

# 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



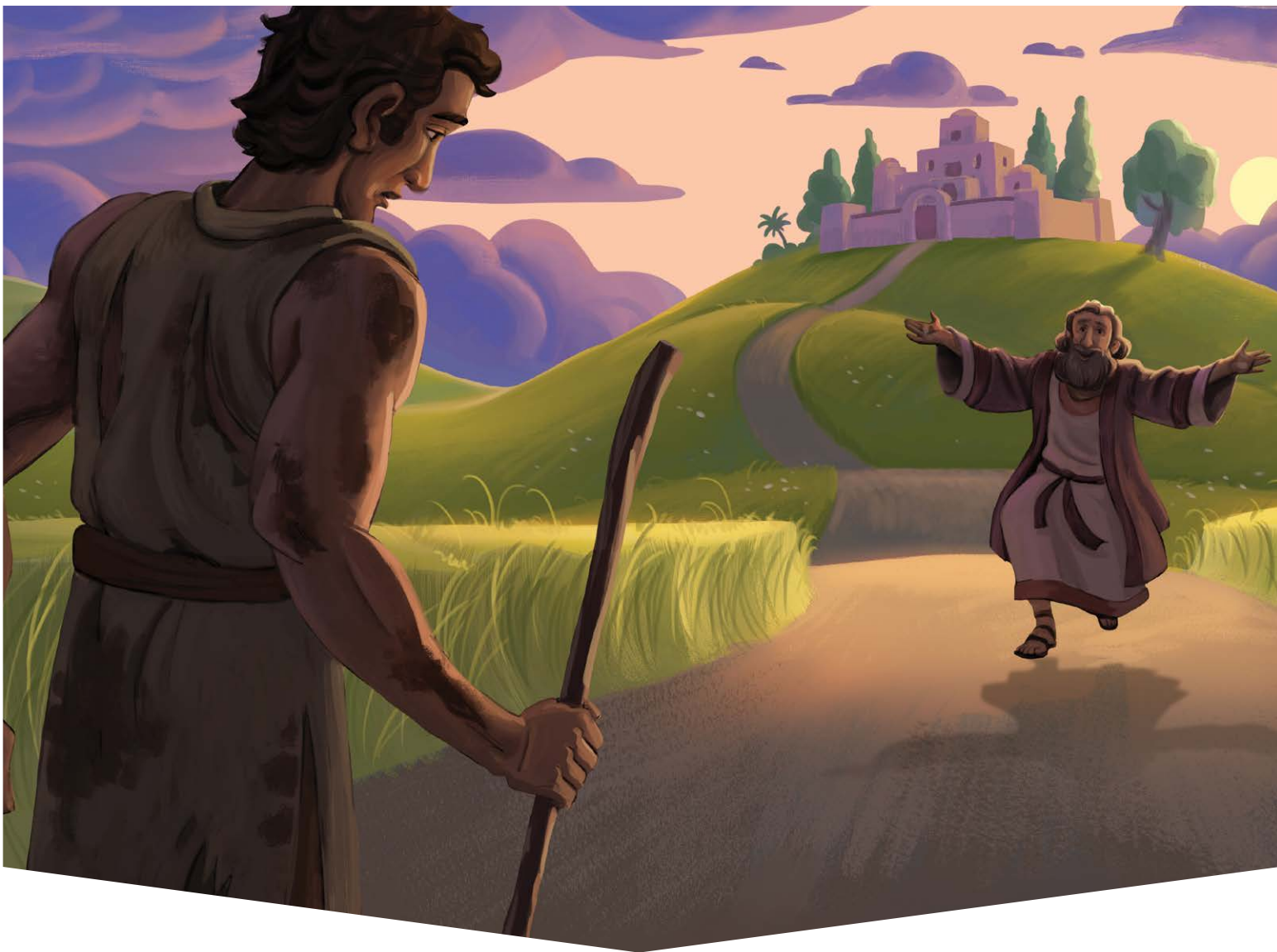
**SESSION 3: Jesus Taught about God’s Love**  
Luke 15



