

Unit 23: The Teachings of Jesus

Unit Description: Jesus taught like no one else—as One who has authority. Everything Jesus taught about revealed what God’s kingdom is like, the kingdom that Jesus had come to establish in full.

Big Picture Question: What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.



SESSION 1: Jesus Taught about Character Matthew 5



SESSION 2: Jesus Taught about Behavior Matthew 6



SESSION 3: Jesus Taught about God’s Love Luke 15



SESSION 4: Jesus Taught about God’s Kingdom Matthew 13



SESSION 5: We Are Part of God’s Kingdom Matthew 22; Luke 14



UNIT 23 | SESSION 2

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT BEHAVIOR

MATTHEW 6

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Chronicles 29:11

Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.
1 Chronicles 29:11 NIV

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should interact with God and others. Believers live to honor God—not to earn God's favor but because they already have it.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Have you ever wondered, *Does Jesus care more about what I believe or about what I do?* That’s one of those questions that can’t be answered in a word.

We learn in the Bible of the danger of a “belief” that is only external. We find warnings like Matthew 15:8: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.” On the flip side, we also learn in the New Testament that “Faith without works is useless” (James 2:20).

This is not evidence of the Bible contradicting itself but of the Bible teaching that these two are not mutually exclusive. So, what is it that the Bible tells us God is looking for? Scripture seems to suggest both belief and action: faith and works.

In Matthew 6, Jesus used the Sermon on the Mount to emphasize this further by spelling out some of the specific actions that true belief will produce. Jesus speaks of giving, prayer, fasting, and holding a right perspective on our possessions.

The irony of Jesus’ explaining the appropriate actions that flow out of genuine faith is that elsewhere in the New Testament we learn that Jesus is the central ingredient in the faithful production of these behaviors in our lives.

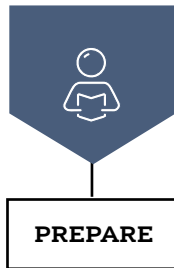
Second Timothy 3:16-17 reminds us that the Word of God is able to teach, rebuke, correct, and train us so that we are fully equipped for the work that God created us for. Considering the whole counsel of God, Jesus is identified in John 1 as the living Word of God. Therefore, Jesus does not simply teach us about the behaviors He calls us to, He is the very One equipping us to live out of these behaviors.

In 2 Peter 1, we find this idea spelled out even more directly: “His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (2 Peter 1:3).

Jesus is deeply concerned with what we believe and what we do. His expectations are high, but He promises to give us everything we need for both faith and works. This is a promise we can count on.

TERMS TO KNOW

Works: acts, deeds, or accomplishments. Works of the law are insufficient to earn one’s salvation, while good works are a natural consequence of saving faith.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



WELCOME

Activity Page

- “True or False” activity page

Session Starter (Option 1)

- dry erase board and marker

Session Starter (Option 2)

- index cards, 10



LEARN

Introduce the Session

- countdown video

Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

Tell the Bible Story

- “Jesus Taught about Behavior” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Questions from Kids

- “Unit 23, Session 2” questions from kids video

Missions Moment

- “Safadi Family Photos” printable

Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “Yours (1 Chronicles 29:11)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- sticky notes



LOVE

Review & Bible skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



LIVE

Activity Choice (Option 1)

- world map
- sticky notes, 1 per kid

Activity Choice (Option 2)

- Big Picture Question Poster

Journal and Prayer

- Journal Page
- “Kingdom Word Search” activity page



WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

SAY “ Who has taught you what behaving well looks like? Why do you think your parents or teachers want you to behave a certain way? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “True or False” on the activity page.

SAY “ Today, we will learn more about Jesus’ teachings. Jesus helps us understand how we can live in a way that honors God. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: LOVE AND HONOR



Form the kids into two teams. Name one team “Love” and the other team “Honor.” On a dry erase board write the following: parents, teachers, friends, and God. Provide each team with paper and pencil. Then lead each team to write down ways they show love or honor to each category listed. Tell kids that honor means we seek to show respect to God and to people. Allow several minutes for kids to write their responses.

