

Session 18

The Hidden Treasure

God surprises me *here*

This session aims to find the treasures and surprises that God has in store for us. All we must do, is to look for them!

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

Supplies:

- ◆ Miner’s uniform (hard hat, headlamp, spade, or pickaxe)
- ◆ Sandbox or a sandy spot outside
- ◆ Marbles, Lego, rocks, or anything that can be buried to be dug up again
- ◆ Cardboard, toilet rolls, cling wrap, sticky tape, stapler, ice cream sticks (depending on which tools you make)
- ◆ Enough of the shapes (already cut out) for each child



WELCOME

Go outside and find something that you can see, touch, hear, or smell. You can bring some edible things for the children to taste. Children bring the items or stories back and show/describe it to the group or to a friend (a coarse stone, the sound of a bird, a cloud that has a funny shape or a flower that smells nice. If it’s raining outside, they can find things inside. It doesn’t matter how small they are!)

Bury items under the ground/sandbox (like wooden blocks, Lego, marbles, stones, leaves or anything that the children will be able to easily identify in the ground). Give them a chance to wonder where these items have been before and all the stories they could tell.



WORSHIP

Theme song: Sing “Why don’t you dig a little deeper!”

Settle-down ritual: Take a sandbox (that everyone can touch) and ask the children to put their hands in the box. While they have their hands in the sand, each child gets a chance to say thank you for something by drawing it with their fingers in the sand. The group leader can begin the prayer with: “Thank you Jesus, we are so grateful for...” and each child gets a chance to say something (ex. parents, a pet, a friend, something tasty they ate, etc.). At the end everyone says “Amen!”



WORD

The storyteller can be dressed as a miner. He/she can have a spade/pickaxe (a real one or a home-made one), a headlamp and hardhat (real or homemade).

Tell this story:

“Do you know what my job is?” (*Wait for reaction.*) “Yes, I work in the mines every day. I’m always busy looking for pretty and special things underground. I’ve found diamonds, gold, silver, and even pretty stones that I’ve never seen before. Once I even found some nuts in a tree that a squirrel hid there. What a delicious lunch that was! YUM!”

Which tools do you think I need to dig under the ground? (*Give the children time to answer.*) Yes! I need:

- ⇒ A spade (to dig with)
- ⇒ A pickaxe (to dig up rocks)
- ⇒ A hardhat (just in case some rocks fall on my head!)
- ⇒ A headlamp or lamp (so that I can see when it's dark)
- ⇒ A map (so I can see where I have to dig and where I've already dug). But sometimes I just get lost anyway!

I need all these tools so that I can find all sorts of treasures underground. It's fun to look for hidden treasures everywhere under the ground. Sometimes I know exactly what I'm looking for. Then I just keep looking until I find it. Other times I have no idea what I'm looking for, then I find the most amazing surprises! Sometimes I find things and then I don't even know what they're meant for, but I know they're important, so I keep them safe for later.

Sometimes when I get to a place where I've found a huge treasure, I just camp there because the treasure is too big to move or take away and I just want to look at it a bit longer. I think it's a treasure that other people should also find, but when I can't show it to my friends myself, I just take them to it. Did you know that God gives us valuable treasures? Let's go find some of God's treasures!

Each child gets an envelope (bought or homemade). Colour in the envelope to look like a treasure. Cut out hearts (symbolises love), watches (patience), plaster (caring for others), smiley faces (joy), hands (to help others), sweets (to share), flowers (God sustains) and raindrops (God's blessings). Children each get a chance to dig up these treasures and to swop them out with each other until each child has one of each shape. Children then put them away in the envelopes and can take them home to tell someone else the story.

(Try to guide children to discover that there are many treasures in God's kingdom. The Bible is a treasure because it's God's Word. To discover that your sins are forgiven, is a big treasure. If you can discover that God cares for you, you have found a wonderful treasure).

The children now get a chance to reflect on the story:

1. I wonder where all the places are where God hides treasures.
2. I wonder if God's treasures can be hidden in people, maybe even inside me.
3. I wonder why God hides treasures.
4. I wonder how I can find these treasures.



WORKING AND PLAYING TIME

- ✍ Make a headlamp with some cardboard and a stapler.
- ✍ Make binoculars with toilet rolls and cling wrap.
- ✍ Make a magnifying glass with ice cream sticks, pieces of cardboard and sticky tape.
- ✍ Take home the treasure you found. Tell someone at home what it means and then go hide it away somewhere in your house or town so that you can go find it again someday.

Close with the **blessing** as in session 16.



