

date: 6/25/17

**Bible Passage: Matthew 18:10–14; Luke 15:1–7**  
(Lost Sheep, Coin, and Son)

## God Wants Everyone to Be Part of His Family, Part 1

### REMEMBER VERSE

Your Father knows what you need  
before you ask him.

Matthew 6:8b

### Equip

*Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

"Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them'" (Luke 15:1–2). To really understand the significance of Jesus' message in the parables of the lost sheep, coin, and son, it's helpful to take a look at the social and religious climate of the time. The Jewish leaders looked disapprovingly on tax collectors, Gentiles, and "sinners" as morally and religiously impure. They didn't pursue relationship with these marginalized people, nor did they attempt to introduce them to God. They were considered lost. The fact that Jesus welcomed such people into His circle and shared meals with them was unheard of and quite uncomfortable to the Pharisees and teachers.

God chose the descendants of Abraham to take the message of who He is to the entire world. It was to be through the example of their relationship with God that other nations would be able to know the one true God. They were blessed to be a blessing to all people. Instead, over time this message was hoarded and kept within the Jewish community—excluding all who fell outside the law.

Jesus rebuked the judgmental mutterings of the Pharisees and teachers by telling three different parables with one central point: God rejoices when the lost are found (and so the Pharisees should too). Every person who isn't in relationship with God is lost. Every person who is lost matters to God, and He invites the restoration of relationship with Him. God wants everyone to be part of His family.

## Support

*Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

As you read through the lesson, ask God to prepare both you and the children for your experience during the children's celebration service. Take hold of who you are in Christ and lean into how He may use you in this day. Pause after reading through each section. Ask God to give you what you need to lead. Whether it's in the questions you ask during EXPLORE or how you facilitate RESPOND, invite the Holy Spirit to speak clearly to you as you're leading the children—allowing Him to be the teacher and leader of this time together.

May you experience the abundance of the blessing that has been given to you. As you walk through each day this week, may you take great joy and confidence in who you are and whom you belong to. May the Lord use the overflow of your life to draw others to Him.

## EXPLORE:: 10 min.

**Small Group Leaders**

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.*

### Option 1: Out of Place

In today's part of The Big God Story, Jesus tells three parables about the lost. God celebrates when the lost are found and become part of His family. This activity will help children think about bringing in the lost.

**SUPPLIES** (per small group)

- Trays or baskets (5–8)
- Box of crayons
- Colored pencil
- White paper (5 sheets)
- Colored paper (1 sheet)
- Business envelopes (long, 5)
- Letter envelope
- Wooden blocks (10)
- Plastic block
- Toy cars (3)
- Toy truck

#### SET UP

Set out five to eight different trays or baskets of items where all the items correlate except for one. The supply list gives examples: a box of crayons with 1 colored pencil in it; 5 sheets of white paper with 1 sheet of colored paper; 5 long envelopes and 1 letter-sized envelope; 10 wooden blocks and 1 plastic block, 3 toy cars and 1 toy truck; etc. Feel free to form your own groupings based on the supplies you have on hand.

#### RELATE

Welcome children and encourage them to look at the items in each tray. **I have several trays to show you. Some of**

you may have noticed that in each tray, there's one item that seems lost, or out of place. Let's figure out together which items are out of place. As children choose the items that don't belong, ask: **Why is that one out of place? What's different about it?**

## DISCOVER:: 25 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

*Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.*

### Ponder Point

# God Wants Everyone to Be Part of His Family

## Chloe's Rules

Host/Worship Leader

### SUPPLIES

- [Chloe's Rules videos](#)
- Worship music (suggestions: "Everybody, Everywhere" and "Sincerely Yours," TruWorship *Sincerely Yours*)

### RELATE

Welcome children as they're entering the large group meeting area. *Tech: Cue Chloe's Rules video.* The theme song will play as the Worship Leader/Host enters and makes his way up front, welcoming and greeting children along the way. This should be a high-energy entrance. *Tech: Cue preschool program theme song.* Choose and play two upbeat worship songs of your choice from a worship album that complements the theme and focus of the lesson.

## Mail Time

Host/Worship Leader

### SUPPLIES

- [Remember Verse image \(see Resources\)](#)
- Envelope (large)
- Bibles (your personal and large children's)
- Mailbox

### PREPARE AHEAD

Print or copy the Mail Time envelope art and attach to a large envelope. Print or copy one Remember Verse card and put it inside the envelope.

### RELATE

Choose one volunteer to hide the mail and another to find the mail. Have the "Seeker" close her eyes while the "Hider" finds a good place to hide the Remember Verse. Once the mail has been hidden, the Seeker will begin to look for the mail while children give clues to its whereabouts by calling out "hot" and "cold."

