Preschool–Grade 6

The Parable of the Talents

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Be faithful. God gives each of us good things, and He wants us to use them for Him.
Bible passage: Matthew 25:14–30. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." *Matthew 25:21 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, small jobs for the opening game (paper cups to stack, crayons to sort, books to line up), 7 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 7 paper strips (see part 4). Set out the jobs for the game. Make sure a second grown-up can stay in the room during the game. Put bookmarks in your Bible at Matthew 25:15 and 25:21.

1. Opening game: While I'm Away (5 minutes)

Give each child a small job: stack the cups, sort the crayons, line up the books. Say: "I'm going on a trip! Do your job while I'm gone." Step out of the door for one minute while the other grown-up stays with the class. Come back and check every job. To each child say, "Well done!" Ask: *How did it feel to hear "Well done"? Did anyone stop working while I was gone?* Say: "Jesus told a story about a man who went on a long trip and gave his servants something to take care of while he was away."

2. Bible story: Well Done! (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 25, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Say: "Jesus told this story. It is called a parable, a story that teaches us about God." Tell it in your own words:

A man was going on a long trip to a far country. He called his **servants**, his helpers, and gave them his money to take care of (Matthew 25:14). The money came in **talents**. A talent was a very big amount of money, so heavy it was carried in a bag (2 Kings 5:23)!

He gave one servant **five** talents. He gave another servant **two** talents. He gave the last servant **one** talent. He gave each one as much as he could handle (25:15). Then he left on his trip.

The servant with five talents went right to work. He **traded**, which means he bought and sold, and he made five more talents. Now he had ten (25:16)! The servant with two talents worked too, and he gained two more. Now he had four (25:17)!

But the servant with one talent dug a hole in the ground. He **hid** his master's money in the earth (25:18). He did nothing with it at all.

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The story continues: After a long time, the master came home. He called his servants to see what they had done with his money (25:19). The first servant said, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more" (25:20). That means, "You gave me five talents. Look, I have gained five more!" **Read Matthew 25:21 from your Bible:** "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." Say: "**Faithful** means he did what he was trusted to do. The master was so happy! He said, 'I will make thee ruler over many things,' which means, 'I will give you much more to take care of.'"

The second servant said, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them." That means, "You gave me two talents. Look, I have gained two more!" The master said the very same thing to him: "Well done, good and faithful servant" (25:22–23).

Then the last servant came. He said he was **afraid**, so he hid the talent in the earth. "Lo, there thou hast that is thine," he said (25:24–25). That means, "Here is your money back." The master was not happy. He called him **slothful**, which means lazy (25:26). He said the servant should have at least put the money in the bank, where it would have grown a little (25:27). Then he said, "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents" (25:28).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. How many talents did the master give each servant? *(Five, two and one, Matthew 25:15)*
2. What did the servant with five talents do? *(He traded and gained five more, 25:16)*
3. What did the servant with one talent do? *(He dug in the earth and hid it, 25:18)*
4. What did the master say to the two servants who worked? *("Well done, good and faithful servant," 25:21, 25:23)*
5. What happened to the talent that was hidden? *(It was taken and given to the servant with ten, 25:28)*

4. Memory verse: Well Done! (5 minutes)

Tape the 7 strips up in order: *His lord said unto him, / Well done, thou good / and faithful servant: / thou hast been faithful / over a few things, / I will make thee ruler over many things: / enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Matthew 25:21.* Explain the old words: **lord** here means master, **thou** and **thee** mean you, **faithful** means you can be trusted to do what you should, and **enter thou into the joy of thy lord** means come and be happy with your master. Read the verse together, and everyone gives a thumbs up on "Well done!" Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "God gives each of us good things: hands to help, a voice to sing and pray, a mind to learn His Word. He wants us to use them for Him, and be faithful. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: do your jobs at home all the way, even when no one is watching. Use your hands, your voice or your smile to help someone for Jesus.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **parable of the talents word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/parable-of-the-talents-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/parable-of-the-talents-craft), or **Use It for God:** call out something God gave us, like hands, feet, voice, eyes or ears. The kids act out a good way to use it for God (hands: pick something up for someone; feet: run to help; voice: sing "Jesus loves me"). After each one, everyone says, "Well done!"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for every good thing You have given us. Help us not to hide what You give us, but to use it for You. Help us be faithful, even when no one is watching. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks what happened to the lazy servant: answer simply. His master took the talent away and gave it to the servant who had ten (Matthew 25:28). Jesus told this story so that we would be faithful. Verse 30 is left out of this lesson on purpose; it is not for this age.

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