

Lessons and Activities for Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Warm Up Activities

- **Option 1:** Before the session make play dough by mixing together 1½ cups flour, ½ cup salt, ½ cup water and ¼ cup oil. Knead well. Use food coloring to tint the play dough. Store in plastic containers. Invite children to use the play dough to make “treasures,” special things for today’s story. Invite participants to make from the play dough treasures, toys or any other kind of special belongings they can think of. Encourage children to show and tell what they have made.
- **Option 2:** Ask participants to consider this question: *If God promised you any one thing you wanted, for what would you wish?* Encourage many different answers, allowing each participant to freely change answers. A brainstorming atmosphere encourages more interesting ideas. Record all answers on chalkboard, whiteboard or newsprint. Save this list to use in today’s Bible Study. Then invite participants to hear the story of a man who had to answer the same question.

Story: God’s Treasure

Note: Use the play-dough items made in today’s warm up activity or images cut from magazines or newspapers of things we commonly think of as treasures to tell today’s story.

One day a man is walking in a field. There he stumbles upon the most beautiful treasure he has ever seen. (Invite children to describe the treasure.) At once he runs back home. He gathers everything he has. (Name the play-dough treasures or the cut-out images as items that the man sells.) Then he gives all these things in exchange for the field. He walks to the field and picks up the beautiful treasure. He says, “I love this more than any other treasure I have ever had.”

Say: *I wonder what the treasure was.* Accept all answers then guide the answers toward more spiritual or abstract things like love, God, family, etc., if needed.

Gospel: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

³¹He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into

the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Group Activity: Graffiti Wall

- Tape a sheet of butcher paper or newsprint to a wall to make a “graffiti wall.” Read aloud Matthew 13:31-33, 44-49a. Then write across the top of the graffiti wall, *The kingdom of heaven is like...*
- Invite participants to write words or draw pictures that show their ideas about the kingdom of heaven.
- Discuss: ♦What evidence do we see that we are living in the kingdom of heaven now?

Praying Together

Option 1: Explain that people are more important than even the best treasure. Ask children to take turns thanking God for different people they know (friends, family, community members, church members, teachers, etc.) . Children can use this prayer: “Thank you, God, for (person’s name).”

Option 2: Pass an ornate box—if necessary, simply cover a box in foil—as a symbol of treasure. Ask each participant to hold the box while giving thanks, silently or aloud, for a treasure in his or her life.. For example, pray “God, thank you for the treasure of family togetherness and for the love we have for one another. Amen.”

Game: Musical Chairs/Treasure in the Field

- Sing these words to the tune of “London Bridge is Falling Down”:

Find the treasure in the field,
in the field, in the field.
Find the treasure in the field,
in God’s kingdom.
- Have children walk around a line of chairs, singing the song and sitting down at the end of the song. At the end of each round, remove a chair. All the children still sit down, until all of them try to squeeze onto a single chair—the “treasure.”

Game: Find the Treasure

Wrap a ball or box in silver foil to represent a treasure. Ask a volunteer Finder to step outside the room while the other children hide the treasure. When the Finder comes back into the room, the other children guide him or her to the treasure by calling out “hot” and “cold” clues. For example, when the child moves closer to the treasure, the children can call out, “warm,” “warmer,” “hot,” etc. When the child moves away from the treasure, the children can call out such words as “cool,” “cold,” or “brr!” Repeat the game with as many volunteer Finders as possible.

Art: Treasure Boxes

Before the session collect a variety of empty boxes (oatmeal boxes, shoe boxes, cereal boxes, etc.). You will also need wrapping paper, aluminum foil, construction paper, scissors, glue and felt pens or crayons. If possible, add sequins, glitter and metallic trim to the supplies. In the session invite participants to transform the materials into individual treasure boxes.