Once the Seeker finds the mail, the Host invites her to pull out the enclosed Remember Verse. Next, the Host should find the Remember Verse in his Bible and read the words aloud. Talk about the meaning of the verse while interacting with children.

Lead children in reciting the Remember Verse several times together using a variety of engaging methods. Hand motions, different voices, various speeds, and character integration are all great ways to help commit the Scripture to memory. For longer verses, approach the verse one section at a time, increasing what the children repeat back each week.

**REMEMBER VERSE**  
**Your Father knows what you need  
before you ask him.**  
**Matthew 6:8b**

**REMEMBER VERSE MOTIONS**

**Your Father:** Bring thumb and index finger together, all other fingers straight and pointing upward.

**knows what:** Tap forehead.

**you need:** Open hands in front of you, palms up.

**before you ask him:** Bring both hands in front of chest in prayer posture.

## Wardrobe of Wonder

Storyteller/Host/Worship Leader

**SUPPLIES**

- [What'sIt: Something Is Missing!](#) (see optional image in Resources)
- Index card
- Marker
- Wardrobe of Wonder
- Small stools or chairs (2)

**PREPARE AHEAD**

Write the following message on an index card: *The What'sIt that you seek is not here, it has been lost. You must discover where it is as you learn from The Big God Story today!* Place the card in the Wardrobe of Wonder.

### What'sIt: Something Is Missing!

Jesus seeks to find and save those who are lost. Today, our What'sIt is lost. As we learn together during The Big God Story, we'll find all the lost pieces to our What'sIt.

**RELATE**

Invite a child volunteer to "spy" on the What'sIt by peeking into the wardrobe. Each time the wardrobe door opens, *cue the Wardrobe of Wonder sound effect*. Have him whisper the identity of the What'sIt in your ear to ensure he knows what it is.

Invite your assistant to sit on the stools with you. Then lead the group in asking the assistant yes-or-no questions about the What'sIt. Once the children have guessed correctly, ask your assistant to retrieve the What'sIt from the wardrobe and bring it to you. Thank your volunteer and encourage him to sit with his small group.

**ASK**

When the child hands you the card from the Wardrobe, read it out loud. Make a big deal about the fact that the What'sIt is missing. (Volunteer's name), **what does it mean that our What'sIt has been lost? How can it be lost? It's always right here in the Wardrobe of Wonder! What do you think we should do?** Allow child to answer. **Yes, you're right, we need to find it. Well, we had better get started so we can get our first clue to find our What'sIt! Friends, do you know what time it is?**

# The Big God Story

Matthew 18:10–14; Luke 15:1–7

God Wants Everyone to Be Part of His Family

Storytelling Technique: Prop Reveal during Storytelling

**SUPPLIES**

[Storytelling video \(see Resources\)](#)

**RELATE**

Hello, friends, it's so good to see you today. I wonder where the What'sIt from the Wardrobe of Wonder could be. We're going to have to find it ... let's get started! Before we do, let's pray together and ask God to teach us as we learn from His big story in the Bible. Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

**This is interesting ...** Take index card from wardrobe and read it again. **The note says we'll be able to find our What'sIt as we learn from The Big God Story. There are some stories Jesus told us in the Bible about things that were lost. He was talking with some people who were lost because they didn't know God. Jesus was telling the people how much God loves them and wants everyone to be part of His family. Now, let's see what's inside this envelope. Maybe it will help us discover more from The Big God Story.** Open envelope #1 for your clue; read it out loud. **"I am woolly and soft and say 'baa' if I am lost. Who am I?" Woolly and soft and say "baa"? Do you know what it is?** Children answer. **A sheep? Do you think we're looking for a sheep?** Children respond. **Okay, I'm going to start looking.** Stand and start to look for envelope with sheep on front. While looking, walk through seated children, playing with them along the way. Look behind ears, ask children if they're sitting on it, etc. Stop and look around room and ask them if they see it. Then retrieve envelope.

**You were right! It's a sheep. Let's look and see what's inside.** Pull out contents of envelope #2. Hold cotton balls for next section. **There are cotton balls inside. These must be our little sheep! What sound do sheep make?** Children make sheep noises. **You make very good little sheep! Jesus told a story about a shepherd who had 100 sheep. Even though that's a lot of sheep, shepherds loved their sheep so much they would normally know each one by name. One day, one of this shepherd's sheep got lost. What do you think he did?** Children answer. **Yes! The shepherd went looking for the one lost sheep. When he found the sheep, he brought it home. Then the shepherd called all of his friends and neighbors and said, "Come and celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!" If even one person is lost and doesn't know God, He will search for that lost person, because God wants everyone to be part of His family.**

Put cotton balls back into envelope; pull out card inside. **I found another card! Let's read it together.** Read card out loud. **"You have found What'sIt number one, but your hunt has just begun. Look around for the number 10, your next clue is around the bend!"** Begin searching again as you did before. **What does the number 10 look like?** Pause for responses. **Yes, there's a "one" and a "zero" right next to it—a straight line next to a circle. Do you**

see the number 10 anywhere? Children answer. **Over here? Oh, I see it! Let's see what's inside.** (Remove coins one at a time and count them while pulling out of envelope #3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 silver coins. Hmm.