Invite each team to share their answers by category. Start with parents and emphasize common answers from each team. Continue through each category while identifying the commonalities.

SAY “ Today, we will learn that Jesus taught how our lives can honor God and people. When we honor others, we are also showing love. How we give to people, pray for them, or forgive them is a way to love and honor them. How we pray to God, give to others, and trust Him is a way we show we love and honor God. In all these ways, we demonstrate we are followers of Jesus. ”

OPTION 2: WHAT DOES OUR BEHAVIOR SHOW?

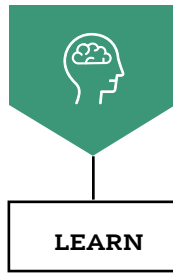
Before the session, write the following behaviors on index cards: boasting, seeking attention for a good deed, worrying, seeking the treasures of this world, holding grudges, showing humility, serving quietly, trusting God, seeking God’s kingdom, forgiving others.

Form kids into pairs and give each pair one of the index cards. Instruct pairs to scatter about the room. Tell kids that each index card has a behavior written on it. Lead each pair to find the index card with the opposite behavior. When they do, direct them to sit down.

SAY “ Our behavior reveals whether we are seeking to live for God or for something else. How does the behavior of boasting show how we are living? [Allow responses.] If we boast in ourselves, we reveal a heart that is prideful and not dependent on God. But if we show humility, we reveal a heart that believes God should receive all the glory. Today, we will learn how Jesus taught ways we can interact with God and others to show Him honor. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Welcome, kids! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you are here today. Raise your hand if you brought a Bible. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The Bible is God’s Word, and God gave us His Word for us to know Him, trust Him, and live for Him.

Do you think our behavior, or how we live, is how God decides whether or not He will save us? Why not? [Allow responses.] No, our behavior is not what makes God save us. He saves us because of our faith in Jesus, not because of what we do or don’t do. But when we trust in Jesus, His followers do live differently. Today, we will learn how Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him and live to honor God. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ Last week, we learned a new big picture question. Does anyone remember our big picture question from last week? [Allow responses.] Our big picture question is, **What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?** Let’s review the answer together: **Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.**

In our story today, Jesus taught the crowd about God and His kingdom. He helped them understand that seeking after God and His kingdom is most important. When we read our Bibles, we can learn more about Jesus and how to become a part of His kingdom. ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ When Jesus began publicly teaching, He told people that God’s kingdom is near. Why do you think God’s kingdom had come near? [Allow responses.] God’s kingdom was coming into the world because Jesus had come into the world. Jesus taught about God’s kingdom because He wants people to live in His kingdom with Him. We can only enter the kingdom of God when we trust in Jesus.

Last week, we learned that Jesus taught about how people in His kingdom should live. Jesus taught that people in His kingdom live differently because they have been given new hearts that want to be like Him and live for His kingdom. In our story today, we will learn what Jesus says about how we should live to honor Him. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Matthew 6. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught about Behavior.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT BEHAVIOR

“Great crowds of people followed Jesus wherever He went. One day, Jesus went up on a mountain. He sat down and began to teach.

Jesus said, “When you give to people who are poor, give in secret. And when you pray, don’t pray just so that people will hear you.”

Jesus taught the people how to pray: “Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

He also said, “Forgive others. If you forgive those who sin against you, God will forgive you too. But if you don’t forgive them, God will not forgive you.”

Jesus said, “Do not collect treasures on earth, which can be destroyed or stolen. Collect treasures in heaven instead. For where your treasure is, that is where your heart will be also.”

Jesus also taught that God provides for His people. “Don’t worry about your life or what you will eat or drink or wear. Look at the birds: They don’t plant or gather food into barns, yet God feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than birds? Seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and all these things that you need will be given to you.”

Jesus taught many things about how people in His kingdom should live. When He finished teaching, the crowds were amazed because He taught them like one who had authority.

Christ Connection: Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should interact with God and others. Believers live to honor God—not to earn God’s favor but because they already have it. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Recite it: Lead kids to recite the Lord’s prayer with you or repeat the prayer after you.

