

Hidden Treasure

MAIN IDEAS

- **Something can be real but hidden from our sight. Even though something is hidden from us, that does not mean it does not exist.**
- **The Kingdom of God is more valuable than all a person’s possessions.**

MEMORY VERSE

“For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?”

—Luke 9:25

SCRIPTURE

- 1) Matthew 13:44-46
- 2) (Luke 9:25)



CURRICULUM RESOURCES

- Ocean (1A)
- Underwater (1B)
- Hidden Message (1C)
- Hidden Message Decoder (1D, see Preparation)
- Nametags (see Additional Resources for Lesson 1)
- Parent Page for Lesson 1 (one per child)

OTHER SUPPLIES

- Bible (English Standard Version)
- Box with lid, and any article that will fit into the box
- Optional: Can of soda/pop
- Bag or jewelry box of cheap plastic gems (available in most craft stores or costume jewelry)
- A pearl (fake, but real-looking)

MATERIALS FOR OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Hidden Message

- For each child:
- › Invisible Message (OA-1A)
 - › Method 1: Lemon juice, paint brush, cotton swab, paper (and close access to a glowing light bulb)
 - › Method 2: White crayon, paper, highlighter markers

2. Hidden Treasure Hunt

- › “Treasure” or “pearl”

3. Magic Eye™

- › Magic Eye™ books

4. Hidden Things Sheet

- For each child (there’s an answer key (OA-1C) for the teacher)
- › Hidden Things (OA-1B)
 - › Pencil/pen
 - › Crayons/markers

5. Microscope

- › Microscope and things that are “hidden” until seen through it

6. Trading Game

- › Buttons, pennies, or small pieces of candy for each child, and a big item (e.g., a bicycle)

7. Hidden Message Sheet

- For each child:
- › Hidden Message (OA-1D)
 - › Pencil/pen
 - › Crayons/markers

8. Memory Verse Sheet

- For each child:
- › Memory Verse (OA-1E)
 - › Crayons/markers

9. Things Hidden Student Project

- For each child:
- › Things Hidden Treasure Box and Lesson 1 Treasure Cards
 - › Scissors
 - › Crayons/markers

10. Memory Verse Game

- › See Appendix for ideas.

PREPARATION

- ➔ Study the Scripture passages carefully and prayerfully. Ask God to make them real in your own heart. Be open to what God may be teaching you in this lesson. Study the lesson well. Pray for the children in your group.
- ➔ Hidden Message Decoder—Carefully cut out only the words highlighted in the **Hidden Message Decoder** sheet so it can be placed on top of the **Hidden Message** sheet to reveal the hidden message.

Large Group Lesson

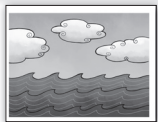
Introduction

BOX WITH ARTICLE
INSIDE AND BOX
LID

(Show the **box with article** inside it. Then put the **lid** on the box.)

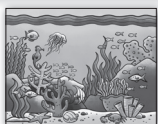
Can you see the [article]? Why? Just because you can't see [article] doesn't mean it isn't there, does it? It is hidden from your view, but the [article] is still there.

(Display the **Ocean** visual.)



If you looked at a lake or an ocean, what would you see? There are many things in a lake or an ocean that are hidden from your view—but they are there.

(Display the **Underwater** visual.)



(Give some examples of “hidden things” in a lake or ocean, such as fish, frogs sitting in the mud at the bottom, weeds growing toward the sun, etc.)

Even though something cannot be seen, that does not mean it does not exist. If you could dive under the water, you could see some of these “hidden things.” A scientist could put an underwater camera on a boat, and you could see the “hidden sea creatures.” They exist, even though you can't always see them.

You can't see your heart—it is hidden from your view, but it is pumping blood through your body. You can't see your lungs, but they are helping you to breathe.

Some things are so small you can't see them—like little creatures called mites that live in your sheets, or amoebas that live in drops of pond water. You would need a special tool called a microscope to help your eyes see these little things.

Some things you cannot see because you do not have the eyes to see them—they are right in front of you, but your eyes can't see them. When I talk, my words are carried to your ears on sound waves—you can look real hard, but you will not be able to see the sound waves because your eyes are unable to see them.

Hidden things exist even though we cannot see them. Some of them we just can't see because they are hidden from our eyes—like the creatures in the sea, or the stars in other galaxies. Other things we will never be able to see because they can't be seen with our eyes.