**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 3

## JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

LUKE 15

**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 told these parables to teach about God's love. God sent Jesus so sinners can be forgiven. As Savior, Jesus loves and seeks sinners. He paid the ultimate price—His own life—to save people from sin.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

Let’s set the scene: It’s Monday morning, you’re running late for work, where you have an important meeting scheduled first thing. But before you can make it to work, you have to drop off the kids at school. And before you can drop the kids off at school, you’ll need to get everyone in the car, which means you’ll need the car keys. And therein lies the problem. Where are the car keys?! A panicked search ensues, sofa cushions are tossed to the ground, bags are emptied, pockets are turned inside out. You have the car, you have the kids, you have the backpacks, lunchboxes, and your wallet, but without the keys, no one is going anywhere.

Every time I read the three parables that Jesus shares in Luke 15—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son—I can’t help but imagine such a scene. A valuable target that’s worth the risk and resources to go and get.

From these three stories, it’s fair to ask, “Who is it that Jesus is after?” A close look at the context where Jesus shared these parables helps us understand.

Jesus has been approached by tax collectors and sinners. These are the worst of the worst in the eyes of the religious people of the day. But there’s another audience as well. The Pharisees and scribes had gathered. And while they complained about Jesus being

with such terrible sinners, Jesus started to make a point that leveled the playing field.

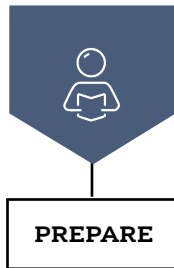
These three parables illustrate that Jesus is concerned about the far-off sinner who has either wandered from faithfulness or has yet to taste and see the goodness of God. But He is also concerned with the outwardly righteous, inwardly sinful Christians who consider themselves deserving of the grace of God. Both are in great need of the love of God.

As we read Luke 15 it should stir our hope for those around us that are far from God and in need of salvation or restoration. But it should also cause us to see our own need for the love and grace of God.

The love of God is relentless, coming after us in our time of need. Whether He is leading us to Himself in salvation or leading us to repentance from our sin, Jesus is in pursuit. We are all always in need of His love and grace.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Agape:** the special unconditional love of God the Father for Jesus (John 3:35), of God the Father for an individual believer (John 14:21), and of Christ’s love for a disciple (John 13:23).



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

- “Decode the Message” activity page



**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 God’s Love” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- robe (optional)
- party blowers, 1 per kid (optional)

### Questions from Kids

- “Unit 23, Session 3” 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)



**LOVE**

### Review & Bible skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- world map



**LIVE**

### Activity Choice (Option 1)

- foam sheets or poster board, 1 per kid
- “Foam Finger Template” printable, 1 per kid

### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- balloons, 2 or 3 per kid
- permanent markers, 1 per kid
- balloon decorating strip
- painter’s tape

### Journal and Prayer

- Journal Page
- “Lost and Found” 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** “Have you ever been part of a big celebration? What did you do? Why did you have a big celebration?”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Decode the Message” on the activity page.

**SAY** “Jesus loves and seeks sinners. That’s great news for all people because we are all sinners. Today’s Bible story teaches us that God sent Jesus to seek and save all who are lost in sin.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: MAKE A MAP



Form kids into groups of three and provide each group with paper and markers. Lead kids to draw a map from one location to another. Tell kids that the map could show the way from their home to the church or it could lead the way from the park to the store. Invite kids to make the map as detailed as possible and include street names or landmarks along the way.

Encourage groups to show their maps to the rest of the kids and display the journey to their intended destination.

**SAY** “Maps are helpful when we need to know how to get from one location to another. Maps are also extremely helpful when we are lost. Have you ever been lost? [Allow responses.] The Bible teaches us that because of sin we are all lost, or separated, from God. But the good news is that God has given us a way to be found! The Bible is like a map because it points us to Jesus—He is the only way to be brought back to God. In our Bible story, we will learn that God sent Jesus to seek and save people lost in sin.”