**Oh! I know! Jesus told a story in the Bible about a woman who had 10 silver coins, but she lost one of them. The coin was very valuable to the woman, so she turned on a light in her house and looked everywhere for that one coin. She cleaned out her entire house until ... she found the coin! The woman was so excited to find the coin she had lost that she called to her friends and neighbors and said, "Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin!" Just like this coin was valuable to the woman, every person is valuable to God. Every time someone decides to follow Jesus, all of heaven celebrates, because God wants everyone to be part of His family.**

Put 10 coins back into envelope; pull out card inside. **Guess what I just found? Another clue! "You've done great with clues one and two, now it's time for something new. One son went far away; help bring him back to his father today." A son went far away ... do you see a clue with a picture of someone who is missing? Let's look around and see. Begin searching again. Here it is!** Open envelope #4 and remove cutout of the Lost Son. **What's on the front of the envelope? It's a picture of a family. But it looks like someone is missing. Who do you think belongs in this picture? Children answer. The son? Let's see if he fits. You're right! It's the son who was missing. This reminds me of another story Jesus told.**

There once was a man who had two sons. The younger son wanted to go out into the world on his own. So the father gave the son all the money he had saved for him, and the son left. Not long after the young man left his father's home, he made some bad choices and spent all the money. He didn't have anything to eat or drink, and he didn't even have a home. He knew he'd made a big mistake. He decided to tell his father he was sorry and ask his dad to forgive him. Do you know what happened? It's the very best part of the story! His father could see him coming from far away. He was so excited that he ran to meet his son. He threw his arms around him, gave him a big hug, and kissed him! The son knew he had not made good choices and asked his father to forgive him. Do you know what the father did? Children respond. **He forgave him! And, not only that ... he threw a huge party to celebrate! He said, "My son was lost and is now found!"**

Reach into envelope and pull out final card. **There's one more note in the envelope for us. Let's read it: "Hip hip hooray! ... You all have done it; you have found every What's!t. All that was lost has now been found. Let's gather together and make a big sound."** Lead kids in cheering, clapping hands, and stomping feet in celebration.

Just like the son who left his father, then came home and was forgiven, God always forgives us and welcomes us home. Jesus' three stories from The Big God Story help us to see that there's celebration when the lost are found. That's how God feels about each of us. God loves each person He made and wants everyone to be part of His family. And He has made the way for us to find Him. Who is that way to God? Children answer. **Jesus, that's right. Because of Jesus we can know God and be with Him forever. When we choose to trust and obey Jesus, we're no longer lost; and, we become part of God's family. God wants everyone to be part of His family!**

## **RESPOND::** 20 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.*

## Wonder Questions

Small Group Enhancements, coloring pages, and discussion questions help your group go deeper into today's portion of The Big God Story.

### SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Wonder Questions coloring pages \(see Resources\)](#)
- [TruWonder Small Group Enhancements timeline and images \(see Resources\)](#)
- Scissors
- Crayons

### RELATE

**From The Big God Story today, we heard three stories that Jesus told. They each were about things of great value that were lost but then found. There was big celebration when the lost were found. God loves each person He made and wants everyone to be part of His family.**

I wonder ... Have I ever been lost? How did that feel?

I wonder ... How did it feel when I was found?

I wonder ... How does God feel when people are lost because they don't know Him?

## BLESS:: 5 min.

### Small Group Leaders

*Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.*

### SUPPLIES (per small group)

- [Remember Verse cards \(see Resources\)](#)
- [HomeFront Weekly: Lesson 5 \(see Resources\)](#)

### RELATE

**Children, God tells us in His Word that when even one of His children goes the wrong way, He will find them and bring them back to His way. He wants everyone to be part of His family.** Gather children around you and send them out with a blessing by praying Scripture over them. This time is an opportunity for children to practice another physical posture of worship. Have children place their hands out in front of themselves, palms up as if cupping them together to hold water. This is a posture that demonstrates our willingness to receive what God has for each of us. Read the following Scripture over children:

**“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God” (1 John 3:1a).**

Encourage children to close their eyes as you speak the final blessing over them:

**May you truly know what it is to be part of God's family.**