Teach outside: If the weather permits, consider teaching the story outside. Point to or listen for birds and remind kids that they are worth more than the birds.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ When Jesus spoke, the people were amazed at His teachings because He spoke with authority. Jesus has all authority because He is God and what He says is best. His commands do not keep us from enjoying life, but they are the way to have a joy-filled life.

Jesus taught how we should give, how we should pray, how we should forgive, and how we should trust Him and not worry. Jesus’ teachings are a matter of the heart. Where did Jesus say our treasures are found? Look at Matthew 6:21. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 6:21.] Our treasures or what we love most is found in our hearts. And because what we love is what we seek after most, how we live shows what is in our hearts.

When we give in secret, pray for God’s will to be done, seek first His kingdom, and trust Him, we reveal hearts that love God and want to honor Him. Those who seek to honor God will receive an eternal reward in His kingdom. What did Jesus say about those who want to be praised by others? Look at Matthew 6:5. [Choose a volunteer to read Matthew 6:5.] Jesus said they have received their reward and it will not last.

We don’t have to live for ourselves or worry about making sure we have all we need. God loves us and cares for us. What example did Jesus give to demonstrate God’s care for His people? [Allow responses.] He told the crowd gathered around Him to think about the birds and how well God cares for them. If He provides for the birds, we can trust Him to always provide for us. Instead of worrying, we can seek His kingdom and live to become more like Jesus. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should interact with God and others. Believers live to honor God—not to earn God’s favor but because they already have it. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 23, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. What should we do if it is hard for us to give to others?
2. Why are the things of heaven much more valuable than the things of earth?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the Safadi family photos as you tell the story.

SAY “ When Amer and Victoria Safadi moved to the United States, they first moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. After a few years, an opportunity opened for them in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They met a



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

woman in Milwaukee who prayed for 16 years for a pastor to start an Arabic-speaking church in the area. In July 2019, Amer, Victoria, and Amer's brother began a church in Milwaukee. After a while, Amer and Victoria began to feel that Amer's brother could lead the church in Milwaukee and God could use them to serve somewhere else. Soon they felt that God wanted them to go back to Cincinnati.

God answered the Safadi's prayers. Amer contacted Travis Smalley, pastor of Lakota Hills Baptist Church, and a Send City missionary in Cincinnati. Pastor Travis told Amer that his church would love to help support his family to tell people who speak Arabic about Jesus. The Safadis packed their bags and moved back to Cincinnati the very next day. ”

Tell kids that the Safadis started an Arabic-speaking church with 22 people, and within two months, they had 55 people from 8 different countries. Share that when the pandemic hit, they began live streaming their worship services and reached a new audience of thousands of people who speak Arabic across the United States as well as North Africa and the Middle East. Pray for the Safadis as they lead their church in Cincinnati.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before the session, write words or phrases of the key passage on a sticky note. Hide each sticky note around the room. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Chronicles 29:11 together.

SAY “ Our key passage teaches us that greatness, power, glory, splendor, and majesty all belong to God because He is the Creator. God made us to live for Him. When we do, we are most happy. ”

Explain to kids that they are to find all the sticky notes and assemble them in order of the key passage as fast as possible. Once completed, read the key passage together.

Lead kids to sing “Yours (1 Chronicles 29:11).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

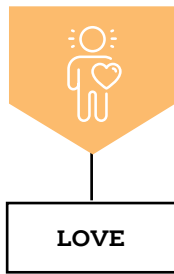
7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Lord, You are worthy of all praise, honor, and glory. You are good and You are great. Thank You for sending Jesus to show us what You are like and bring us into Your kingdom through faith in Him. Help us love You with our all of our hearts. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Israel Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Matthew 6. Explain that Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6 is a continuation of His teaching in Matthew 5. Tell kids Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5–7 are commonly known as the Sermon on the Mount. Remind kids that Jesus taught with authority because He is God.

Consider comparing the New Testament Israel Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Sea of Galilee [D6].) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Matthew 6:33.

