

Discovering Your Treasure

Youth Resource for One Great Hour of Sharing

Topic: Discernment of what is most important

Setting: Middle school and/or senior high youth meeting for approximately 60 minutes. Can be done in almost any setting that has the ability to mount things on walls. Remaining furniture could best be placed in a circle or other formation conducive for discussion.

Goal: To explore the values that we espouse and those we live with a view of transforming our priorities

Objectives: Youth will:

- Identify what they believe is most important in life.
- Place “coins” where they actually spend their money
- Discuss the differences and look at the stories of others’ treasures

Materials: two colors of paper (see preparation below), tape or mounting material, magazines, scissors, circle stickers, Bibles, One Great Hour of Sharing bulletin inserts or treasure map stories, Bibles, poster board and markers (optional)

- Preparation:**
1. Make signs with the following words printed on them: food, shelter, clothing, medical, entertainment, sports, school books and supplies, gifts for friends and family, church activities, support of those in need, devotion to God. Hang these around the room.
 2. Print a selection from the following Bible verses on a different color of paper writing/printing out the text from the Bible used in your youth program: Deuteronomy 7:6; Proverbs 15:6; Isaiah 33:6; Lamentations 1:11; Matthew 2:11; Matthew 6:21; Matthew 13:44; Matthew 19:21; Luke 2:19; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Timothy 6:19. Mount these on the walls, interspersed with the other signs.
 3. Cut circle stickers into groups of 10 stickers each.

Lesson Sequence:

Opening: 5–10 minutes

Activity: Welcome youth as they enter. If they are slow to gather, invite those who arrive early to look for pictures in the magazines provided that illustrate the words and phrases on the wall. They can attach them with glue or tape to the appropriate page.

Open with a prayer asking God for discernment in choosing what is most important.

Invite the youth to stand by the sign they believe represents the most important thing among the choices presented (see #1 under Preparation above). Call on volunteers to speak about why they chose the sign they did.

Resources: *Prepared signs and Bible verses mounted on walls, magazines, scissors, tape or glue sticks*

Presenting: 15 minutes

Activity:

Read the two parables in Matthew 13:44–45.
Discuss the following questions:

1. How is the kingdom of heaven like a treasure or a pearl?
2. What would bring you the kind of joy that the treasure brought the farmer or the pearl brought the merchant?
3. What type of response did Jesus hope for in telling this parable to the crowds and to us?

Resources: *Bibles*

Exploring: 15–20 minutes

Treasure Activity:

1. Give each youth 10 circle stickers to represent their treasure. Tell them that they are to consider them the money that they actually spend and to affix the stickers to the signs accordingly. They may attach more than one of their circles to the same sign, but should honestly distribute their wealth to the things they currently spend money on.
2. When the group comes back together, debrief the activity by looking at which signs contain the most circles and which the least. Ask some of the following questions:
 - How did you decide how many stickers you would place on each sign?
 - Did the Scripture verses have any influence over your choices in either activity? If so, how?
 - Does money equate to the treasure we were looking at earlier in the parables?
 - How was your first answer about what is most important different from the places where you put your stickers? Why do you believe this is so?

Resources: *10 circle stickers per youth, the signs from the opening activity*

Discerning: 15 minutes

Activity:

1. Read Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 4:1–7. Discuss what they might have to say in relation to the choices that were made in these two activities. Here are some additional questions for discussion: What is the treasure here? What does it mean that we have this treasure in "clay jars?" What does our being human have to do with our choices and our needs? How do we decide what is a necessity and what is a luxury?
2. Choose different volunteers to read the stories of others who benefit from the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. What is their treasure? How does our treasure intersect with their needs?

Resources: *Bibles, One Great Hour of Sharing bulletin inserts and/or treasure map stories*

Closing: 5–10 minutes

1. Set a goal for the money your youth group will try to raise for One Great Hour of Sharing. Invite individuals to make a commitment about where they will seek their treasure?
2. Close in prayer for the individuals whose stories you have read and for each other as you try to live as those who seek a treasure beyond what our eyes can see.

Resources: *Optional poster board with goal to measure progress, if so desired*



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