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- Spiritual things—things about God—are sometimes hidden things.¹

1. If you are teaching totally unchurched children, you may need to explain that God is the Maker of the whole world and everything in it. He is the ruler of the whole earth.

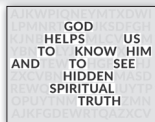
- God is so great and so glorious that we can never fully understand Him. There is much about God that is hidden from us. We will never be able to understand some of the mysteries of God.
- Other things about God can be understood. God shows people what He is like and who He is.
- God helps some people to see some spiritual things. It is like God gives them a microscope or a special pair of spiritual glasses to see the hidden spiritual things.
- Other people can't see any spiritual things. They have no understanding about God, and even though they try to understand things about God, they can't. It is like their eyes are blind to spiritual things. Unless God helps them to see the hidden things, they cannot see spiritual truth—they cannot know God.

Illustration.....



(Call three children to the front of the room and show them the **Hidden Message** sheet.)

Can you tell me the hidden message on this sheet? (Children should not be able to discern the message.) You can't see the message because it is hidden, and you need help to see it.



(Hand one child the **Hidden Message Decoder** sheet, and ask him to place it over the hidden message.)

With the help of this special decoder or tool, you have a new way of seeing the message sheet. You couldn't see it on your own. But I helped you to see it. What is the message? [God helps us to know Him and to see hidden spiritual truth.]

The message was on the sheet the whole time, but you could not see it until I helped you to see it. It is the same way with spiritual truth and the things of God. God is real, and the truth about Him and His ways are real, but sometimes we can't see it. We need God's help because we are blind to spiritual truth.

BIBLE

(Hold up a **Bible**.)

- The Bible is God's message to people. It tells us about God, and about what is good and right. It teaches us how to trust God, how to go to heaven, and how to have real joy.
- The Bible tells some stories with a hidden spiritual meaning. They are called parables. The parables have a hidden message about God.
- Some people hear them and think they are just nice stories. Some people can see the hidden meaning, but it doesn't make any difference to them.

- Other people see and understand the hidden meaning—the spiritual truth—and love God and the things of God. They are called the children of God, the people of God, or believers.

(If the children you are teaching are familiar with the Bible, have a Sword Drill with the following verse—see the Sword Drill instructions in the Appendix. If they are not familiar with the Bible, just read the verse to them or have one of the children read it aloud.)

Matthew 13:45-46—“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

- A merchant is a person who buys things, and then sells them for more money than he buys them for.
- Merchants need to know what something is worth so they don’t pay too much for something—if they pay too much for something, they won’t make money on it.

Illustration.....

OPTIONAL: CAN OF SODA/POP

(Give an example of good merchandising as provided below. You may want to demonstrate using **a can of soda/pop**. Be sure to give the illustration quickly and resume the Bible lesson.)

If I buy a [can of pop/soda] for 25 cents from a factory and sell it in a store for 75 cents, then I would make 50 cents. If I sold a lot of [cans of pop/soda], I would make a good living.

Would it be a good idea to buy the [can of pop/soda] for 80 cents if I can only sell it for 75 cents? What would happen? How about if I paid 60 cents for the pop? I wouldn’t make much money, and I would soon lose my store. So it is very important for a merchant to know the value of things.

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? *What did the merchant in the parable we read know about the worth of the pearl? [It was worth more than all his possessions.]*

A merchant would not buy the pearl for more than it is worth, or even for what it is worth, because then he couldn’t make any money (profit) on the pearl.

Illustration.....

JEWELRY OR BAG
OF GEMS

(Show the **jewelry or bag of gems**.)

This bag of gems can be bought in a craft store and are quite cheap—you don't need a lot of money to buy them. (You may even want to tell the children the cost.)

PEARL

(Display the **pearl**.)

This is not a real pearl. But if it were a real pearl, it would be worth a lot of money. Let's pretend that this is a real pearl.

(Display the **jewelry or bag of gems**.)

If you owned the gems, would you trade one gem for the pearl? How about two gems? Why? Would you trade the whole bag of gems—every single gem—for the pearl? Why?

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- In Bible times, pearls were especially valuable.
- Instead of putting their money in the bank, rich people bought pearls because they knew that pearls would stay valuable.
- Pearls were so valuable that the Egyptians worshiped them.

