

If I Were a Rich Fool

Bible Story: If I Were a Rich Fool (The rich fool: Bigger barns) • *Luke 12:13-21*

Bottom Line: When you focus on stuff, you can miss what matters.

Memory Verse: “I have learned the secret of being content no matter what happens. I am content whether I am well fed or hungry. I am content whether I have more than enough or not enough.”

Philippians 4:12b, NIV

Life App: Contentment—deciding to be happy with what you’ve got.

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

1. Not Enough Room (*review the Bible story*)

What You Need: Small containers, huge container, lots of small items

What You Do:

- Hand out small containers. Kids might need to share them.
- Dump out all of the small items so kids can reach them.
- Explain that kids will put the items into their containers.
- There won’t be enough room in their containers, so when they get full, they should dump all of their items into the huge container.
- While they’re doing this, ask questions about today’s Bible story:
 - In the Bible story, who was telling the story about the barns? (*Jesus*)
 - What job did the rich man have? (*farmer*)
 - Where did he store his crops? (*barns*)
 - Why did he think he needed bigger barns? (*his crops couldn’t fit in the ones he had*)
 - What did he think he would do after he stored all of his crops? (*take life easy*)
 - Was God happy with the man’s decision? (*no*)
 - Why wasn’t God happy? (*because the man was focusing on his stuff instead of on people*)

What You Say:

“The man in today’s story didn’t have enough room in his barns for all of his stuff, just like you didn’t have enough room in your small containers. He thought he needed something bigger. But God had a different plan, because He knew that people are more important than stuff. The man didn’t think about the fact that he could have helped others with his stuff instead of keeping it all for himself. **[Bottom Line] When you focus on stuff, you can miss what matters.**”

* 2. Reverse Old Maid (*application activity*)

What You Need: “Cards”

What You Do:

- Divide kids into groups of four or five.
- Give each group a set of cards and help kids deal the cards. All cards should be distributed. Some kids may have one more card than others do, which is okay.
- Explain that you will be playing a card game similar to Old Maid.
 - One kid will take a card from the kid on his right (without seeing what it is).
 - Then he offers his cards to the kid on his left, who takes one card.
 - At any point, if a kid ends up with a pair of cards, he puts it down on the floor in front of him.
 - Play continues until all the cards have been paired off.
 - Tell kids that the “Old Maid” in this game is a little boy.
- Let kids play the game. They’ll think that the person who ends up with the little boy card is the loser. Let them think that’s the case.

What You Say:

"In the game of 'Old Maid,' the person who ends up with the old maid card at the end loses the game. But in our game, the person with the little boy card is the winner! Why is *(insert name of winner)* the winner? Because people are more important than stuff! All of the other cards have pictures of stuff on them. But stuff doesn't matter nearly as much as people do. **[Bottom Line]** When you focus on stuff, you can miss what matters, and people are what really matter!"

3. People Power (memory verse activity)

What You Need: Bibles, "ASL Verse" Activity Page; 2 for each Small Group

What You Do:

- Distribute the Bibles and help your group find Philippians 4:12b using the navigation tips from week 1. Read the verse aloud together a few times.
- Use the Activity Page to teach kids the motions for "secret," "content," and "no matter."
- Engage kids' critical thinking skills by asking them why the sign for "content" is a good motion for the word. Your group may have more than one idea.
- Lead kids to say the first part of the verse using the signs they learned.
- Save this Activity Page to use again next week to finish the verse.

What You Say:

"Paul said that he had learned the secret of being content. He had learned the secret *(tell the kids' paraphrase of 'content' based on the sign)*. What is the secret of being content no matter what? *(Pause for responses.)* Yes! The secret of being content no matter what is focusing on what really matters—loving God and loving others."

[Make It Personal] *(Tell kids about a time when you put your stuff before people. What happened? What would you do differently if you had a chance to do it again?)*

Pray

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Guide kids to gather close around you.
- Remind kids that **[Bottom Line]** when you focus on stuff, you can miss what matters. And what matters is to love God and to love others.
- Pray for each child by name, expressing your love for them in specific ways.
- Close by asking God to help your group to focus on what truly matters this week.
- Ask kids to think about a certain person in their life, such as a parent, a sibling, or a friend.
- Tell kids to repeat this prayer, and put that person's name in the blank: "God, help me to put _____ before my stuff."

If you did the "People Power" ASL activity, guide kids to show their parents the signs they learned. Lead kids to then say what really matters (loving God and loving others).

What You Say:

"God, we want to focus more on people than on our stuff. We want to put others before the things that we have. Help us to do this and to be content with what we have. In Jesus' name, amen. **[Bottom Line]** When you focus on stuff, you can miss what matters, and people are what matters!"