



WEEK 2

HYBRID TEACHING GUIDE

LOST AND FOUND

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus values you.

THE BIBLE

Luke 15:8-10; Psalm 103:8-14;
Romans 8:38-39

WHAT? *What are we talking about today?*

OBJECT LESSON | Lost and Found

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your program, create a Lost and Found box. Label a large cardboard box labeled with the words "Lost and Found." Fill it with random objects from your storage closet (or your church's actual Lost and Found) and remove each object from the box as you teach.
- You know what I love? A lost and found section. I love the weird and random objects people have left behind. Keys, books, toys, sunglasses, socks . . . You never know what you're going to find in there!

QUESTION | Have you ever spotted something weird in the Lost and Found section?

- **Have you ever spotted something weird in the Lost and Found section?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give a few students a chance to respond.
- Last week we said there are tons of reasons why we lose things.
 - Sometimes it's because we're careless.
 - Sometimes it's because we get distracted.
 - But there's another reason why things might get lost and stay lost. Some things stay in Lost and Found for a long time, collecting dust, because — well, maybe because those cheap sunglasses just aren't worth the effort of their owner trying to find them.
- Sometimes we lose things and don't bother to find them because the things we lost are basically trash.

ACTIVITY | Trash Sculptures

- But hey! Have you ever heard the phrase, “One man’s trash is another man’s treasure?” Let’s see if that’s true.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your program, fill small [trash cans](#) (one for each team) with “trash” — but, like, not real trash. That’s gross. Crumple up some paper, toss empty toilet paper rolls in there, then add some bent paper clips, nearly empty rolls of duct tape, a marker, and whatever miscellaneous objects you find in your storage closet that you’ve been meaning to throw away. When you’re ready to play, divide your group into teams of 5-10 or call a few students to the front to play while the rest of your group watches. Give each team a trash can full of “trash” and give them two minutes to create a sculpture out of it. Invite one person from each group to explain their sculpture and have your students vote on a winner. Afterward, debrief the activity by asking . . .
 - **What was your reaction when I told you what to do with this trash?**
 - **What did you notice about the trash?**
 - **Did your trash become more or less valuable to you as you sculpted? Why?**

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you’re working only with middle schoolers.
 - **Have you ever found something awesome that someone else lost or threw away? What was it?**
 - ★ **Has anyone ever wanted to keep something you were going to throw away? What was it?**
 - ★ **How do you think it’s possible for two people to value the same thing differently?**

POLL | Trash or Treasure?

- Whether something is “trash” or “treasure” is often a matter of perspective.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Give students a series of pairings. For each pairing, ask them to vote on which one is trash and which one is treasure, like . . .
 - Dogs or cats.
 - The book or the movie.
 - A concert or an amusement park.
 - Walmart or Target.
 - Mountain Dew or Dr. Pepper.
 - Beach or pool.
 - Pizza or tacos.
- See what I mean? Whether or not something is valuable is largely a matter of opinion. You and I can see the exact same item (maybe some abandoned sunglasses from the Lost and Found Box), but value that same item completely differently.
- I don’t know if you can relate to this, but I’ve had moments when I’ve felt a little bit like those abandoned sunglasses.

- I've wondered how much I actually matter to others or to God.
- Even worse, I've treated other people as if they were disposable, and not worth my time or attention.