Let's read the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value again.

Matthew 13:45-46—“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

? *Knowing what you now know about merchants and pearls, what is the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value teaching? (Answers will vary but make sure the children understand the following points.)*

- The Kingdom of heaven is so valuable that it is worth more than all a person has.
- It takes a person with “eyes that can see”—a merchant—to see the value of the pearl; and it takes a person with “spiritual sight” to see the value of the Kingdom of heaven.
- A person who has understanding sees the value of the Kingdom of heaven and gladly gives all he has for the Kingdom of Heaven, knowing he is getting something much better than he is giving.

There is another parable that shows the worth of the Kingdom of heaven.

(Read or have a child read Matthew 13:44.)

Matthew 13:44—“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

- We don't think of burying our money in the backyard. But in Bible times, robbers (or raiding parties) and their enemies would sometimes come through and take everything they could find. So people hid their money and valuables by burying them in the fields where they would not be found.

❓ *In the “Parable of the Hidden Treasure,” why did the man want to buy the field? [because there was a treasure hidden in it]*

❓ *Do you think the owner knew that the treasure was in the field? [no] What would he have done had he known about the treasure? [put a higher price on the field; dug up the treasure first]*

❓ *Why was the man joyful about selling all he had? [because the treasure was worth so much more than what he had]*

Spiritual truth is real. God is real. And heaven is real. Knowing God and loving Him is like a treasure in a field. It is the most important, most valuable, most wonderful thing in the world to know God.

To see God as the greatest treasure takes spiritual eyes. Spiritual eyes are like having a special decoder to see the hidden message. Only God can help you to see hidden spiritual truth and give you a heart to love Him, to love His ways, and to want to go to heaven. But knowing God is the treasure worth more than everything else in life.

(End with prayer.)

Small Group Application

Choose one or more of the following suggestions for interacting with the children during this time.

- ❑ *Do you believe that there is a hidden spiritual world? Why or why not? How can you believe in something you cannot see? What are some ways you can learn about spiritual things?*
- ❑ *In a kingdom, there is a king. Who is the King in the Kingdom of heaven? What is so wonderful about God? Who belongs to the Kingdom of heaven? What does it mean to be a subject in the Kingdom of heaven? What is so wonderful about the Kingdom of heaven?*
- ❑ *Do you think God knows the value of the Kingdom of heaven? Is all that we have worth as much as the Kingdom of heaven? How do you know this? If the Kingdom of heaven is worth more than all we have, why does God offer us this treasure? [because He is good and loving]*

❑ *What does it mean to see the value of the Kingdom of heaven? How can you measure how much you value the things of God? [by how much you are willing to part with for the Kingdom; by what you are interested in] What are you willing to give up for God? What might you need to give up for the Kingdom of God? How can you tell if you love the things of God?*

❑ Read Luke 9:25.²

Luke 9:25—“For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?”

Tell us in your own words what this verse means. What does to “lose or forfeit himself” mean? How long is this life compared to life after death? Why is it such a terrible thing to “lose yourself”? Describe the person who gains the world but loses himself. What can you do to NOT be like this person?

(You may want to end with a prayer asking for the eyes to see the value of the Kingdom. Pray that love for the things of this world will be very small in comparison to love for the things of God.)

Optional Activities

If time allows, choose one of the following optional activities:

1. Hidden Message

With invisible ink (lemon juice or white crayon: see methods below), help the children draw a picture of one of the parables or write “heaven” or “Kingdom of heaven” on the **Invisible Message**. While the children are working, emphasize the point that just because something is hidden, that does not mean it does not exist.

- Method 1: Use lemon juice as invisible ink and paint with a paintbrush or a cotton swab. After the paper dries, hold the paper very close to a glowing light bulb and watch the hidden things appear.
- Method 2: Use white crayon for drawing or writing. Children can then color over the page with a highlighter marker to make the hidden picture or message appear.

2. Hidden Treasure Hunt

Hide a “treasure” or “pearl” and have the children look for it. Re-emphasize the point that the Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure or a pearl of great value. It is very valuable and worth looking for.