SAY “ Jesus had come to earth to build His kingdom and bring people into His kingdom. As He taught, He helped people understand that the only way into His kingdom is by faith in Him. The righteousness that He taught His followers to seek is only found when we trust in Him. Everyone who is made righteous through Jesus will receive eternal life and all the joys of heaven. ”

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

SAY “ What are some earthly treasures people’s hearts seek after? ”

Answers will vary. Prompt kids to discuss how worldly desires or materials may tempt our hearts to love them more than God. Discuss how people may seek after money, praise from others, comfort, fame, or the latest technology. Remind kids that Jesus taught that earthly treasures will not last and that we should seek Him above all.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:19-20.)

SAY “ How did Jesus’ prayer show faith in God? ”

Discuss how Jesus acknowledged God’s holiness and authority. Remind kids that Jesus’ prayer showed faith because it demonstrated dependence on God. Discuss how the prayer revealed our need to ask for forgiveness of sin and help us avoid temptation. Encourage kids to remember that our prayers are a way to honor God.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Matt. 6:9-13.)

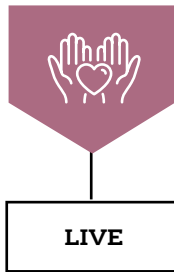
SAY “ What should we do when we feel worried? ”

Remind kids that we can always pray and take our worry to God. Tell kids that the Lord wants us to cast our cares and worries on Him because He loves us. Explain that reminding ourselves of the truths found in God’s Word is a great way to fight worry. Explain that we can also look at how God cares for this whole world, from the smallest ant to keeping the sun in its place, and be reminded that He loves us even more and promises to take care of us.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Phil. 4:6-7.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: RACE TO THE NATIONS



Display a world map on a wall or on the floor. Form kids into three teams and provide each kid with a sticky note. Lead teams to line up single file at the end of the room opposite the map. Tell the teams that they will race against each other to place their sticky notes on a country.

Explain that each kid must pick a different way to race to the map. For example, the first kid may choose to run, but the next kid may choose to hop. When you say “Go,” direct the first kid from each team to race to the map, place their sticky note on it, and race back to their teams. The team to place all of their sticky notes on the map first, wins.

SAY “ Each country you placed your sticky note on has people who need to hear the gospel. The Safadis were willing to go wherever God called them to serve. We can be faithful to share Jesus with others and pray for missionaries serving all around the world. ”

OPTION 2: KINGDOM ART



Provide kids with paper and markers. Prompt kids to think about Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of God. Tell kids that they have been tasked with being an illustrator for a kid’s Bible. Lead kids to choose one of Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of God to illustrate. Invite kids to think about how they might illustrate forgiving their enemies or not worrying about tomorrow. When kids have completed their artwork, display the pictures somewhere in the room. (Tip: As you teach about Jesus’ kingdom in the coming weeks, use the pictures as a way to review His teachings.)

SAY “ Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him. Your illustrations are a great way for us to remember that all of the Bible is about Jesus and that it is only through Him that we can live differently from the world. Through faith in Jesus, we receive new hearts that seek to live for His kingdom. ”

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for His Word and for helping us live to honor Him. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Kingdom Word Search” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
2. What does this story teach me about myself?
3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 23 • Session 2

JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT BEHAVIOR

Matthew 6

**WHAT DID JESUS TEACH WHEN HE WAS ON EARTH?
JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT GOD AND HIS KINGDOM. HE TAUGHT THAT ALL
SCRIPTURE IS ABOUT HIM.**

Great crowds of people followed Jesus. One day, Jesus went up on a mountain and began to teach.

Jesus said, "When you give to people who are poor, give in secret. And when you pray, don't pray just so that people will hear you."

Jesus taught the people how to pray: "Our Father in heaven, Your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

He also said, "Forgive others. If you forgive those who sin against you, God will forgive you too. But if you don't forgive them, God will not forgive you."

Jesus said, "Do not collect treasures on earth. Collect treasures in heaven instead. For where your treasure is, that is where your heart will be also."

