his opportunity for growth. In the end, the people listening are left wondering how they are caring for what's been entrusted to them.

Bottom Line: Use your things wisely. God has given each of us responsibility over something—money, talents, even our stuff. We pray kids discover how they can use those things wisely.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today's story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. The stuff that kids own is very important to them. Ask God to help kids see that it's not inherently bad to have cool stuff or to like having cool stuff. What matters is what they do with their stuff and how they use it, share it, and take care of it.

•• EARLY ARRIVER IDEA

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Help your group find the person in the group who has the most and the least of the following things:
 - Letters in their last name
 - Pets



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GRADE PRE
SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

- Green in their clothes
- Buttons on their shirt or dress
- Pockets
- Hair

•• MAKE THE MOST

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: Copy paper

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of paper. Tell them to tear their pieces of paper into as many tiny pieces as possible.
- When they think they're finished, challenge them to keep making the pieces even smaller.
- Work together as a group to throw ALL the tiny pieces of paper into the trash can.

What You Say: "You guys sure made a lot of pieces out of one sheet of paper. You definitely made the most out of those papers. [Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we'll hear/we heard about making the most of something way more important than paper."

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children's Ministry worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

•• THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

Made to Explore | An activity that extends learning through hands on experimentation and discovery

What You Need: Spark Story Bible, copy paper (3 pieces per person), crayons

What You Do:

- Open the Spark Story Bible to the Parable of the Talents (p. 316).
- Hand out 3 pieces of copy paper to each of your kiddos, and then read the story aloud to your group.
- When you get to the part where the man gave talents to his servants, explain that each was given a different amount. Ask them to draw 5 circles on one piece of paper, 3 circles on the 2nd piece, and one circle on the 3rd piece.
- At the point in the parable where the first two servants go to the market and make more money, ask the kids to draw 5 more circles on the paper with 5 circles and 3 more circles on the paper with 3 circles.
- When you get to the servant who hid his money, ask the kids to fold up the paper with one circle and put it in their pocket. If they don't have a pocket, they can sit on the folded up piece of paper instead.
- Explain that when the first two servants used what they had wisely, they did a good thing. The servant who did nothing ended up with nothing.

What You Say: "Each of the men in our Bible story received different things. The story isn't really about what they were given or whether they had more than someone else. It's a story about stewardship—taking care of what you have because it all belongs to God."

"Close your eyes and picture the things that are in your room at home or wherever you keep your toys and clothes and all your favorite stuff. What are some of the things you see? (Let kids share.) Those are some really great treasures! When you take care of the stuff

God's given, you show God that you know how to **[Bottom Line] use your things wisely.**"

[Make It Personal] *(Tell kids about responsibilities you had as a kid. What jobs did you do? Did you ever lose a privilege because you didn't take care of something well?)*

•• **WHO'S GOT STUFF?** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: Tape, "Stuff Cards"

What You Do:

- Tape one or more "Stuff Cards" to each kid's chest.
- Ask kids to stand in a circle so their "Stuff Cards" are visible to everyone.
- Read one of the riddles below and lead kids to gather around the child whose gift answers the riddle.
—For some riddles, it's okay to have several answers.
—Add variety by having the kids move in different ways for each round of the game (*hop, crawl, skip, tiptoe, march, hop on one foot, etc.*).
- 1. If you have this, you might be able to ride it to your friend's house. (*bike*)
- 2. If you have this, your family buys dog food. (*pet*)
- 3. If you have this, you probably have some video games. (*game controller*)
- 4. If you have this, you might be on a team. (*soccer ball*)
- 5. If you have this, you can learn to play music. (*piano*)
- 6. If you have this, your feet don't hurt when you step on a rock. (*shoes*)
- 7. If you have this, you can jump really high. (*trampoline*)
- 8. If you have this, you don't get cold in the winter. (*coat*)
- 9. If you have these, you always have something to read. (*books*)
- 10. If you have this, you aren't hungry. (*food*)
- 11. If you have this, you can learn about Jesus. (*Bible*)
- 12. If you have this, you can play fun games. (*tablet*)
- 13. If you have this, you can buy stuff. (*money*)
- 14. If you have this, you have a TV. (*TV remote*)
- 15. If you have this, you have something sweet to eat. (*candy*)
- 16. If you have this, you can call or text a friend. (*cell phone*)
- Finish the activity by asking kids to come up with ways to use their stuff wisely—not only for themselves but also to help others by possibly playing with a friend, helping a parent out with chores, and so forth.

What You Say: "What are some ways we sometimes waste our stuff? Maybe we don't use some things as much as other things. Like if we have two board games and only use one, or if we have a bunch of stuffed animals but really only play with a few of them. Can you think of some things you might have at home that you don't use? (*Allow them time to share.*)"

What You Say: "Everyone has stuff. Some people have more than others, and that's okay. Many of us have way more than we need. The main thing isn't **WHAT** you have or how much you have; it's what you do with it. It's not bad to use your things for yourself, but God doesn't want you to use your stuff **ONLY** for yourself. God wants you to **[Bottom Line] use your things wisely**. So that means if we have things that we don't use, we could give them to someone who would use them!"

•• **NUMBER GUESS** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: No supplies needed



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GRADE PRE

SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

What You Do:

- Read this month's memory verse, Luke 16:10a, (*found on the left column of the first page of this leader guide*) out loud to your group.
- Invite kids to repeat each phrase after you: "Whoever can be trusted with very little (*Whoever can be trusted with very little*) can also be trusted with much (*can also be trusted with much*)."
- Practice saying the verse by playing a guessing game.
 - Choose a number from zero to five and hold that many fingers behind your back so the kids can't see it.
 - Next, have the kids stand with hands behind their backs.
 - At your signal, tell the kids to guess what number you have chosen by holding up their fingers.
 - Then, show them your hand.
 - Those who guessed correctly get to say the memory verse together with you.
 - Play several rounds to get lots of practice saying and hearing the verse.

What You Say: “Guessing games are fun even if we don’t always get the right answer. I’m glad God doesn’t play guessing games. God doesn’t make us guess about how to **[Bottom Line] use our things wisely**. It’s all about learning as we grow. Now we can be trusted with little things, and as we get older and learn how to **[Bottom Line] use your things wisely** we can be trusted with more!”

PRAY AND SEND [Pray to God | Prayer Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Say: “Whenever you don’t know how to **[Bottom Line]** **use your things wisely** for God and for good, take a minute to pray. Ask God to help you to take care of the things God has given you. Let’s do that right now. I’ll pray and you can repeat after me.

What You Do:

- Pray the prayer below, pausing after every phrase so kids have a chance to repeat it.

“Dear God, (Dear God,) thank you for all of the stuff you have given to us (thank you for all of the stuff you have given to us). Help us to use those things wisely (Help us to use those things wisely.). Help us to not waste what you have given us (Help us to not waste what you have given us.). In Jesus’ name (In Jesus’ name). Amen (Amen).”

What You Do: Give each child a weekly GodTime card. Sunday leaders, pass out October's monthly Parent Cue cards as adults arrive to pick up.

-- NOTES --