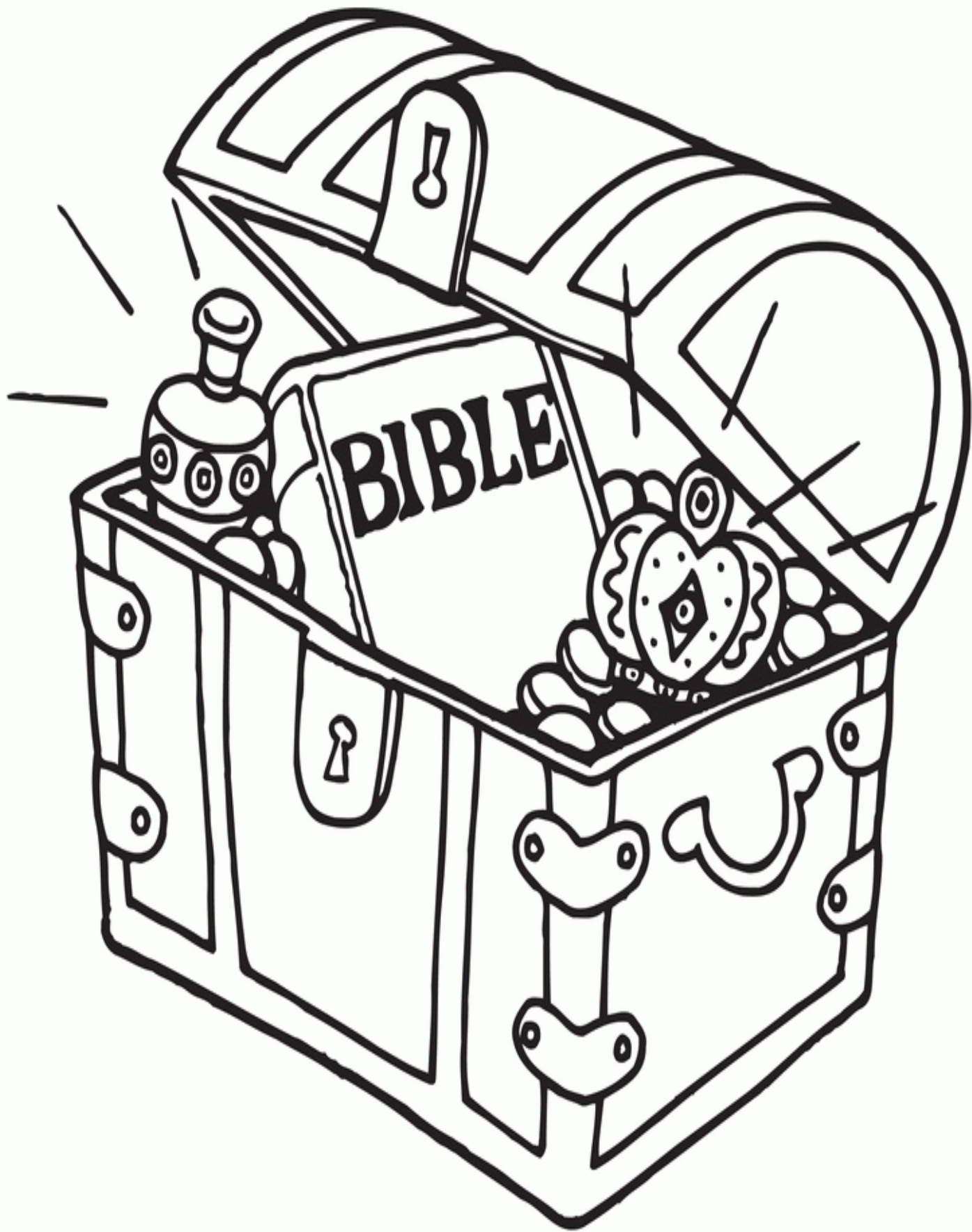
Instructions: ◆Pick a box for your treasure box. ◆Cover the box with paper. ◆Use any of the materials to decorate the box as you like. Invite participants to fill the boxes with pictures of five treasures they already have and five more treasures that they want. For example, one could make a paper heart with the names of family members written on it as a treasure that he or she already has or a paper car as a treasure that he or she wants.

