

**SUPPLIES:** A large room to run around in

### TELL

- For the opening question, I'm going to ask you a question and then we'll go around the circle and say our names and then our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Here's the opening question: Let's pretend that all the stuff that is yours is instead MINE. And let's pretend that I am selling your stuff. Of all the things I have that are yours, what would you pay for the most to get back?
- (go around the circle)
- During this summer, we're going to be talking about parables. Parables are stories that can help us better understand an idea. For instance, I could tell you that you have to just try harder. Or, I could tell you the story of the "little engine that could" that shows us what trying harder might look like.
- The story we're going to hear now is about three servants and how they do with what is given to them. Let's listen for what happens.

### READ Matthew 25:14-30 -- Parable of the talents

14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." 21 His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." 22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." 23 His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." 24 Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." 26 But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29 For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

## ASK

- There were three servants. How many talents did the master give to the first, second and then third servant? (5, 2 and 1)
- What did the three servants do with the talents they were given? (the first two used the talents and got more for doing so. The third one buried his talent in the ground)
- What did the master think of how his servants used their talents? (well pleased with the first two, upset with the third)
- Why do you think the master was upset with the third servant? (because he had trusted the servant but the servant didn't trust him back – because the servant was wasteful – because the servant refused, in a way, the master's gift)
- What happened to the third servant? (He lost his talent)

## TELL

- As we've been talking about during this parables series of lessons, the parables Jesus tells us are to help us better understand what the Kingdom of God is like.
- As a reminder, the Kingdom of God is wherever we let God be king.
- And when we let God be king, then we receive and become aware of the gifts that God has given us, and, as shown to us by the first two servants, we know how to use those gifts and good things happen.
- But fear, as shown to us by the third servant, keeps us from living in the Kingdom of God.
- Fear causes us to not trust God, causes us to not trust ourselves, and causes us to freeze with indecision.
- So what we have in this story is two understandings of the master, who represents God.
  - One understanding is that God is on the side of the servants. And so those two servants act with freedom and trust. They are not afraid and therefore they can *do* things with what the master gave to them.
  - The other understanding is that God is against the servants. And so the third servant is afraid to lose what he's been given and therefore buries it/doesn't use it at for fear of losing it and getting in trouble.
- We're going to play two similar games, now, where we can see how each one of these perspectives about the "master" affects us.

## EXPLAIN 1<sup>st</sup> Activity

- Our first activity is going to be freeze tag.
- I need one person who is willing to be "the master."
- And the rest of us are going to play this game as if we're the third servant. We're going to be frozen with indecision if the master catches us.
- Therefore, if the master tags us, then we are frozen – meaning that we can't/won't move.
- To make the game more fun, those who are not frozen can unfreeze the frozen by crawling around their legs.
- Set boundaries. What's in- and out-of-bounds?
- Any questions?

**NOTE:** Game ends if everyone gets frozen (unlikely, but possible) or after about 5 minutes. Feel free to do two rounds during those five minutes.

## DO FREEZE TAG

### ASK

- OK, everyone go back to your seats!
- So did you want the master to be near you? (NO!)
- In order to not get caught by the master, what did you do? (run away!)
- And when the master caught you, what happened? (we froze)

### TELL

- This is exactly what happened to the third servant. Because he thought the master was against him, then the third servant was frozen in fear.
- Now we're going to do a similar type of game, but this time we're going to pretend that we're the first and second servant and see the master as someone who is for us.

### EXPLAIN 2<sup>nd</sup> activity

- Our second activity is going to be "Everybody is It Freeze Tag."
- The way we play this is that everyone is it.
- That means anyone can tag anyone else.
- If you get tagged, then you are frozen.
- The ONLY person who can unfreeze you is the master.
- I need a volunteer to be the master (if you're up to choosing the same person from Freeze Tag, it makes for a better illustration for later).
- The master cannot be frozen and can unfreeze you by crawling through/between your legs.
- Game ends if there's just one person besides the master left or if I tell us to restart with a different master.
- Set boundaries (what's in and out-of-bounds)
- Any questions?

## DO EVERYBODY IS IT FREEZE TAG

### ASK

- So did you want the master to be near you? (yes!)
- Why? (cuz he could help us be unfrozen)
- And did you do anything to get the master's attention? (yes)
- And what did you do after the master helped you? (ran around – did things)

### TELL

- And this is exactly what happened for the first and second servant. Because they thought that the master was for them, they went out and moved, they went out and used what the master had given them.
- We are to pretend that the master in the story is God and that the servants in the story are us.
- Jesus is trying to show us how it's better for us to be like the first and second servant, where we live and trust that God is for us.

## CLOSING PRAYER