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Priceless!

Key References: Matthew 13:44-46; *Christ's Object Lessons*, chap. 8, pp. 103-114; chap. 9, pp. 115-121; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 70-72; Our Beliefs nos. 9, 10, 11















powertext

"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Peter 1:18, 19).

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 74.

power**point**

God treasures me and gave everything to save me.

Imagine that while scuba diving you spotted an old sunken ship with a lot of treasure still on board, and no one knew where it was but you. What would you do? What would you be willing to give to get the priceless treasure? In our lesson today Jesus talks about such a hidden treasure.

Jesus is coming to town." The news spread from house to house. Everyone was excited; the air seemed to crackle with anticipation. People rushed around, finishing their work. Mom didn't have to insist today. No one wanted to miss a single word Jesus said.

Jesus was different, not like other ministers or the Pharisees. You could understand everything Jesus said. He told wonderful stories. There was something special about Jesus' stories; you enjoyed them when you heard them, but the more you thought about them afterward, the more spiritual meaning you discovered.

When Jesus started talking about the kingdom of heaven, He grabbed everyone's attention. Many wondered if this was the time they had been waiting for, when He would proclaim Himself the Messiah and chase the Romans out of their land. Would there be riches for everyone in the new kingdom? Everyone listened, confidently expecting that soon they would be rid of their Roman masters.

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Sunday

READ Read Matthew 13:44 and this week's lesson, "Priceless!"

THINK Think of words that describe your value to God. Try to view everyone as very valuable in God's eyes.

MEMORIZE Begin to memorize the power text.

PRAY Ask for a real understanding of your value to God.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 13:45, 46; Philippians 2:6; and John 1:1.

FIND What did Jesus give up when He came to earth?

THINK Where do you fit in this story?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you give everything to Him.

Tuesday

READ Read Exodus 19:3-6.

THINK How did God describe His people?

SHARE Think about some of the people you treasure. Tell them today how special they are to you.

REVIEW Review the power text.

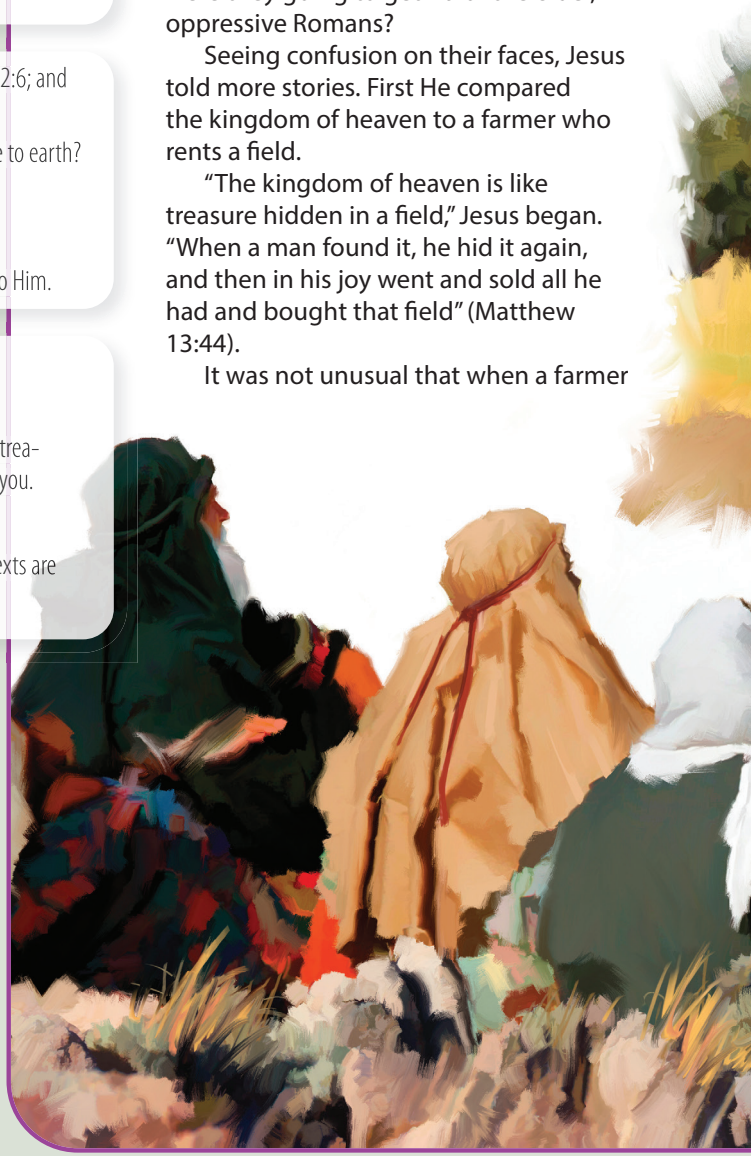
PRAY Ask God to help you see what these texts are saying about you.

But the kingdom Jesus talked about didn't feature Roman soldiers, revolution, and rebellion. As the people made their way home they quietly discussed and wondered about the kingdom Jesus had described. It didn't make sense. It didn't fit with their picture of a kingdom. When were they going to get rid of the cruel, oppressive Romans?

Seeing confusion on their faces, Jesus told more stories. First He compared the kingdom of heaven to a farmer who rents a field.

