

## WEEK 2 LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

We can give back to God.

### BIBLE

**The Parable of the Bags of Gold:**  
Matthew 25:14–29; Deuteronomy 26:1–11

## ABOUT THIS WEEK

Every person on a film crew is given a different job to do, and they all work together to make the best movie ever. This week, kids will hear Jesus share a story about some workers who were trusted with different amounts of gold. God gives everyone different gifts, and **we can give back to God** by making the most of our gifts!

## LARGE GROUP TIME

Hey, welcome back! You know how cool movies are, right? Well, making them is a big job. It's like when you want to build an awesome Lego set—you need someone to get all the pieces and make sure everyone knows what to do. In movies, there's a person called a producer who gets the money and gathers a team of artists. It's a bit like the story we'll hear today from the Bible. It's about using money wisely, just like the producers do for movies. So, let's see what Jesus has to teach us. *Roll film!*

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### ACTIVITY | Casting Call

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, split the kids into two teams and have each team member take turns drawing. Give each round 60 seconds and award a point if the drawer's team guesses correctly. Create a list of Bible characters, celebrities, or movie characters (or a combination of all three) based on your group's knowledge base. Prepare a list or write the clues separately on slips of paper for kids to draw out.*
  - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** *Set up the activity the same. However, have a leader make "I ..." clue statements about the character and see how many kids can guess. For David, you could say, "I was a shepherd. I became king of Israel. My best friend was Jonathan ..."* For Dory, you could say, "I'm a fish. I'm blue and yellow. I forget a lot of things. 'Just keep swimming' is my motto. I helped find Nemo ..." After kids get the hang of it, let them give clue statements for their team.
- Today's Bible story will show us that certain people are right for a job while others are not ... just like how a part of the movie-making process is trying to find the right actors to play each of the characters in the film.
- Let's play a game to see how familiar we are with some of the biggest names in storytelling history.

### ACTIVITY | Digging For Gold

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, create two teams and prepare a bucket for each one. Place metallic coins*

(like [these](#)) at the bottom of each bucket and cover them up with packing peanuts, paper shreds, or cotton balls. Team members will take turns reaching in and pulling out one coin without looking. Each gold coin collected will yield them a point. See which team collected the most gold when time's up.

- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Use real coins or play coins like [these](#) instead and have teams add up their change at the end to see who collected the most money.
- ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** Make this into a sensory bin and see how many gold coins they can collectively gather. Hide the coins and other objects in sand, uncooked beans, or uncooked rice.
- Before a movie gets made, a producer has to figure out how much it's going to cost and then raise the money to invest in it. Some movies cost so much that you might wish you could find some buried gold to fund the movie with.
- In today's parable, Jesus talks about people who were given bags of gold and what they each decided to do with it.

### POLL | What movie job would you want?

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Call out the different jobs below and have kids respond on a scale of one to five: five for "definitely yes," four for "sounds interesting," three for "maybe," two for "maybe not," one for "definitely not." Have them hold up the number of fingers matching their answer. For added fun, pass out star stickers they can stick on the nails or finger beds of one hand so they can give "star ratings."
- **What job would you choose if you could choose any job on a movie set?**
  - **Producer:** Funds movie project and is in charge of the budget.
  - **Director:** Is in charge of the set. Gives instructions to the actors.
  - **Screenwriter:** Writes the movie script.
  - **Actor:** Acts out the part they are given.
  - **CGI:** Adds all the computer-generated imagery to the movie.
  - **Wardrobe:** Creates all the costumes the actors wear.
  - **Set Design:** Designs and builds all the sets.
  - **Stunts:** Do all the dangerous stunts for the actors.
- **Which job would you want most from this list? Why?**
- **Is there a job you would not want to do? Why?**
- There are a lot of jobs on a movie set because so many different things go into making a movie work. God created everyone with different skills and resources that can be used to make a movie or to serve God and others ... or both!