#### OPTION 2: PARTY PLANNERS

Form kids into groups of three or four. Tell each group that they have been chosen to plan a coming home party for a family member who had been lost in the wilderness for one year. Explain that the family member had chosen to go his own way rather than follow the trail signs. Tell the kids that the family member was sorrowful over his choices and is grateful to have been found by rescuers.

Direct kids to think of how they would plan a party for his return. Prompt kids to think about the food they would prepare, the new clothes they would give him, the decorations they would display, and so on. Provide paper and markers if groups would like to draw pictures of the party. Invite each group to share their celebrations.

**SAY** “If a lost family member had been found, wouldn’t you want to throw the best party ever? Did you know that heaven celebrates when a sinner has been found and saved by Jesus? Today, we will learn that Jesus came to seek and save sinners.”

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** “ Hi, kids! My name is [your name]. I am so excited you are here today. If you brought your Bible, please take it out and open it to Luke 15. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] The Bible is God’s Word and it teaches us the way to be saved from our sins through faith in Jesus.

Today, we will learn that without faith in Jesus we are lost in our sin. But the good news is that God loves us so much, He sent Jesus to seek and save sinners. In our Bible story, we will learn that Jesus taught people about God’s love through His mission to save people from sin. ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “ Do you remember our big picture question from last week? Let’s say it together: **What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?** Do you remember the answer? [Allow responses.] **Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.**

All of the Bible reveals God’s plan to save people from sin. Even from the very beginning, right after Adam and Eve sinned, God had a plan to send Jesus into the world to seek and save sinful people. When Jesus came to earth, He fulfilled God’s plan and taught people that He is the Messiah God promised. It is only by faith in Jesus that we are saved and able to enter the kingdom of God. ”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

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

**SAY** “ We have learned that Jesus taught people about His kingdom and how they can live to honor Him. Last week, we read Matthew 6 and learned that how we live reveals what is in our hearts. Jesus taught the crowds that our lives are meant to bring glory to God and show love toward others. When we obey Jesus’ teaching, we show others what God’s kingdom is like.

As Jesus taught, many who came to listen to Him were those who were rejected by others. In our Bible story, Jesus taught about God’s love for all people—even people that were not very well liked. We will learn that God’s love is shown to all people through Jesus’ saving grace. ”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# LEARN the Bible Story

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

Open your Bible to Luke 15. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Jesus Taught about God’s Love.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

### JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT GOD’S LOVE

“Tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus teach. Jesus told them three parables to teach them about God’s love. Jesus said, “If a man has 100 sheep and loses one, he leaves the 99 sheep and searches for the lost sheep until he finds it. Then he tells his friends and neighbors, ‘Let’s celebrate! I found my lost sheep!’ In heaven, there is more joy when one sinner repents and turns back to God than for 99 people who did not wander off.”

Jesus also said, “If a woman has 10 silver coins and loses one of them, she lights a lamp, sweeps the house, and searches carefully until she finds it. Then she tells her friends and neighbors, ‘Let’s celebrate! I found my lost coin!’”

Then Jesus repeated, “In heaven, there is joy when one sinner repents and turns back to God.”

Jesus told a third story. “A man had two sons. The younger son said, ‘Father, give me my inheritance.’ The father gave his son his share, and the son went to another country. He wasted his money and lived foolishly. There was a famine, and the people in that country did not have enough food. The son got a job feeding pigs. He was so hungry, even the pigs’ food looked tasty.

“The younger son decided to go back to his father and admit he was wrong. He would ask to work for his father like the servants.

“The younger son headed home. He was still a long way away when his father saw him coming. His father ran to him, threw his arms around him, and kissed him. The son began to apologize. ‘I have sinned against God and against you,’ he said.

“But the father told his servants, ‘Let’s celebrate with a feast! Bring the best robe and put it on my son! This son of mine was lost, and now he is found!’

“At this time, the older son came from the fields and heard music at the house. ‘What’s going on?’ he asked one of the servants.

“‘Your brother is here,’ the servant said. ‘Your father is celebrating.’