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field," Jesus began. "When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field" (Matthew 13:44).

It was not unusual that when a farmer



was plowing a field he would find a box full of priceless treasure. The farmer would then try to negotiate with the owner of the property the purchase of the field he had been renting. The price of a field was usually far beyond anything the farmer could easily afford. So the farmer would go away with a heavy heart because he didn't own that much money.

But the farmer in Jesus' story quickly raced home wondering how he could raise the money. Arriving home, he explained to his family that he needed to



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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 6:19-21.

DRAW Draw or create a representation of something you consider very precious. Is it something you could give up for someone you love?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you find the treasures in His Word.

Thursday

READ Read Deuteronomy 7:6-8.

THINK God has chosen each of us to be His "treasured possession." How does the realization that God treasures you change the way you look at life?

DISCOVER God's promises tell how much He treasures us. Ask some people what their favorite promises are.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Claim one of the promises and thank God for it.

Friday

READ Read Deuteronomy 14:2.

PREPARE God treasures His friendship with you so much that He put one day in the week aside for you to spend together. Take time to prepare for that day.

VALUE With your family, talk about everything Jesus gave up to come to this earth.

WRITE Before worship, write a note for each member of your family: "Dear _____, you are a treasure to God." Give out the notes at worship.

REPEAT Repeat this week's power text from memory.

PRAY Say a prayer of thanks and sing a song of praise to God for counting you as His priceless treasure.

sell everything they owned to buy a field. The farmer's wife and friends could not understand what had happened to him. But the farmer knew that if he could buy the field, the treasure would be his.

To help the truth of the story sink deep into the minds of His listeners, Jesus told another story. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45, 46).

It was common for merchants to journey long distances, asking and searching for the perfect pearl. They traveled the world, buying and selling pearls. This was the trade of the merchant in the story. He found many beautiful pearls, but none that was perfect.

Then one day quite unexpectedly he found it. Polished, sparkling, glimmering—it was breathtaking. Immediately he knew that this was the pearl he had



always dreamed of. However, it was expensive. The merchant knew that it would cost him a fortune. In fact, he would have to sell everything he owned. But it was worth it. His friends and his family wondered about his sanity, but he sold everything he owned to buy the perfect pearl.

Jesus knew what it was to give up everything. He had given up His place in heaven with His Father. He had given up all of His power, His crown, and all the honor and respect as King and Lord of all creation.

But He didn't regret it. Each one of His disciples was worth it. Even if there had been just one of them, He would have been willing to give up everything and come and live on earth. He valued each of them more than the greatest treasure and richest pearl. To Him they were each priceless.

Jesus knew that in time all except Judas would follow Him. Once they gave up everything to follow Jesus, the disciples would discover a treasure far greater than everything they had left behind. They would understand that everything fades in insignificance compared to the priceless treasure of the kingdom of God.



PUZZLE 9

REDEEMED BY THE LAMB

Cross off each letter from the following verse in the letters below. Rearrange the leftover letters to spell out the word that describes what Jesus thinks of us. The word is a noun, not an adjective.

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

A A A A A A A A B C C D D D D

E E E E E E E E E F F G G H H H H H

I I I I I I I L L L N N N N N N N N

O O O O O O O O O R R R R R

S S S S S S S S S S S T T T T T T T T T T

U U U U V V V W

CELEBRATE

Instructions: The answers to the clues can be found in Luke 15. The appropriate verses have been placed in parentheses. Each answer consists of a nine-letter word or words. When you have found these nine letters in the grid, mark them. We have given you one word to get you started. When you have marked all of the answer words, you will have nine letters left over in the grid. These letters form the two words that complete the following sentence.

1	2	3
RIG	WEA	ERS
HIS	FIE	NER
SHO	EBR	OME
CEL	NWH	LTH
MEA	ESH	~~ING~~
CAR	ULD	LLY
HIS	OBE	HER
~~GAT~~	TSH	EES
ONE	SIN	OUS
HIS	HTE	YED
REJ	EFU	ATE
DIS	~~HER~~	ILE
LOS	FAT	LDS
PHA	OIC	ING
COM	RIS	EEP

Clues:

1. "The tax collectors and sinners were all GATHERING around" (verse 1).
2. "The _____ . . . muttered, 'This man welcomes sinners' " (verse 2).
3. "Doesn't he . . . go after the _____ _____ until he finds it?" (verse 4).
4. "When he finds it, he . . . puts it on his _____ and goes home" (verses 5, 6).
5. "There will be more _____ in heaven over one sinner who repents" (verse 7).
6. "Than over ninety-nine _____ persons who do not need to repent" (verse 7).
7. "Doesn't she . . . sweep the house and search _____ until she finds it?" (verse 8).
8. "There is rejoicing . . . over _____ _____ who repents" (verse 10).
9. "The younger son . . . squandered _____ _____ in wild living" (verse 13).
10. "A citizen . . . sent him to _____ _____ to feed pigs" (verse 15).
11. "So he got up and went to ____ _____ " (verse 20).
12. "The father said . . . , '. . . Let's have a feast and _____ ' " (verses 22, 23).
13. "_____, the older son was in the field" (verse 25).
14. "All these years I've been slaving for you and never _____ your orders" (verse 29).

Puzzle Clue: All of heaven celebrates when a sinner _____ _____.