**SO WHAT?** Why does it matter to God and to us?

### SCRIPTURE | Matthew 25:14–29 (The Parable of the Bags of Gold)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Set up your space like a movie set, with a director's chair, megaphone, and [clapper board](#) (or [make your own](#)). You will be a movie director every week and invite kids up to pantomime as you tell the story. Don't worry about it being sloppy or awkward—the whole point is for the director to tell the kids what to do during the storytelling. Feel free to ad-lib and make it funny. Use the clapper board to signal the "acting" sequence. This week, you will need three kids to be the different workers.
- Listen up, movie crew! We have a brand new parable to turn into a movie today. **Who remembers what a parable is?** Parables are stories Jesus told to help explain things about God.
- I, your director, will help you know what to do so we can have a successful day of filming.
- **Let's begin by reading our script in Matthew 25:14–18.**
- Now, let's make it a movie. The three workers are the main characters today. Is the rest of the crew ready?

Wonderful. The Parable of the Bags of God, take one. Action!

- In this parable, a wealthy owner gave three of his workers three different amounts of gold. The first worker got five bags of gold but worked really hard and earned five more.
  - **Worker one, pretend you are working very hard.**
  - **Crew, let's clap five times together.**
  - **Worker one, you now have ten bags of gold to show your boss. How happy are you? Show us a happy dance!**
- The second worker got two bags of gold and worked very hard to double the bags, just like the first worker.
  - **Worker two, show us your version of a hard worker!**
  - **Crew, let's clap two times.**
  - **Worker two, you have four bags. Show us your biggest, goofiest smile!**
- The third worker got one bag of gold. It's important to note that the story doesn't tell us it's because the owner liked this guy the least. The owner gave out as much as each one could handle.
  - **Worker three, you got only one bag of gold. You are not happy about this. Let's pretend to dig a hole and bury that gold.**
  - **Crew, clap once very quietly.**
  - **Worker three, cross your arms and look displeased. Nailed it.**
- So, two of the servants went out and doubled the master's money. How do you think the boss reacted to see what his workers had done while he was away?
  - **Let's read Matthew 25:19–23 and find out.** The first two workers were diligent and did everything they could with the money and trust the master had given them. As for the third worker...
  - **Let's read Matthew 25:24–27.** The master was upset because this third servant didn't do anything with the money. He didn't even do the bare minimum. It showed that he did not care about his master or the responsibilities given to him. He didn't do his job. Do you think he got fired?
- **Let's read Matthew 25:28–30 to see how the story ends.**
- Jesus told this parable to show us that God gives everyone different gifts, abilities, and resources. The worst thing we could do with what God gives us is to do nothing at all. There's always a way to give back to God if we try.
- *End scene!*

## BIG IDEA | We can give back to God.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Use [the video provided](#) for this week to reveal this week's Big Idea, like you're announcing the winner of a movie award.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Hang up movie posters or prepare a slideshow that contains the words from the Big Idea. For a low-prep version, you could just have the words typed out instead of using actual movie posters. For example, you can use movie titles like "**We** Bought a Zoo," "**I Can** Only Imagine," "**The Giver**," "**Back to the Future**," and "**God's** Not Dead." See if kids can guess which words from each poster make up the words of today's Big Idea before revealing the answer.
  - ✂ **ACCESSIBILITY HACK:** If you have kids in your group who use sign language, ask them if they'd like to share how to sign the Big Idea or other keywords. Have the large group learn together.
- The nominees for this week's Big Idea are:
  - God helps us know what's true.
  - We belong in God's family.
  - God gives us second chances.
  - We can give back to God.
  - God sends us helpers.
- And the Big Idea is...**We can give back to God!**

