



Buried Treasure?

Unearth God's riches this Bible Sunday

ACTIVITY MATERIALS FOR 10 TO 14-YEAR-OLDS

As we look at the Bible with our young people we want them to get a sense of the riches that this book contains; riches for their lives and the lives of all people around the world.

We shall especially consider the eagerness of young people in some of the toughest parts of Jamaica to have their own Bible by looking at part of the DVD prepared for this Sunday. Please try to watch this before your group meets, even if you are unable to use it in your session.

This focus will lead to considering ways your young people can help practically to meet the needs of the young people of Kingston, Jamaica

You could set the scene as the group arrives by decorating the room in colours of the Jamaican flag (green, black and yellow), playing some Caribbean music and offering appropriate drinks ('Lilt' is of course 'totally tropical').

WAY IN

1. Imagine you had to leave your home in an emergency – what three objects would you take with you and why (let's assume that all people and pets are safely out!)?

- Why are these things important to you? What would it mean to you to lose them?
- Now you have to choose just one of the things to save – Which one and why?
- When the Queen was crowned she was given a Bible with the words, 'We present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords.'

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- What was meant by this? In what way is the Bible 'precious' to you or to other people you know? If you weren't able to read the Bible how would it affect you?
- Did anyone think of rescuing a Bible from their house why/ why not?

(If this raises the issue of there being Bibles in abundance in this country come back to this in the later section – see '**GOING WIDER**' where the DVD will challenge us to think about the need for Bibles amongst the young people of Jamaica.)

2. You will need: a list of Bible stories/events (suggestions below – feel free to add your own)

Divide the young people into small groups. If your numbers are very small you might have to do this activity as individuals ... or skip it altogether.

Give each group a story/event from your list which is to be acted out without words to the other groups. Give points for correctly guessing what has been portrayed. (Don't forget: 'Points mean prizes')

Suggested Bible events/ stories

Feeding of the 5000

Crossing the Red Sea

Turning the Water into Wine

Saul's Conversion

The Good Samaritan

The Sacrifice of Isaac

Raising of Lazarus

Noah's Ark

The Lost Son

Creation

Stress that while we have focused on 'dramatic' parts of the Bible the whole of the Bible is about how God gets involved in the lives of ordinary men and women – and that is always exciting.

In the next activity we will explore how the treasures of the Bible can be dug out and make a difference for us today.

3. You will need: A supply of plasticine and the list of Bible references below.

Choose one person to start. Give them one of the Bible references below to look up (each one describes a characteristic of the Word of God) and then model in plasticine the description they have found.

The first person to guess what is being modelled takes the next turn.

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James 1.23 (mirror)

Hebrews 4.12 (sword)

Psalm 109.105 (lamp/light)

Matthew 4.4 (food/bread)

Psalm 119.140 (gold)

Talk about the different descriptions of God's Word.

- Why is it described this way?
- How does it help us understand the kind of book the Bible is?
- What words would you use to tell others what the Bible is like?

DIGGING DEEPER

You will need: Copies of Psalm 119.9–16 from the Contemporary English Version or The Message (or possibly a mixture of both) for each member of the group; felt pens. *Please refer to copyright guidelines if printing copies.*

Questions for group discussion:

- What are the words or phrases that stand out for you in these verses? Mark them with the pens. Why have you chosen these particular words?
- What are the challenges you find in doing the right things day by day? What are your particular temptations? How has the Bible helped you cope (as verse 9 says it will do). If the Bible isn't something you use to help in your daily life how do you think it could help?
- How has obeying God's instructions brought happiness (verse 14). How might it?
- Do you have a favourite part of the Bible? If so, what is it? Why is it important to you?
- Verse 16 speaks of the importance of remembering what is in the Bible. How might it help us to memorise different parts of the Bible? Could we start by committing the verse we highlighted as being significant to memory (if the group agree to do this don't forget to check out how they have done the following week)? As leader can you be the example by committing yourself to memorising a verse from today's reading?
- If the group seems keen could you encourage them to have a weekly verse to learn? Be wary of making this simply a 'memory' exercise. Try to be creative in ways that the verse is introduced, e.g.:

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- Put individual words from the verse around the hall/building to be found and sorted.
- Use relay race activities as ways of collecting words to be arranged into this week's verse.
- Look for songs that put Scripture to music.
- Let the young people write their own songs to help them remember verses.
- Create a 'treasure hunt' in and around the building where you meet that will result in a verse being found.

GOING WIDER

Watch the section on the Bible Sunday DVD which focuses on the Sidewalk Sunday School in Jamaica. (If you are not able to watch the DVD with your group tell them the story of the Sunday School that is recounted on the CD.)

- How do the young people respond to the situation they have heard about/seen?
- What can they do to help this project?
(Encourage them to focus on a response that involves them rather than simply asking their parents for money.)
Is there a way they could fundraise for the project?
Encourage their ideas – but if they struggle one or more of the following might be appropriate:

Making coffee and selling cakes after Sunday worship

A promise auction (the young people offer their services for which people bid)

A sponsored walk (or silence!)

A sale of their books, games

Could the young people have their faces painted with the Jamaican flag and be sponsored to 'wear' this for the day?

Preparing and serving food at a 'Jamaican evening'. Recipes and ideas can be found in the FairTrade cook book (or on www.fairtradecookbook.org)

If the group are particularly involved in sports consider how these activities could become part of their fundraising.

- Explore ways in which this support can be part of the ongoing focus of the group rather than ending once the fundraising stops.
This could include:
 - regularly praying for the Sidewalk Sunday School
 - writing to the Sunday School, sending photos and descriptions of their Sunday group

And finally ...

You will need: A map of Jamaica (try Google Images) cut into the same number of pieces as there are in the group. If the group is large, print two maps so that the individual pieces are not too small.

- Invite each person to write their own prayer for the people of Jamaica based on what they have learned today.
- Encourage them to keep the pieces and to go on praying for Jamaica in the weeks ahead.
- Emphasise that though we cannot be the whole answer to the needs explored we can all be a part of the solution.
- The young people might also want to write a prayer for themselves asking God for help in making the Bible more important in their lives.

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