Art: Mustard Seed Flowers

Mustard seeds can be given to each child to add to the glue that has formed a flower on a colorful piece of paper. Write words from today's lesson around the flower to remind children of what we have learned today.

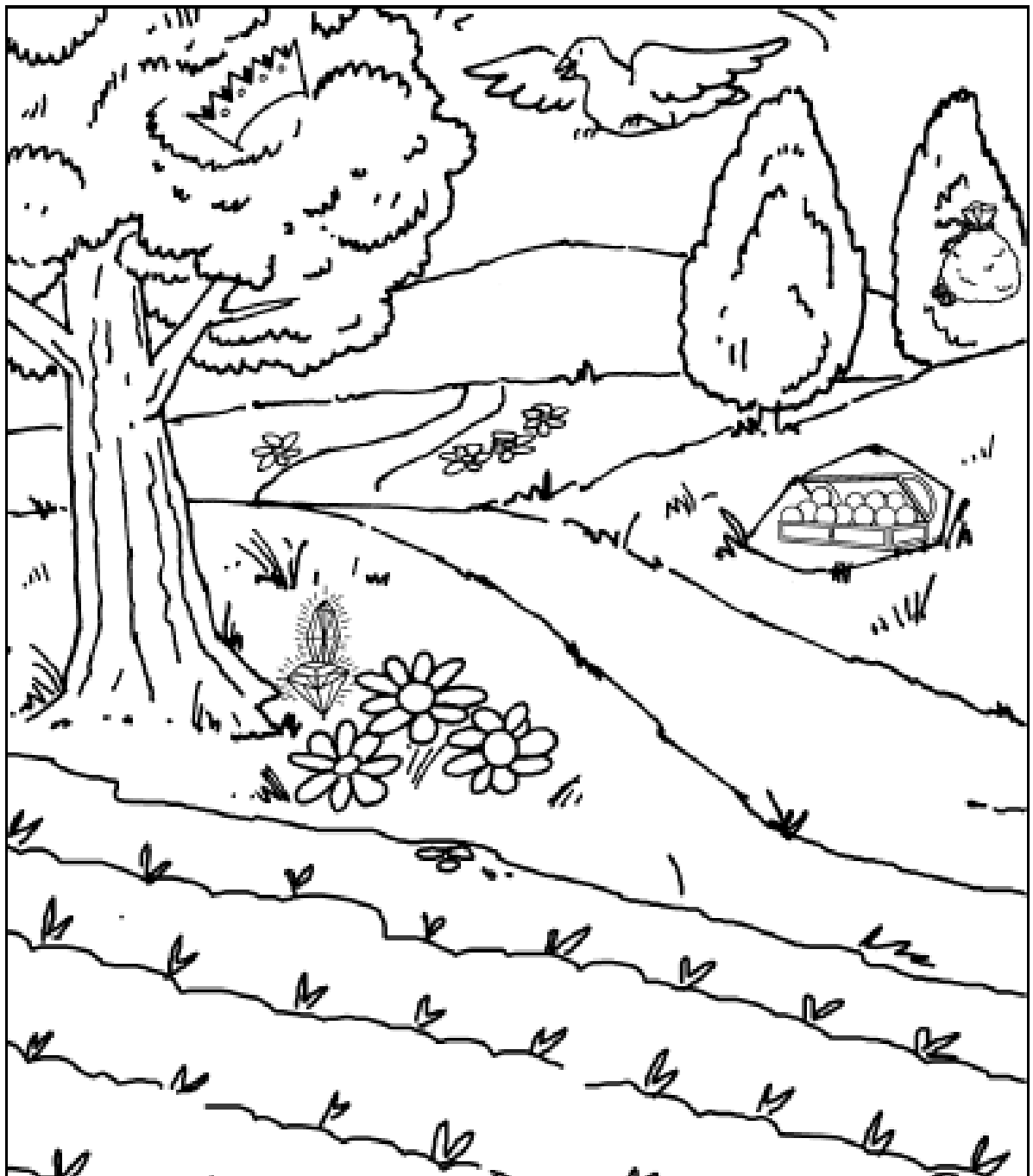


Jesus told parables to teach people about the Kingdom of God.
In one famous parable, he said that the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed -
it will start small and then grow! (Mark 4:30-32)



The kingdom of heaven is like
a hidden treasure.

