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An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for Sunday, August 7, 2016

Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost – Lectionary Year C

Scripture: [Luke 12:32-40](#) [**Summary:** *Jesus Teaches About The Kingdom of God*]

Supplies Needed: At least two ping pong balls, but the more you have, the better. One will be destroyed. Usually, you can find a pack of six at a dollar store)

ASK (a.k.a [The On-Ramp](#))

- Good morning!
- Have you ever had a prized possession?
- Like maybe a perfect toy? Or a piece of jewelry or maybe a certain kind of bike or piece of clothing?
- Yes? Good! OK, now I want you to pretend that this ping pong ball is that prized possession. [hold up the ping pong ball]
- And for some strange reason, you've decided to let me borrow your prized possession. *Thank you* for loaning it to me.
- But because I don't care about your prized possession nearly as much as you do, I might not treat it very well. In fact I think I just broke it [*crush the ping pong ball with your hand*].
- [*NOTE: Practice this ahead of time. If you can't crush the ping pong ball with your hand, you can instead choose to step on it OR you can change the language from "broke it" to "lost it" and then throw the ball into the congregation (somewhat gently)*].
- Oh no! I'm soooo sort of sorry...however...I'm really glad that wasn't MY prized possession
- What do you think – was that very nice of me?
- If you ever get another prized possession, do you think you'll let me borrow it again?
- No...probably not. In fact, you might just decide to not let ANYONE borrow it.
- But what if you had LOTS of prized possessions [*hold up a bunch of non-crushed ping pong balls*] and knew that you were always getting more, all the time, every day?

- Then you wouldn't be as scared about sharing your prized possession, right? Because you would know that even if one got damaged, you'd have plenty more and more on their way.
- You might, then, start sharing these ping pong balls all over the place, right? Because you would no longer be so afraid of losing your prized possession.

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- This is why Jesus begins his teaching from today's scripture story with this line, "Be not afraid. It is God's good pleasure to give you the kingdom"
- God's kingdom – which is God's better way for us to live, right here, right now – is an even better gift than our most prized possessions.
- AND, this is not a gift that God gives just once, but ALL the time.
- God never stops offering us God's better way to live, even when we make a mistake and crush a ping pong ball.
- In other words, we can't lose God's better way to live because God keeps offering it to us.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- The Good News for today is that the best gift that God can give us, the kingdom of God, cannot be lost or stolen from us or broken by us.
- But it CAN be shared. And the more we share this gift from God that we have received, the better life is for us AND for those around us.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer...

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Help us to learn from Jesus...

Help us to learn from Jesus...

...how to receive your kingdom....

...how to receive your kingdom...

...so that we can share it...

...so that we can share it...

...with those around us.

...with those around us.

Thank you and Amen