3. Magic Eye™

Look at some Magic Eye™ pictures. (Magic Eye™ picture books are available in many libraries.) Search for the hidden things. Emphasize that even though the hidden picture cannot be seen at first, it still exists. Just as “special eyes” (or focusing our eyes correctly) are needed to see the hidden picture, so we need spiritual eyes to see the things of God.

2. Be sure to discuss the memory verse in your application time.

4. Hidden Things Sheet

Children can find the things listed on the **Hidden Things** sheet, and then color the picture. As the children are working, remind them that the Kingdom of God is worth searching for.

5. Microscope

If you have access to a microscope, have the children see “hidden things” through the microscope. Make the point that there are many hidden things that our eyes can’t see, but they still exist. Emphasize that heaven is a real place even though we cannot see it.

6. Trading Game

Play a trading game. Give each child buttons, or pennies, small pieces of candy, etc. Start with objects of lesser value and have them trade their [buttons] for the objects. Increase the value of the objects so the children are trading both buttons and objects they already possess for the new object. At the end, take out one big thing (e.g., bicycle) and ask the children what they would trade for this object. Make sure the children see that the object is worth more than everything they have. Make the point that the Kingdom of heaven is worth more than all we possess.

7. Hidden Message Sheet

Have the children decode the hidden message on the **Hidden Message** sheet.

8. Memory Verse Sheet

While the children are coloring the border of the **Memory Verse** sheet, discuss the memory verse with them.

9. Things Hidden Student Project

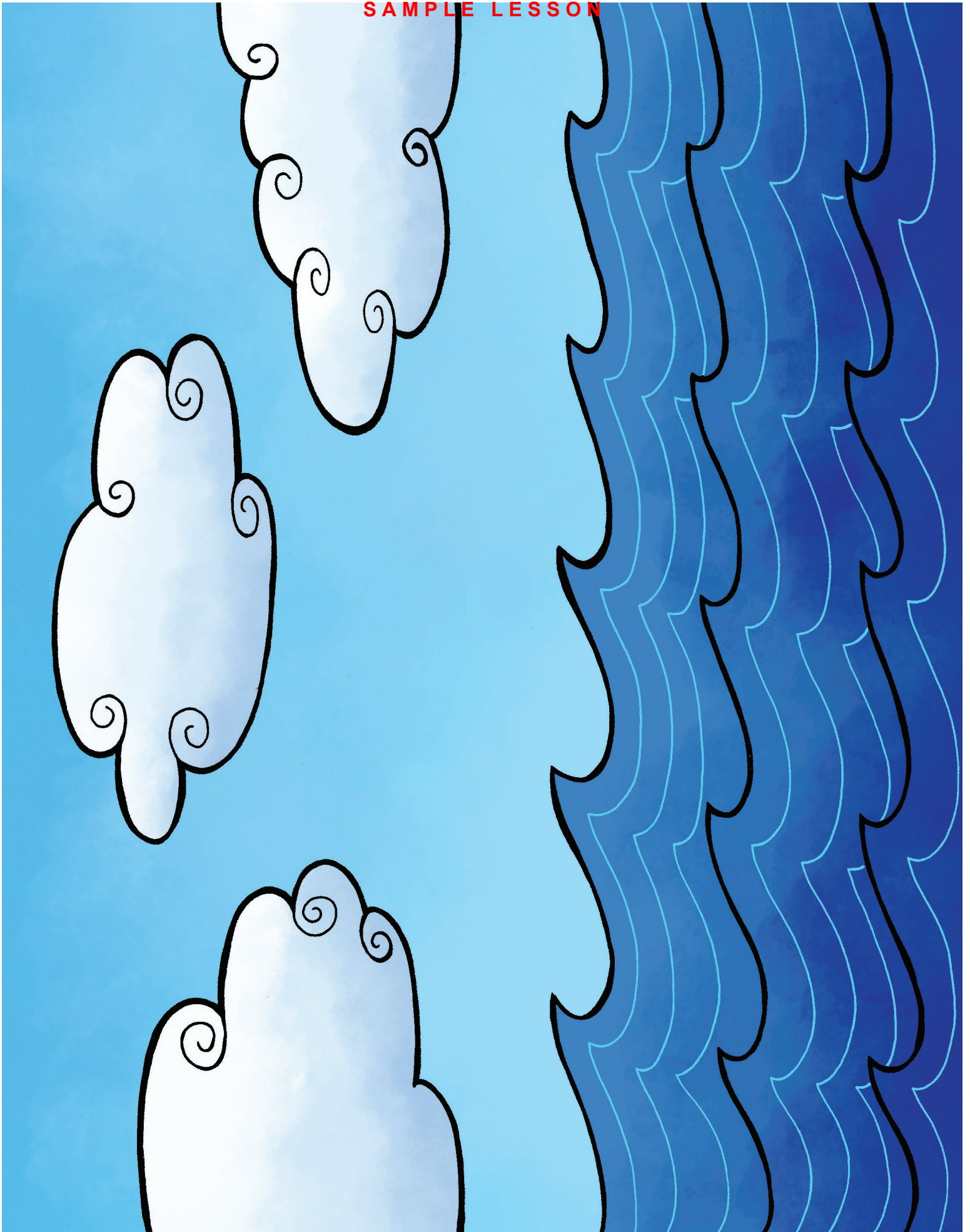
Children can cut out the Treasure Box, color the inside pictures, and assemble it, and then cut out and complete the cards for Lesson 1. They can store their completed cards in the Treasure Box, and take it home at the end of the study to remember what they have learned, and even add more “treasures” to their box as they learn more about the hidden things of God. (A sample *Things Hidden* Project is provided in the Coordinator’s Kit. For additional Projects, see Truth78.org.)