## VIDEO | A Clip About Special Effects

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare a video showing the differences between movie scenes with and without special effects like [this video](#). We always suggest viewing the clip beforehand to make sure you think it's a video that will be a good fit for your context! For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)
- Movie producers want to make good movies that they hope many people will watch. And movies aren't cheap. Most of them cost millions and millions to produce.
- Some of the most expensive parts of a movie to produce are special effects. Let's say a producer needed a shot of something that doesn't really exist or would be too difficult to recreate. They would hire a special effects company to create these shots, and there is a lot involved.
- **Let's take a look at some movies before and after these expensive effects were added.**
- When special effects shots are done well, you can't tell they aren't real, right? The special effects company spent the producer's money well, hired a good crew, and delivered some great shots. They did a good job with the money they were given and the skills they had.
- Now imagine if a special effects company was hired to create a shot, and they just put the money away without doing any work with it.
  - **How would the producer feel about that?**
  - **How would that affect the movie?**
- In a similar way, the parable Jesus told about the bags of gold showed that God gives everyone different gifts and responsibilities ... not so we can just sit on them, but so we can put them toward doing things that please God. **We can give back to God!**

## OBJECT LESSON | Multiplying Corners

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** For this activity, give each kid a sheet of paper with the Big Idea printed on it, along with a pair of safety scissors. Show how each sheet starts out with four corners. Have them cut off one corner and count how many corners the sheet has now—there are now five. Cut off another corner and count the six corners. Keep going until they've cut off the original four corners and end up with eight.
- In some Bible translations, the bags of gold from today's story are called "talents." Talents were a measure of money in those days, and each talent was worth a lot of money. The average person would have to work for twenty years to earn just one talent. But the people in the Bible story were given five, two, and one talents. That means even the worker who had one talent, or bag of gold, had more than enough to work with.
- The word "talent" has multiple meanings nowadays. It can describe the actors in a scene—we call them "on-screen talent." It's also the word we use to describe the skills and abilities God gives us.
- Sometimes we might think that we don't have as much talent as someone else, so we might not feel like we don't have enough to give. Or maybe we feel like when we use our talents for God, there's not much in it for us.
- Giving back to God might feel like you're losing something, like when I cut off this corner. But look what happens. Every time I cut one corner, another corner appears, and I end up with more. The corners are multiplying every time I think I'm losing one.
- God has a way of multiplying the things we give. Each servant in the Bible story started out with more than enough. The ones who pleased the master were the ones who made the most of what they had. When we give to God, God can make it become more than what it originally was. That's how you know it's worth it when **we give back to God!**

## SCRIPTURE | Deuteronomy 26:1–11

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the passage aloud or invite a volunteer to read.
- **Have you ever bought a poster for a movie? Or a T-shirt with designs from the movie? Or toys based on**

**characters from the movie? Or the soundtrack?**

- **Why do we do these things?**
  - Sometimes, when we admire a good movie, we want to remember it and let other people know about it.
  - **What are some ways we can do this with God—to remember how good God is and let other people know, too?**
  - One way to remember God’s goodness is to give back to God.
- **Let’s read Deuteronomy 26:1–4.**
  - **Do you know what “first fruits” are?**
  - First fruits are the first and best parts of a harvest. When God’s people moved onto the land that God gave them, they would grow fruits, vegetables, and grains on the land, then take the best of these crops and give them back to God because they were thankful. They knew that they would not even have that farmland if God hadn’t given it to them.
- **Let’s read what they did next in Deuteronomy 26:5–9.**
  - The people would take their first fruits to a temple, which would be like a church today.
  - They remembered all of the hard things that they had been through, like being mistreated in Egypt. More importantly, they remembered how God had helped them, taken them out of Egypt, and then brought them to a good place to grow lots of good food.
- **Out of gratitude, they gave their first fruits back to God in Deuteronomy 26:10–11.**
  - The servants in Jesus’ parable—the good and faithful ones anyway—recognized that the bags of gold weren’t theirs. The master had given it to them. Likewise, God’s people knew they wouldn’t have any crops if God hadn’t helped them.
  - That’s why they joyfully gave back their first fruits to God, to remember how good God had been to them.
- **We can give back to God**, also, to remember God’s kindness to us.