Jesus also taught that God provides for His people. "Don't worry about your life or what you will eat or drink or wear. Seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and all these things that you need will be given to you."

Jesus taught many things about how people in His kingdom should live. When He finished teaching, the crowds were amazed.

Christ Connection: Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should interact with God and others. Believers live to honor God—not to earn God's favor but because they already have it.

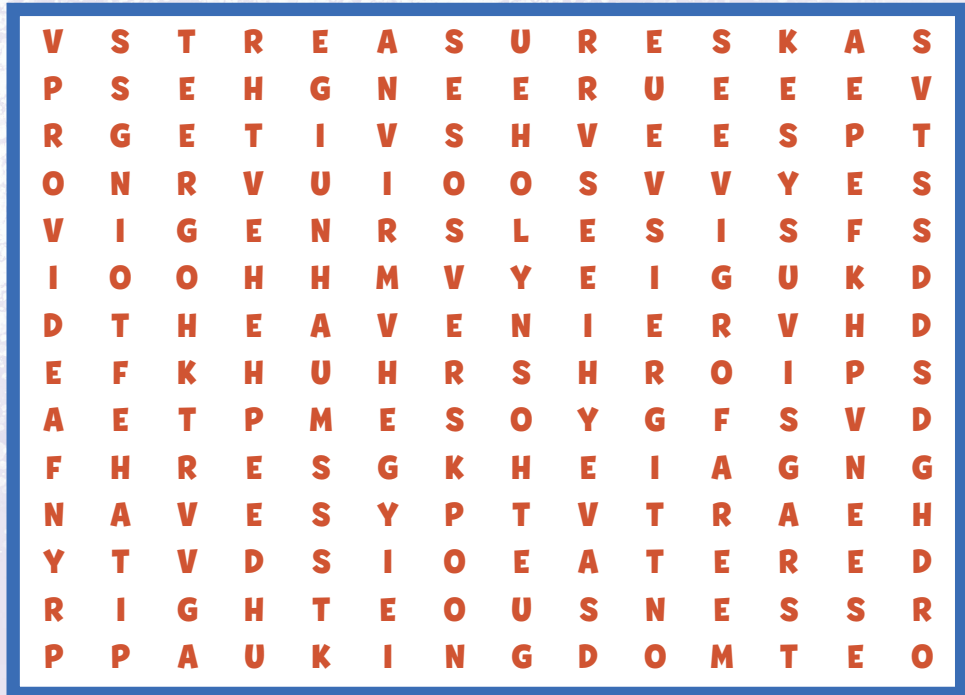
FOLD

True or False | Look up Matthew 6 to help you know what statements are true or false. Write a **T** for true or a **F** for false.

- ___ 1. When you give to people who are poor, let everyone know what you gave. (Matthew 6:3-4)
- ___ 2. Pray that God's kingdom will come and His plans will be done. (Matthew 6:9-10)
- ___ 3. If you forgive those who sin against you, God will forgive you too. (Matthew 6:14-15)
- ___ 4. Collect treasure on earth which will not be destroyed. (Matthew 6:19-20)
- ___ 5. For where your treasure is, that is not where your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:21)
- ___ 6. Jesus used the example of cats catching mice to teach that God provides for people. (Matthew 6:25-26)
- ___ 7. Jesus taught that we should not worry about our life but trust God. (Matthew 6:30-32)
- ___ 8. Seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first. (Matthew 6:33)

Kingdom Word Search | Find and circle the words Jesus taught in Matthew 6.

SEEK, PRAY, FORGIVE, HEAVEN, PROVIDE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, HOLY, HEART, TREASURES, KINGDOM





NAME:



Jesus Taught about Behavior

BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- Jesus taught people how to live for the kingdom of God. He taught them how to pray and that we should forgive others.
- He taught people not to collect earthly treasures that will not last, but to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first.
- He taught people to trust that God would meet their needs.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should interact with God and others. Believers live to honor God—not to earn God's favor but because they already have it.

KEY PASSAGE:

1 Chronicles 29:11

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.