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

OBJECT LESSON | A Value Calculation

- So here's what I'm wondering. Just how valuable am I? How valuable are you? What determines our value? Is it something we can calculate?
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *(Throughout this object lesson, play a caricature of yourself. Your goal is to help students to see how absurd it is to calculate your value in this way.) For this object lesson, you'll need a [white board](#) and a [marker](#). Explain you're going to calculate your own value, writing each number on the board as you go. Start with your clothes, assigning each item a value. Then assign arbitrary values to your talents or traits you like about yourself (like how far you can throw a baseball or that you can sing) and deduct money for skills you lack or traits you don't like about yourself (like how uncoordinated you are or that you're forgetful). Be sure to undervalue yourself – this will spark students to think about all the ways you are valuable that you didn't mention, which will help them think about all of the ways they are valuable too. Finish this object by lesson by announcing your total value.*
- So that's it! That's how valuable I am . . . right? Of course not! This calculation does not represent my value at all. But we often treat ourselves and others this way, don't we? We assign value to ourselves and others based on . . .
 - **Our possessions**, as if our money or stuff could actually add or subtract value from who we are.
 - **Our abilities.** Isn't it interesting how we all have different opinions about what's valuable and what's not? If you think value is calculated by how good you are at sports, you're going to put unrealistic pressure on yourself to excel in that area, and you're going to look down on people who don't excel in that way.
 - **Our characteristics.** If you think someone's value is determined by their attractiveness, popularity, sense of humor, or intelligence, you might find yourself feeling shame about things you can't control when you think you don't measure up in one of those areas. Plus, you might miss out on some really awesome friendships with people who don't fit your particular definition of "valuable."
- We usually calculate value (ours and others') without really thinking about it. We all have preferences, biases, and experiences that shape our opinions on what we think is valuable. That's why we have to think critically about how we define "valuable," because it impacts how we treat ourselves and others.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share.*

- Tell us about a time you felt valuable. What made you feel that way?
- What are some reasons why someone might not feel valuable to God or to others?

SCRIPTURE | Luke 15:8-10

- Throughout this series, we're looking at one chapter of the Bible — just one.
 - This chapter recounts a series of stories Jesus once told about things that were lost and then found. Each story communicates a different and important truth.
 - These stories aren't historical stories. They're parables — stories Jesus made up and told in order to teach an important truth.
- We explored the first of these stories last week, but in order for this next story to make sense, we have to remember who Jesus was talking to and why he was telling these stories. So let's recap.
 - Jesus told these stories to the Pharisees — religious leaders who were super focused on following hundreds of religious laws in order to please God.
 - These laws were important and weren't inherently bad! In fact, they were given by God to help God's people stay healthy, safe, and close to God.
 - But Jesus said the Pharisees had gotten things wrong — *really* wrong. Because the Pharisees believed following these religious laws exactly could make someone more good, holy, and valuable to God, they became arrogant, self-righteous, and dismissive of people who they believed were sinful.
 - So the Pharisees often attacked Jesus because He spent time with people the Pharisees did not believe were valuable. They were angry at the way Jesus cared for people who they considered to be sinners.
 - Jesus told this series of stories to help the Pharisees how wrong they were about themselves, others, and God. First, Jesus told a story about a lost sheep to show the Pharisees God isn't angry or judgmental when we wander away. Instead, God finds us and carries us lovingly back to safety.
- Now let's look at the second story.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Luke 15:8-10 together.
- The woman in the story had ten coins and lost one. You might be thinking, "So what? She still has nine more. What's the big deal?"
 - For this woman, one silver coin was worth a full day's work. The loss of this coin would have had a huge impact on her!
 - That explains what happened after she found her lost coin. She celebrated!
- If you remember, there were a few celebrations mentioned in the last story too. If we're counting, the amount of celebrations so far in these parables, we're up to three:
 - The shepherd rejoiced when he found his lost sheep.
 - The whole community rejoiced when the shepherd found his lost sheep.
 - The woman rejoiced when she found her lost coin.
- Here's another thing these parables have in common: at the end of both parables, Jesus says there's a huge party in heaven anytime someone lost gets found by God.
 - When someone meets Jesus for the very first time, heaven rejoices.
 - And when someone who knows Jesus but wandered away finally comes back, heaven rejoices then too.

- These parables, of course, have a point. They teach us something important about who God is and what God wants us to do.

