

**Lesson Plans that Work**  
**Year C – Season after Pentecost, Proper 14**  
**Lesson Plans for Younger Children**

**Scripture: Luke 12:32-40**

Even on a sultry summer day, the wind of the Spirit hovers — almost imperceptibly. Our lives rarely accommodate a slower pace for the summer. Yet, we are invited to notice, again, the priorities that drive us. We are invited to stop, however briefly, the manic activity and consider options Jesus offers us.

**A Notation for This Week’s Gospel**

What if the abundance of possessions — all this stuff we are accumulating — is, in fact possessing us? Find a stash of treasure, and our hearts will not be far away. What if truly getting the readiness Jesus calls us to is about streamlining for action? What IS this kingdom that is God's "good pleasure to give?"

**Theme: An invitation to choose the unfailing treasures**

**Before:** This activity would be good outside, especially if your church has trees or flowers you can walk to with the children. Both suggested activities invite the children to use their imaginations, so it is more important to honor what they come up with than get right answers. It is suggested that you tell the first part of the story and then do the activity. If you have time, do the second part of the story and that activity.

**Beginning:** Tell the children that today we are going to use our imaginations. Do they know what that means? If they are not sure, offer that we are going to think about things we may not be able to see. For example, you may be able to think about a friend who is not here in this room, but you can still imagine that friend being right here with us.

**Praying:** Thank you, God, for all the beautiful things in our world and for the imaginations you have given us. Amen.

**The Story:** Jesus was talking to the people who came to listen to him. Jesus said, “God wants you to be with God in the kingdom. In the kingdom, people sell stuff they don't need and give the money to people who need things. The very best things are things you cannot buy or sell. Can you buy the sunshine? Nope. Can you buy a star in the night? Nope. Can you buy a very best friend? Nope. Can you buy the rain? Nope. Can you buy God’s love? Nope.”

**Activity:** Jesus told the people to make imaginary bags to hold those best things. Let's stand up and take hold of a huge imaginary bag. Let's open the flap of the bag and look inside. What do we see? Wow! I have a rainbow in mine! (Pretend to pull out a huge rainbow and spread it around the room.) What do you have in your imaginary bag? Did anyone find a butterfly? A bird that flies through the sky? A puppy to lick your nose? (Accept whatever the children have found in their purses.)

If it is possible to go outside, tell the children to drag their huge imaginary bags with them and look for things we can see and then make imaginary so they can go in our bags. A flower? A tree? Green grass? A sidewalk to run on?

**The next part of the story:** Jesus then told the disciples that one day he will come back. It will be a time we do not expect him, and we will be completely surprised. So, since we do not know when he will come, let's practice what we would do if he came today.

If we heard a knock, knock, knock on our door, what would we do? Sure, we would go open the door. What would we do if we saw it was Jesus? (Invite the children to share their responses.) Then he would sit down with us and ask us what we have in our imaginary bags that we could tell him about. So, we could open our bags and take out all the wonderful things we have found today.

**Activity:** Who wants to pretend to be Jesus, go outside our door and knock three times? We can pretend we do not know who is knocking on our door. What might we say? ("Who's there?") What might Jesus say? ("It's me, Jesus, can I come in?") What would we say? ("Of course, Jesus, come right in.") Jesus would know each of our names and he would say hi to each of us. Then, he would say, "I see you have made bags for yourselves. Will you tell me about what is in them?" And we can take turns telling Jesus about the things we found to put in our imaginary bags. When we have finished, Jesus will need to go talk to some other people, so we can say goodbye to him and tell him he can come back anytime he wants.

**Getting Closure:** Tell the children you are going to take your imaginary bags home with you and keep looking for things you can put in it. Tell them they can do the same thing.

**Closing Prayer:** Thank you, God, for all the things we found to put in our bags. Help us to remember that the best things that we have are from you. Amen.

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