“The older brother was angry! He refused to go to the feast. The father asked him to come inside. The older brother said, ‘I never disobeyed you! But you never threw a party for me.’

“The father said, ‘Everything I have is yours. We have to celebrate. Your brother was lost and is found.’”

### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Use party blowers:** Distribute a party blower to each kid. Invite kids to blow the party blower each time they hear the word “celebrate.”

**Put on a robe:** Invite a kid to stand in front of the group. When you teach how the father placed the robe on his son, place a robe on a kid. Discuss how when we repent of sin and place our faith in Jesus, He clothes us in His righteousness.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Christ Connection: Jesus told these parables to teach about God’s love. God sent Jesus so sinners can be forgiven. As Savior, Jesus loves and seeks sinners. He paid the ultimate price—His own life—to save people from sin. ”

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ All three stories Jesus told had a common point. What was it? Look at Luke 15:7. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 15:7.] Jesus taught that heaven rejoices when a sinner repents. When someone repents of sin, they turn away from their sin and turn to Jesus by faith. Just as the shepherd looked for his lost sheep and the woman looked for her lost coin, Jesus came to seek and save sinners who are lost in their sin without Him. When we are saved, all of heaven rejoices.

The last story Jesus told was about a son who left home, wasted his money, and had nothing to eat but pig’s food. He was ruined by his sinful choices. Then he realized he could beg his father to become a servant in his household. Do you remember how the father responded when his lost son came home? Was he angry with his son? [Allow responses.] No! He rejoiced that his son was home! He threw a party and invited his friends to share in his joy.

The older brother never left home, but he was also lost. How did the older brother’s response show he was lost too? Look at Luke 15:28-30 [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 15:28-30.] He was angry and refused to go to the party. Even though the older brother never left home, his heart showed that he did not truly love his father or his brother. He chose to think only of himself.

Jesus came to rescue us from sin and bring us back to God. Like the father inviting the older brother to the party, we are all invited to trust in Jesus and be saved. And we can rejoice when others put their faith in Jesus for forgiveness of sins. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ Jesus told these parables to teach about God’s love. God sent Jesus so sinners can be forgiven. As Savior, Jesus loves and seeks sinners. He paid the ultimate price—His own life—to save people from sin. ”

(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 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. If there is only one God, how can He be with everyone at the same time?
2. How does knowing God is always with you help you trust that He loves you?





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Safadi Family Photos” printable. Remind kids that Amer and Victoria Safadi are missionaries partnering with Lakota Hills Baptist Church in Cincinnati to reach people who speak Arabic in the area. Tell kids that Lakota Hills Baptist Church also offers English classes to help those who want to learn English. Explain that the English classes also help the Safadis and church members build relationships with the people. Tell kids that as the Safadis build relationships they have more opportunities to tell Arabic speakers about Jesus.

**SAY** “The Safadis ask every Arab person or family they meet to come to their church or to their house to have tea and talk with them. Amer and Victoria know that they need to build relationships with the people living in the community to create trust. God uses relationship building to help others believe in Jesus.”

Pray that the Safadis continue to build relationships with the Arabic-speaking people in Cincinnati. Pray that their church will continue to grow to tell more people about Jesus in their community.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Chronicles 29:11 together.

**SAY** “Our key passage reminds us that God is exalted above all. He is so much greater than sinners, and still He sent Jesus to save us. That is something to rejoice about!”

Form kids into two teams and have each team sit around a table. For larger groups, consider forming additional teams. Provide each team with a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain that when you say “Go,” one kid from each team will write the first word of the key passage and pass the paper to the kid on their left who will write the second word of the key passage. Instruct kids to continue passing the paper around the table until every word of the key passage has been written down. The first team to write the entire passage, including the reference, wins.