10. Memory Verse Game

Play a Memory Verse Game. (See Appendix.)

Send Home

- Parent Page for Lesson 1 and Scope and Sequence (one per child)



AJKWPIQNEYMTXDWI
LPMNRTGODJKSDFGH
KJNBHELPSMLCVUSM
YBNTOLYJKNOWXHIM
ANDTEWTOHGFSEEHJ
ZXCVBNHIDDENMASD
REWQSPIRITUALIUYTP
OPUYTNMTRUTHZMNV
AJKFGDEWRTQAZXCV

GOD

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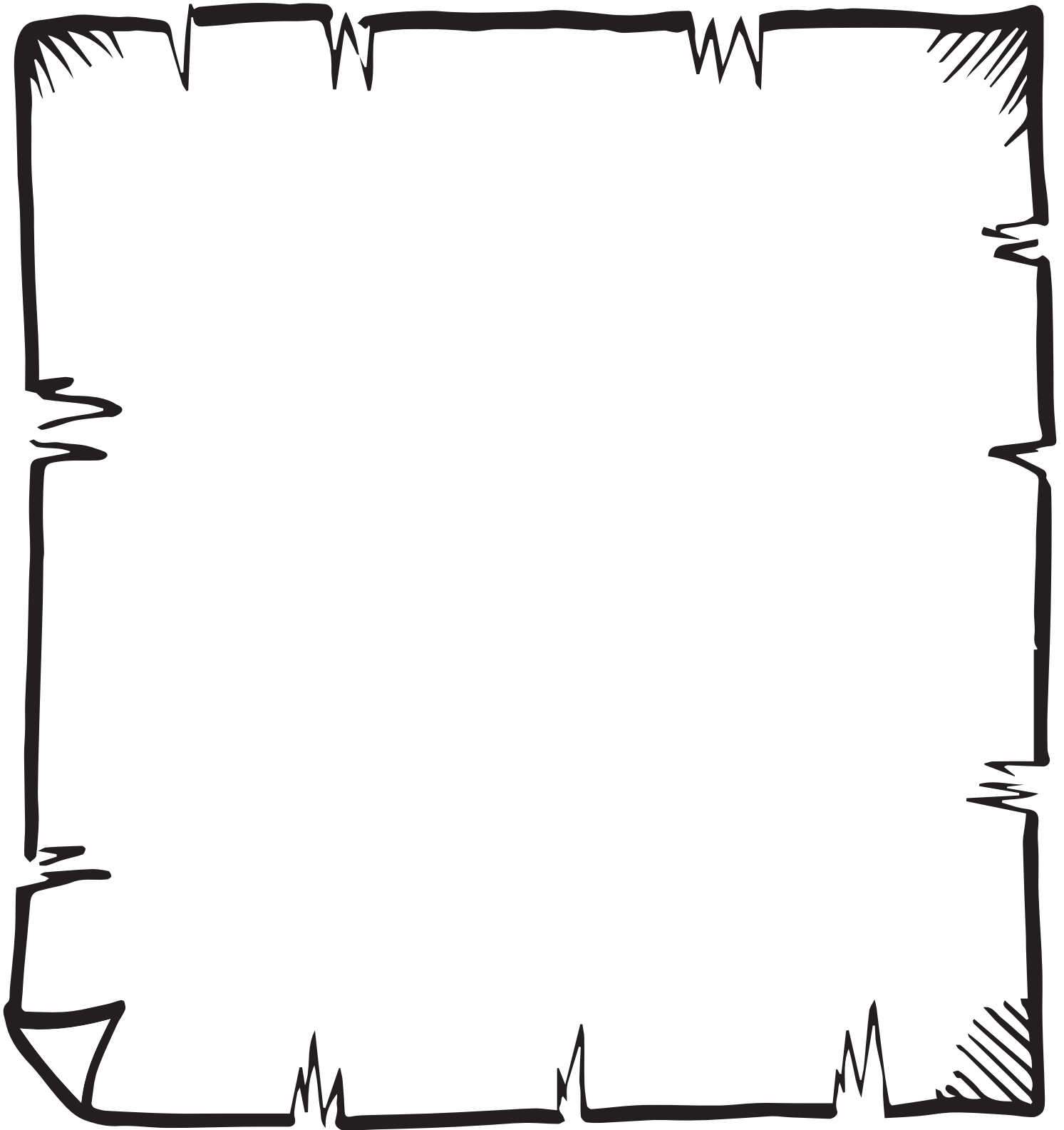
SEE

