



S1.Lesson 13: Kingdom of God

Middle School Lesson Plans

Supplies: 1 spoon per individual in the class; a table that everyone can sit at and reach the middle of the table (depending on the size of your class be prepared to have 2 or 3 such tables); 1 deck of cards per table that you are planning to use.

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING Activity - What did you get for Christmas?

- Sit in a circle and have each person in the circle share what their favorite and not-so favorite gifts they received from Christmas.

ASK

- So during this time of the season, we've received lots of gifts, right?
- Some were gifts that we really wanted, right?
- But how badly did you really want those gifts?
- I mean, what did you do to get those gifts?
 - How HARD did you work for those gifts?
 - What do you mean by, "You just WAITED?"
 - That's how badly you wanted those gifts, eh? =)
- And since receiving the gift, how have you used or cherished the gift?
 - How much time have you spent on it?
 - How much effort have you put into using it?
- God gives us the gift to live in the Kingdom of God.
- When we hear that phrase, we might automatically think, "Heaven."
- But the Kingdom of God is way more than a place we go to when we die.
- Let's start with reading a scripture passage where Jesus offers two images about what kind of gift God's Kingdom can be.

READ Matthew 13:44-45

44 Jesus told them, "The kingdom of God 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 Jesus told them another parable, "The kingdom of God is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

ASK

- Can you think of something that you valued so much, that, if somehow you found it buried in a field, that you would sell everything you had in order to buy that field to get that treasure?

TELL

- A good way to think of the Kingdom of God is to think of it as “Wherever God is allowed to be King.”
- With these two little stories, Jesus is pointing out that when we really want something, we can be pretty focused and just a little bit crazy about getting that thing, right?
- We’re now going to watch a video clip that illustrates that single-mindedness that Jesus is talking about in the scripture:

WATCH video clip from Ice Age II

ASK

- Does Scrat let anything stop him from trying to get the acorn?
- Do you think all that effort and pain is worth it for him?
- What do you think might be different for Scrat if he were using all his energy to let God be king over him instead of an acorn?

TELL

- Jesus uses two things that people in his time would’ve really liked and would’ve wanted.
- Jesus is equating the Kingdom of God to whatever it is that we think we want.
- But God’s way is better than our way – so what God would offer us, if we sought God as much as we seek treasure or acorns, then that would be even better for us.
- And that’s the good news for today: God’s Kingdom is better than our self-made kingdoms, and God’s Kingdom is available to us – we simply need to seek it with the same intensity that we would seek something else that we really want.

If there’s time…:

ACTIVITY

Play the card game of spoons with a twist: The spoons are spread out all around the room and one spoon is on the table. When one person gets all four of the same card, then that person grabs the spoon on the table. Once that happens, then everyone else bolts from the table to SEEK a spoon in the room. Whoever doesn’t get a spoon, gets the letter S and so on until SPOON is spelled. Stop after one player spells SPOON. If you don't know how to play Spoons, read the directions here:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spoons_%28card_game%29

CLOSING PRAYER