Find these treasures hidden in the field below.



A Mustard Seed Faith

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Luke 17:6 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on Luke 17:5-10 (NIV).



Mustard Seed Faith

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

DRINK	SEA	DUTY	OBEY	APOSTLES
FAITH	EAT	INCREASE	PLANTED	SMALL
SERVANT	LORD	UPROOTED	MUSTARD	PREPARE
SEED	REPLIED	TREE	MULBERRY	SUPPER

A Mustard Seed Faith

He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you." Luke 17:6 (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



**Mustard Seed
Faith**

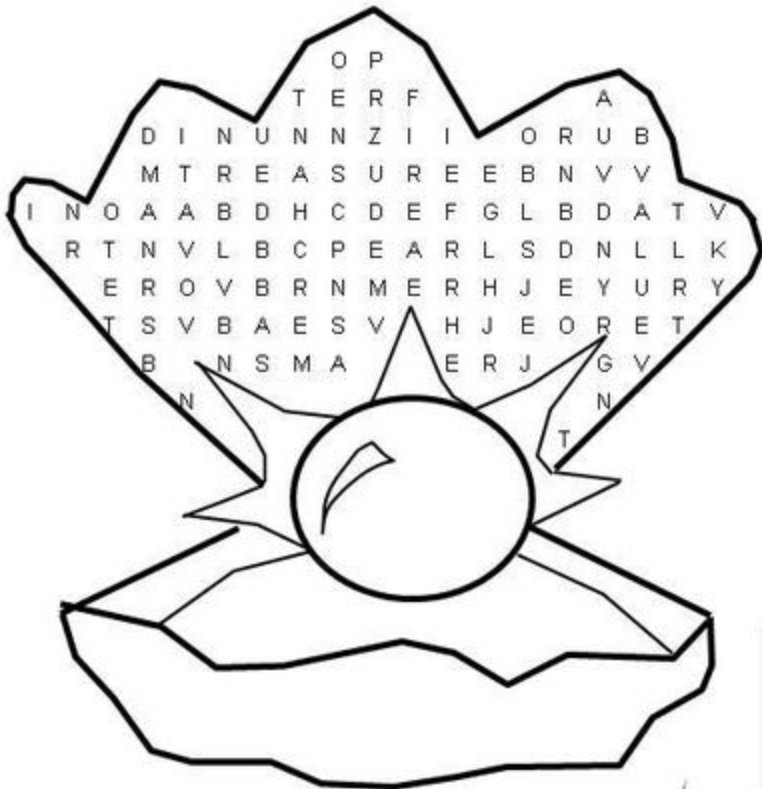
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Q	T	S	N	O	Y	G	W	Z	I	C	F	B	J	A	D	P	U	M	H	R	K	E	X	L	V

- 17-25-15-4-2-23-16 _____
- 19-18-25-13-23-21-21-6 _____
- 3-23-23-16 _____
- 10-4-11-21-23-15-3-23 _____
- 3-19-15-25-25 _____
- 5-13-23-6 _____
- 12-15-10-2-20 _____
- 3-23-15 _____
- 19-18-3-2-15-21-16 _____
- 2-21-23-23 _____

OBEY	INCREASE	SMALL	SEED	TREE
MUSTARD	FAITH	MULBERRY	PLANTED	SEA

The Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

The kingdom of heaven is like ...



- ★

Field
Treasure
Man
Joy
Sold
Merchant
Pearls
Value

★
Find the
hidden
words

He went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