SCRIPTURE | Psalm 103:8-13

- In this parable, we learn that, when we're lost and wandering far from God, God values us enough to tear the whole house apart looking for us.
- It's great to know God values you, but the main takeaway of this parable wasn't to tell the Pharisees how much God valued them (although that was true).
 - Jesus' point was that God values everyone — even the people they overlooked, dismissed, and judged because the Pharisees didn't think they were holy enough.
 - Because the Pharisees were judgmental toward people they considered sinners, Jesus needed them to understand that God deeply loved the people who didn't matter to them.
- The Pharisees were convinced these "sinners" were less valuable to God (and therefore to them) because they weren't as pure or righteous as the Pharisees were. Although the Pharisees knew the Jewish Scriptures very well, maybe they forgot about this one . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Psalm 103:8-13.
- The Pharisees were judgmental, self-righteous, and condemning to others — and they believed that's how God would want them to be! But unlike the Pharisees, this Psalm tells us God is merciful, gracious, slow to anger, overflowing with love, forgiving, and compassionate.
- Jesus knew the Pharisees needed this reminder, but I think He knew the Pharisees weren't alone. You and I need that reminder too. Like that woman and her lost coin, **Jesus values you** . . . and He also values the people you struggle to value.

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

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share.
 - **What does Jesus' story about the lost coin teach us about God?**
 - **Read Romans 8:38-39. Is it ever difficult for you to believe God won't stop loving someone? Why or why not?**

A VALUE ADJUSTMENT

- So what about you? How is this parable challenging you today? How do you need to adjust your understanding of what's valuable? How do you need to change your behavior to better value others?
- **DO YOU NEED TO LET GOD FIND YOU?**
 - Just like the woman in today's story, God is relentlessly chasing after us when we wander away from Jesus. If you've never gotten to know Jesus or you've wandered away from Him, maybe today's the day you decide you'd like to be found again.

- If that's you, maybe your next step today can be to tell God what you're turning away from so you can follow Jesus more fully.
- **DO YOU EVER FEEL WORTHLESS?**
 - Do you question your worth? Do you think you've been calculating your value based on the wrong things? Did you really need to hear how much God values you today?
 - If so, maybe your next step today can be to ask God and the people you trust to help you see your value through Jesus' eyes.
- **DO YOU TREAT OTHERS LIKE THEY'RE WORTHLESS?**
 - Remember, Jesus told this story to the Pharisees specifically. Although this story does show us how much you and I are valued by God, Jesus had a bigger purpose: to convict us when we're treated others with less value than they deserve.
 - So who have you been viewing or treating as though they're less valuable than they really are? Who do you dislike? Who have you been judging? Who have you been overlooking? Who have you labeled as a "sinner"?
 - If you can name someone you've been devaluing, maybe your next step today can be to do something that shows them (and you) that they truly are valuable.

REFLECTION | Valuable Coins

- Jesus values you and Jesus values the people you struggle to value. I guess you could say these two truths are two sides of the same coin.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Before your program, fill a bowl with blank wooden "coins" [like these](#). Hand one coin to each student, along with a pen or [fine-tipped permanent marker](#).
- On one side of your coin, write the words, **"Jesus values me."**
 - There are going to be times when you doubt your own value, either because of something you did or because of something you think you are.
 - When those moments come, I need you to remember that even when you feel worthless, Jesus values you. You are God's beloved child and that's enough. You don't have to do or be anything else to be loved by God.
 - Jesus values you so much that He'll never stop helping you feel found. And when you let Him find you, He'll never stop celebrating that you're not lost anymore.
- Now I want you to think about the person or people who are difficult for you to value. On the other side of your coin, write the words, **"Jesus values them."**
 - You know how much you need to know that you're valued? You have the ability to help others know they're that valuable too. At the very least, you have the ability to help others not question whether or not they matter because of the way you treat them.
 - When you find yourself devaluing someone, I hope you'll remember this truth Jesus shared with the Pharisees — that the people we dismiss are the people Jesus values so much that He'll never stop searching for them.
- You haven't done anything to earn God's love, but you are loved. Now let that love change you so deeply that you begin to value others like God values you. Like that woman and her lost coin, **Jesus values you** (and everyone else) so much more than you know.

DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
 - ☆ **Do you think you ever calculate your value based on the wrong things? Give an example.**
 - ☆ **Do you think you ever view or treat others as though they're less valuable than they really are? Give an example.**
 - **What can you do this week to value yourself and others the way God values you?**