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

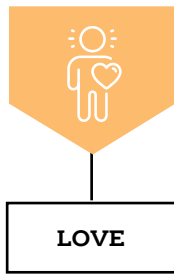
### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “Father, thank You for Your incredible love for us. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to save sinners like us so that we can have a relationship with You and be saved. Help us share this good news with those around us. 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 Luke 15. Point out the location of Perea (F6) along the eastern shore of the Jordan River. Tell kids that Jesus traveled through this area on His way from Galilee to Jerusalem. Explain that in the Bible this area is sometimes called “Judea beyond the Jordan.”

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 areas east of the Jordan River.) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Luke 15:21-22.

**SAY** “ The son had made sinful choices and wasted his inheritance. He admitted he was no longer worthy to be the father’s son. The sinful choices he made brought guilt and shame. But after the son confessed his sin, the father forgave him!

Our sin brings guilt, shame, and separation from God. The good news is that while there may be consequences for our sin, no sin is too bad for God to stop loving us. God’s love for us is greater than anything we may do. And just like the father clothed his son in his best robe, when we place our faith in Jesus, we are clothed in His righteousness. ”

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ How was the older brother just as lost in his sin as the younger brother? ”

Discuss how the older brother dishonored the father through his pride and selfishness. Tell kids that the older brother revealed that he thought his behavior and service was enough to please his father. Remind kids that the older brother refused to celebrate his younger brother’s return and accused the father of being unloving toward him. Help kids understand that the older brother also needed to repent and trust in his father’s love.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Luke 15:28-30.)

**SAY** “ Can we be saved without repentance? Why not? ”

Lead kids to understand that trusting in Jesus means that we recognize our sin and want to turn away from sin. Help kids understand that self-righteousness, like the Pharisees showed, reveals that we think our behavior or our present standing is enough to please God. Remind kids that we can only please God by faith and repentance is an act of faith.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Luke 15:7.)

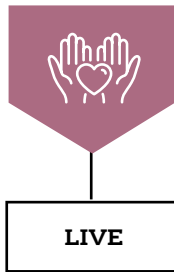
**SAY** “ How does the father’s love toward his sons help us understand the love God has for us? ”

Explain that the father showed love through forgiveness, mercy, and an invitation to join him at the feast. Encourage kids to remember that God loves each of them and invites them to trust Him by faith in Jesus.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 4:10.)

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





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### LIVE the Mission

#### 1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

##### OPTION 1: CHEER ON MISSIONS



Remind kids that the Safadis are missionaries to people who speak Arabic in Cincinnati, Ohio. Tell the kids that Cincinnati is home to several professional sports teams for baseball, football, hockey, and soccer. Explain that Cincinnati is also a city where over half of the people do not regularly attend any church.

Distribute the “Foam Finger Templates” and foam sheets or poster board to each kid. Tell kids to trace the fingers on the foam or poster board and cut it out. After kids cut out their sports fingers, they can write *Pray for the Safadi family* or *Pray for mission work in Cincinnati* on their foam fingers to remind them to pray for the mission work in Cincinnati and the Safadi family.

**SAY** “ Foam fingers are used to cheer on sports teams as they play. We can ‘cheer on’ missionaries and mission work through prayer. God hears our prayers and works to further His kingdom through our prayers. ”

##### OPTION 2: BALLOON BANNER

Provide each kid with two or three balloons and a permanent marker. Lead each kid to think about the story today and what they learned about God’s love for sinners. Direct kids to blow up their balloons. On the balloons, direct kids to write ways God showed His love through the parables and ways they have experienced God’s love in their lives.

Lead kids to work together to use balloon decorating strip to create a balloon arch. Tape the balloon arch over a doorway. Lead kids to walk under the arch and be reminded that when we trust in Jesus, we are invited to an eternal celebration in God’s kingdom.