**VIDEO | Big Picture, Episode 2**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week’s episode of [Grow TV](#).*

**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

**REFLECTION | Big Picture Storyboard**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you’ll need a corkboard, black foam board, or any board, really. Provide large index cards and writing utensils for kids to use. Have kids write or draw according to the prompt, and then stick it on the board using pins or tape. Try grouping similar responses in the same area. Prepare multiple boards if you have a large group.*
- A storyboard is created before a movie goes into production so everyone can see the big picture. This ensures everyone is on the same page and knows what this movie is all about! Let’s pause and storyboard what we learned today!
- Think back on the Parable of the Bags of Gold and write or draw one thing about the story that stuck out to you most. Afterward, put it up on the storyboard, and those of you who are willing can share with us why that part was most memorable for you.
- Okay, now that we have our big picture storyboard up and running, let’s talk a little more about what this parable teaches us about God and our life with God.
  - **What are some “bags of gold” God has given you or kids your age?** They can be skills, responsibilities, or even stuff you have.

- If everyone, all over the world, used what God gave them to help others, what might the world look like?
- What might the world look like if no one ever gave back to God?
- Why is it important to give back to God?
- God can use whatever we give and do amazing things through it. I mean, God can do amazing things even without us, but God chooses to work with us and make us a part of the big picture! **We can give back to God** because everything we have comes from God anyway!

## RESPONSE | Make It Reel

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass out a copy of the [printable](#) provided to each kid where kids will write or draw one action step for the week in the space provided. Feel free to send the printables home or hold on to them so that by the end of Week 5, kids can make “reels” by taping or gluing their weekly film strips together.
- It’s time to add to your life movie reel! What happens next? What can we do about what we learned today?
- Think of ways you can give back to God some of the good things God has given you.
  - Are you a great baker? Make some cookies for a neighbor.
  - Do you love to organize? Help your parents organize a messy closet.
  - Are you a great conversationalist? Tell your friends about Jesus.
  - The list is endless because God gives all of us different and wonderful things **we can give back to God!**
- **Write down or draw one way you can give back to God this week.**
- God made us and has given all of us so much. Don’t hide all the wonderful things that make you, you. Give it all back to God!

## MEMORY VERSE | Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV)

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Learn the memory verse together using any combination of the resources provided: [memory verse coloring page](#), [sign language motions](#), or choose from [this list](#) of our favorite memorization techniques!
  - ✳ **PRETEEN HACK:** The memory verse is a great way to get preteens involved. Have them learn the verse first and set the verse to a popular movie soundtrack of their choice. Give them opportunities to teach the verse to the rest of the group.
- **“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.”**

## PRAYER

- God, thank you for everything you have given us. Show us ways we can give back to you, and let us watch you multiply them. We know everything we have comes from you! Amen.

## SMALL GROUP TIME

### DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
  - **Why did the master say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” to the first two workers?** They took the bags of gold they were given, put them to work, and got even more.
  - **Why did the master call one worker “You wicked, lazy servant”?** He was given one bag of gold and buried it in the ground so it didn’t multiply.
  - **What did the master do with the one bag of gold that had been buried in the ground? Why do you think he did that?** He gave it to the first servant, who had 10 bags of gold.
  - **Read Deuteronomy 26:9–11. Why do you think giving first fruits back is an appropriate way**

**to worship God?** *Because it reminds us that everything we have was given to us by God in the first place.*

- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

- **Name some of the things you have (skills, abilities, time) that you can give back to God.**
- **Is there a talent or thing God gave you that you aren't using, like the servant who buried a bag of gold?**
- **Does God need us to give? Why should we do it anyway?**

## ACTIVITY | Coin Bags

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, check out [this tutorial](#) to help kids make their own no-sew coin bags using felt or fleece, string, and beads. Pro tip: tape the ends of the string (like shoelaces) so they're easier to weave through the slits and beads. Provide several [wood coins](#) for kids to decorate or write on—they can write the Big Idea or list what they can give to God. If this works for your ministry, you could also encourage kids to save money in these pouches they want to give to God.*
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Get fabrics with cool prints that preteens are currently into. Have fabric shears available for clean cuts, and provide [fabric tape](#) to hem the edges.*
- God may not give us bags of gold, but God has given all of us special gifts and opportunities to give back to God and others. As you make your own bag, think about how you might use what God gave you! Our talents are not for us to hide and keep to ourselves but so **we can give back to God.**