

Alley Rundown - October 14 & 15, 2017

Bible Story: Parable's Got Talent (Parable of the Bags of Gold) • *Matthew 25:14-30 NIV*

Bottom Line: Use your things wisely.

Key Question: How can you best use your things?

Memory Verse: "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." *Luke 16:10a NIV*

CONNECT TIME GAME: Pump It Up!

NOTE: This is intended to be done once service time begins.

"Now, for today's game, I need two volunteers and your Small Group Leaders who are feeling a bit risky! Who thinks they have what it takes?"

LG Leader chooses two volunteers and their Small Group Leader with them.

"So, have you ever heard the phrase 'with great risk comes great reward'? Well, that is what this game is all about! I have here two standard bike pumps. To each pump I have attached a balloon. It is up to you to decide how many full pumps of air you can put into the balloon before it pops. For every pump . . ."

LG Leader unveils the doughnut holes.

" . . . I will put one donut hole on your group's plate. You can quit any time and keep the doughnut holes on your plate. However, if your balloon pops before you choose to stop pumping, you lose *all* of your reward."

"The small group leader will be the one who pumps, and I will be making sure he or she does a full pump of air (all the way up and back down)."

"Let's get started. To start things off, let's begin with 5 pumps for each team."

Both small group leader pumps 5 times. LG Leader puts 5 doughnut holes on each plate.

"Now that we are off and running, we will go 1 pump at a time."

Each time the LG Leader asks if the volunteer would like to continue. They are encouraged to ask their small group in the crowd (like Price is Right). If both volunteers choose to continue, the leaders pump at the same time on the LG Leader's count. Place a donut hole on the volunteers' plates for every pump. Continue this until either both volunteers have quit and taken their doughnuts or the balloons pop. NOTE: If the volunteers quit early, still have the leaders pump until it pops to show them how many more they could have won.

"That was a lot of fun. You were great contestants, but I'm all out of air. Get it? Never mind—enjoy your doughnut holes, and let's get ready for Large Group!"

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INTRODUCTION: "Hello, hello, hello! Quick question as we get started today: raise your hands if you've ever been trusted to take care of something . . . a younger sibling or a dog, cat, maybe an iguana . . . or maybe it's your job to take out the trash every week. Anyone? (Pause for response.) Yeah! Of course, at some point, many of us have been trusted to take care of something."

"Now, for those of you who have your hands raised, how many of you had something go wrong and you had to tell the person in charge what happened? Yeah? OK—get together with your Small Groups for a moment and swap a few of those stories in your group."

After a few minutes, have a few small group leaders share an example from their group.

"Man, those stories are crazy! Remind me to think twice before asking you to watch my hamster—Just kidding . . . sort of."

"If you were here last week, you know that we started talking about what it means to take care of what we have because it all belongs to God. Do we have stuff that we call ours? Sure. But if we track our stuff back far enough, what do we find out? Yes—it all belongs to God. But here's the question: God has a lot to care about, right? Like keeping the universe in motion! Does God *really* care about how I use my stuff? I mean, *really*? Doesn't God have better things to do than to pay attention to how I spend my money or use my things?"

"Today's story comes from the New Testament of our Bibles in a section we call the Gospels. The four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—tell about the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It's where we learn His story and what He did and said while He was here."

"Many times when Jesus was teaching people about Himself or about what life with God looks like, He would tell a story. Most of the time these stories took very familiar things and used them as illustrations for the point Jesus was trying to make. These stories were called parables and Jesus was a master at telling them. Today we're going to check out one of these parables together. Let's take a look at this Week's Episode..."

CG: Week 3 Lesson Video

"It may be easy to look at the master's response to the last servant and think that he was being a little harsh. I mean it cost him way more than just missing out on some doughnuts. But here's the deal—the boss trusted his servants with a great responsibility. He was going away, and he asked the servants to care for his stuff and to use it wisely. The first two servants took what they were given and did something with it. We don't know what they did.

Maybe they purchased land to grow crops or invested in a new business. All we know is that they took what the boss had entrusted them with and treated it as if it was their very own."

"They made wise choices with what was entrusted to them, and in the end, their boss rewarded them for it. The third servant, however, didn't really show much initiative for what his master gave him. He just stuck it in a hole and waited for his master to return. And because he did not make wise choices, the master made sure that he would not be trusted with his property again."

"Now, God is not going to walk up and hand us several bags of gold. *But* since the earth is the Lord's and everything in it is His, too, like we've been saying this month, then the truth is that God has ALREADY entrusted us with something, and we have a responsibility to make wise choices about how we take care of those."

"It may be money we have, or the stuff we own, or the gifts and talents he has given us. All of these 'things' have the potential in one way or another of being used to bring honor to God and for His kingdom."

"Like the boss in our story, God is also *really* interested in seeing what we are going to do with what He has given us. We should care about what we do with what we have."

CG: Key Question 3

"Before you head to small groups, we are going to spend a few minutes in worship. Just you and God. Here's our Worship Experience this week. Take a look..."

CG: Worship Experience Video October 2017 Week 3

Supplies Needed: Paper and Pen for each student. Children will trace their hands and take 5 minutes to pray a "5 Finger Prayer".

(DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS)