

Alley SG – Connect Time - October 14 & 15, 2017

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

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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Just For Fun:

What You Need: Individual fun-size candy (Skittles) packages (1 per child)

What You Do:

- **Pass out** individual bags of candy so that everyone has one.
- **Tell** them not to open or eat them yet.
- **Ask** them to listen to all the instructions first.
- **Explain** that their goal is to be the first to get all of the same color of candy in their hands by trading candy with other people.
- **Instruct** them to open their bags on the count of three and start trading.
 - The first person to get all the same colors in his or her hand (without eating any of them) wins!

Wrap Up and Say:

"You had to use some strategy to try and win this game, didn't you? You had to trade and try to get more of a certain color candy."

1. Bingo

What You Need: "Bingo Grid" Activity Pages; one per person, pens; one per person

What You Do:

- **Pass out** the blank BINGO grids and pens so that everyone has one of each.
- **Encourage** them to write down some of their favorite things—possessions.
- **Remind** them to write ONE thing they own or have at home in *each* box.
- **Give** them a few minutes to fill in their grids. They should keep them private.
- **Challenge** them to walk around finding other people who have one of the same things as they do.
 - If they do, they sign their names or put their initials on top of that square.
 - They can only sign one box for each person.
 - **Explain** that the first person to get 5 in a row in any direction will be the winner.

Pro Tip: *If you'd like to make it more challenging or go additional rounds, you could make winning conditional on creating an X, a T, or an L on the grid instead of the standard 5 in a row.*

Wrap & Say:

"What does it seem like a lot of you have? (*Take a few responses.*)

What were some of the most unique possessions you saw? (*Take a few responses.*)

Bottom line: We own a lot of things! So today let's talk about how we can best use our things—to love people and to honor God."

2. Discussion Questions

- Which character in the story do you think you are most like?
- Why do you think people try to hold onto things?
- What kind of talents have you been given?
- How can you use those talents for God?

3. Verses to Take with You

What You Do:

- **Re-read** Matthew 25:23: *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" (NIV)*
- **Ask** kids:
 - What do you want God to say about you someday?
 - What talents do you have that you could put to work?
 - What gets in the way of you using your talents for good?

4. Making it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Index cards, Pens

What You Do:

- **Ask** kids to write a note to themselves about one thing they want to remember from what you've talked about today.
 - What things do you want to be more faithful to do?
 - What things might you someday hope that God puts you in charge of?
- **Let** kids share what they wrote and pray for each other in their groups. If your group doesn't know each other very well yet, let them share general ideas instead of specifics.

PRAY: Dear Jesus, thank you for the way You use stories to teach us important truths. You've made each of us unique. We have talents we can invest and use to love others and You better. Someday we want to hear You say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" We want to prove we can be trusted with a little and someday be trusted with even more. We love You. In Jesus' name, amen.

5. "God Time" Take Home Sheets

What You Need: "God Time" Sheets (one per child), pens (one per child)

NOTE: The God Time sheets are intended to be a closing time activity each week in The Alley. Children will begin working on their sheets, as well as be encouraged to bring their sheets back the following week for Alley Cash. Children cannot turn in their sheets the same week. The goal is to keep the lesson on their minds and in front of them throughout the following week.