**SAY** “ God’s love is for all people. Through Jesus, God has extended an invitation for people to accept His love and find forgiveness. When we do, all of heaven celebrates that a sinner has been saved! Believers then have an opportunity to tell others about the love God has for them through Jesus. ”

#### 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.

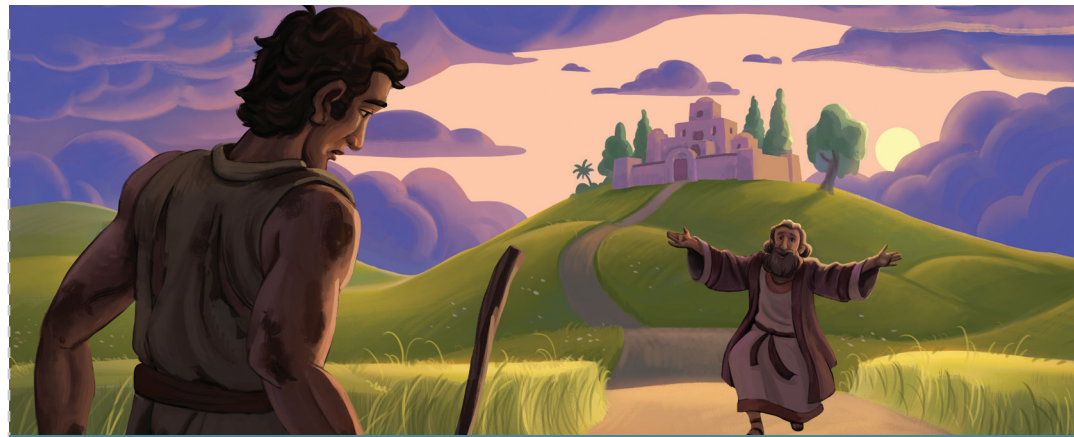
- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story 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, praising God for His love and the salvation He provides through faith in Jesus. As time allows, lead kids to complete “Lost and Found” 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 3

## JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT GOD'S LOVE

Luke 15

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

Tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus teach. Jesus said, "If a man has 100 sheep and loses one, he leaves the 99 sheep and searches for the lost sheep until he finds it. Then he tells his friends, 'Let's celebrate!' In heaven, there is more joy when one sinner repents and turns back to God than for 99 people who did not wander off."

Jesus also said, "If a woman has 10 silver coins and loses one of them, she lights a lamp, sweeps the house, and searches carefully until she finds it. Then she tells her friends, 'Let's celebrate!'"

Jesus told a third story. "A man had two sons. The younger son said, 'Father, give me my inheritance.' The father gave his son his share, and the son went to another country. He wasted his money.

"The younger son decided to go back to his father and admit he was wrong. His father saw him coming. His father ran to him. The son began to apologize.

"But the father told his servants, 'Let's celebrate with a feast! This son of mine was lost, and now he is found!'

The older son heard music at the house. 'What's going on?' he asked.

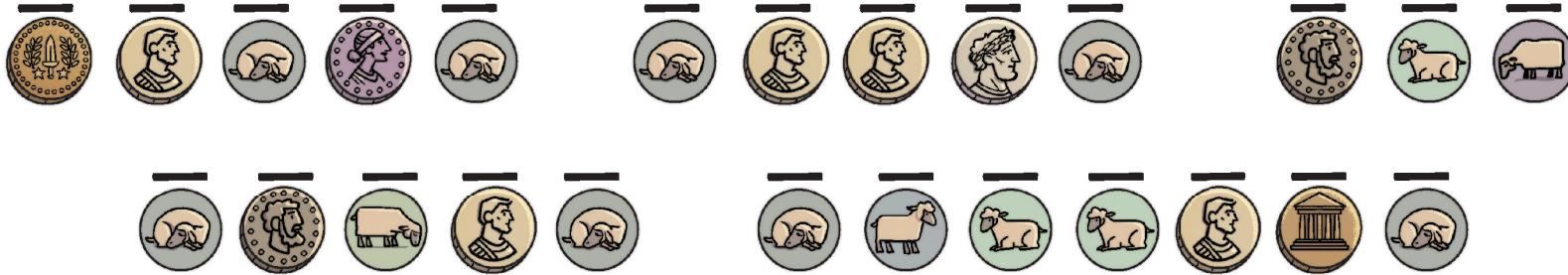
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"The older brother was angry! He refused to go to the feast. The older brother said, 'I never disobeyed you! But you never threw a party for me.'"