HIDDEN

SPIRITUAL

TRUTH

An Invisible Message:



Use invisible ink to draw a picture of one of the parables or to write the words “heaven” or “Kingdom of heaven.”

Can you find the hidden things?



Color in the objects listed below as you find them hidden within the picture above:

- lamb • staff • broom • coin • pearl of great price • ring • flashlight
- magnifying glass • bird • chest • gem • drawstring bag • shovel

Remember that the Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure or a pearl of value.
It is very valuable and worth seeking.

A HIDDEN MESSAGE

Use the code below to decipher the hidden message.

A	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L
M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	W











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----- 8:36

**"For what does it profit a
man if he gains the
whole world and loses
or forfeits himself?"**

—Luke 9:25

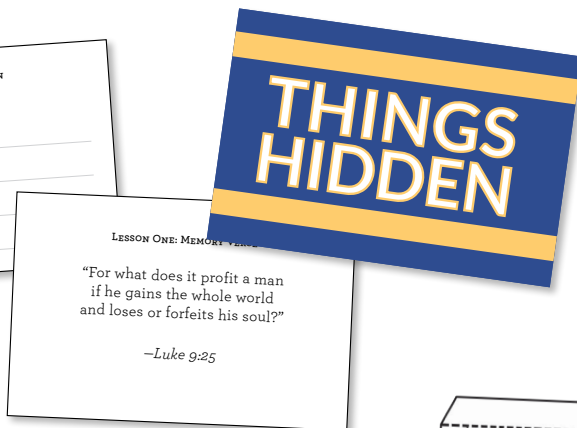
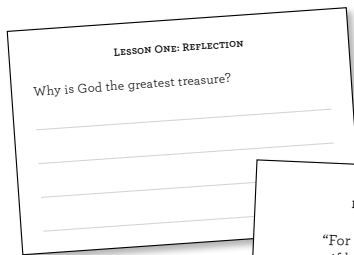
THINGS HIDDEN

Student Project



TREASURE BOX

During the study, students have the opportunity to create and fill a special treasure box to remind them of the treasures they have discovered in Scripture. The inside of the box features images from the Parable of the Sower for children to color. The box can then be easily folded and assembled. Each day, children will add the Treasure Cards to the box along with other treasures they find in nature to the box.



TREASURE CARDS

Each lesson has 4 Treasure cards children can fill out and add to their box.

Memory Verse Cards: Children can decorate with stickers or draw pictures on to remind them of the lesson

Lesson-Specific Treasure Cards: Children attach a treasure to remind them of the parable in the lesson (a seed, a pearl, etc.)

Reflection Cards: Children think about an application question and write a response.

Additional Treasure Cards: Children can look around their everyday surroundings and collect things from nature, wisdom from parents, or Bible verses and share what they've found on the card.