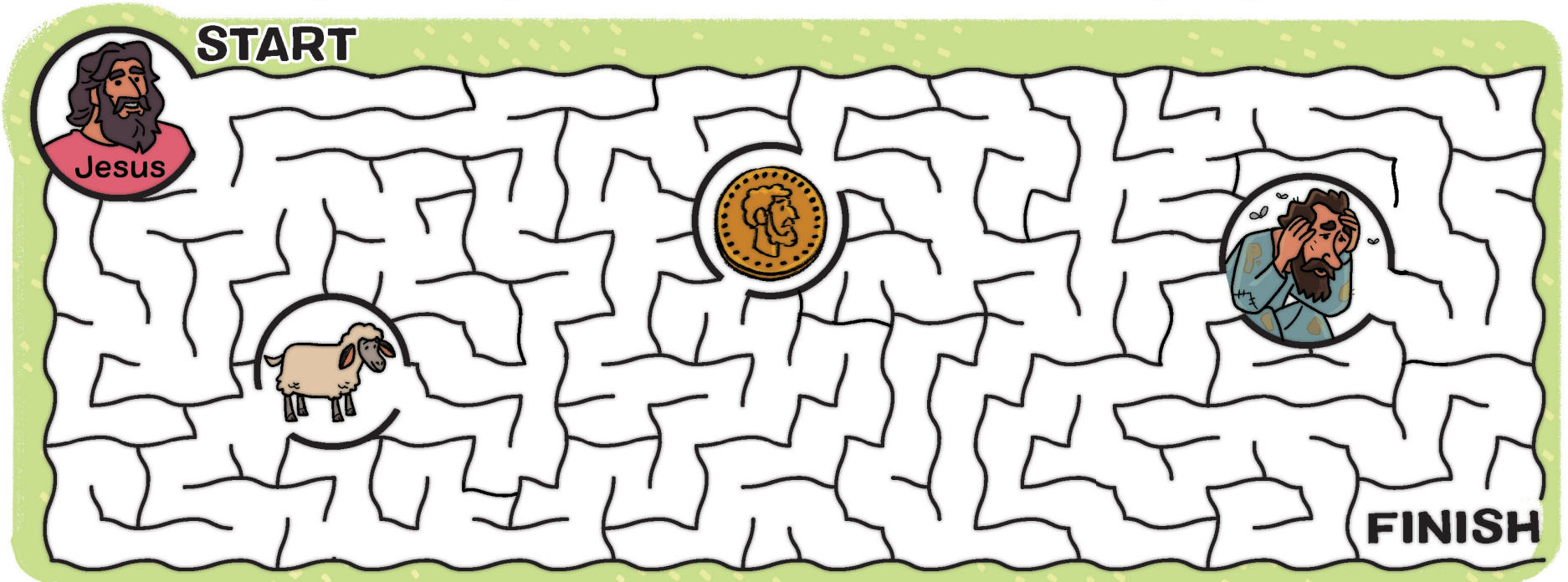
**Christ Connection:** Jesus told these parables to teach about God's love. God sent Jesus so sinners can be forgiven. As Savior, Jesus loves and seeks sinners. He paid the ultimate price—His own life—to save people from sin.

FOLD

## Decode the Message | Use the alphabet code to spell out the message.



## Lost and Found | Find the path through the maze to collect the lost sheep, lost coin, and the lost son.





NAME:



the **GOSPEL** PROJECT.

## Jesus Taught about God's Love

### BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- Jesus told the tax collectors and sinners parables about a lost coin and a lost sheep. Jesus said when they were found, there was much rejoicing!
- Jesus also taught about a lost son whose father rejoiced when he came home.
- Jesus said, "In heaven, there is joy when one sinner repents and turns back to God."

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Jesus told these parables to teach about God's love. God sent Jesus so sinners can be forgiven. As Savior, Jesus loves and seeks sinners. He paid the ultimate price—His own life—to save people from sin.

### 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.