HOW TO EARN ETERNAL REWARDS

Lesson 4: My Eternal Rewards
Lesson 4—My Eternal Rewards

Unit Summary
God loves to reward His children for their hard work, obedience, and service on earth—not only with blessings in this life, but with rewards in the life to come. The Bible teaches that every attitude, thought, and action has both earthly and eternal consequences. For believers, bad attitudes, negative thoughts, and selfish actions will burn up at Christ’s judgment seat. But God will reward good attitudes, positive thoughts, and selfless actions, generously multiplying their value in heaven. This is both assuring as we know that we’ll be forgiven for our failures, and also motivating as we understand that we’ll be rewarded for the good things we do.

Lesson Summary
“So heavenly minded they’re no earthly good” goes the old saying. But unless we are heavenly minded, we are no earthly good. Jesus taught that we ought to live with eternity in mind! Everything we do has an eternal impact. It affects who will be in heaven, what responsibilities we will have, and what rewards will be earned. We ought to live and work aware that what we do today has an impact on our life in eternity and the rewards that we will be given after we die.

Paul’s Power Principle: Eternal rewards—the only thing that lasts forever!

In this lesson, your children will...

KNOW
- Christians who live for God receive heavenly privileges

FEEL
- Bold to pursue heavenly blessings

DO
- Determine to live for Christ this week
Welcome!—Candy Auction

Supplies: slips of paper, box full of candy

As kids arrive, give each child 100 slips of paper and tell them each slip is worth one dollar for the auction. (Hint: they are welcome to pool their money with friends.)

Display a large basket or box full of candy as kids are arriving. Announce that you’re going to hold a candy auction. Hold up a piece of candy and offer it starting at $1, and take bids going up to $5, then $10, and so on. Always end with, “Going once, going twice . . . sold for [the winning bid].” Kids can pool their money to get large pieces of candy, or just buy small pieces. When time is up, let kids know they can turn in their money for candy at the end of class today. (Be sure to have candy to pass out as they turn in their “money” at the end of class.)

Talk about how people save up their money to get things on earth. They will save money, trade money, pool money with others, invest money—even print fake money—just to get stuff. But what happens when they die? They leave it all behind—all their money and all their stuff! What matters is what we have invested in heaven! That is what will truly matter in the end.
**Let’s Meet-n-Greet!**

Get out a bowl of candy and ask the kids to all come up to the front, get one piece, and then go give it to someone and welcome them to church. They are not to get one for themselves, but only for someone else. They should make sure everyone gets one piece. Tell them not to open or eat the candy just yet. After everyone is seated with their candy, let them know that they have a choice: They can eat it now, during the service, or wait until the end of the service. The choice is completely theirs. **All I’m going to say is, I encourage you to wait until the end.**

At the end of the service, ask who still has their candy, and have them hold it up. If they still have it, they get to come up and get another piece as a reward for their patience. Those who ate it got a treat and should be thankful, but those who were patient got an extra reward. **The same is true in life. God gives us lots of blessings in life, but for those who are patient and focused on eternity, there will be extra blessings awaiting them in heaven!**

Leaders, be sure to stop whatever you are doing to move through the audience and greet the children, especially those you do not recognize. Announce any birthdays for the week. (See the *How to Use DiscipleTown* guide for quick and easy ways to acknowledge visitors and birthdays.)

**Let’s Worship!**

During your worship today, focus on how amazing and incredible our God is. **That is why He is worthy of our worship and why we want to live for Him—because we will be spending forever with this amazing God.** The song below is a love song to God that helps express just how incredible our God is.

**Recommended Song:** *Song for You* from *Love Out Loud*, available at Kidology.org.

**Puppet Intro**

*Leader & puppet introduce today’s lesson. You will find a scripted version of this intro at the end of the lesson.*

**Supplies:** metal coffee can or similar solid can to make a “time capsule” with, and a collection of fun toys and objects to go into the can

Puppet shows up with a metal can that is filled with various items. Leader asks what Puppet has, and he explains that he has put many of his favorite and most treasured toys and keepsakes into this can. He shows them to Leader, explaining each one. Leader asks why he is collecting them, and Puppet says that he is making a time capsule and is going to bury it in his backyard so that 100 years from now when archaeologists dig it up, they will be able to study him and learn all about him. He is hoping that it will last for many, many years and provide great insights into what kind of person he was. Leader thinks it is a fun idea but asks what Puppet thinks about laying up some treasures that will last a million years and tell what kind of person he was. Puppet gets very excited and thinks it is a fantastic idea. Too bad it’s not possible! Leader says, “Oh, but it is! The Bible teaches that we can lay up treasure and rewards in heaven that will last for all of eternity—well past a million years—and our rewards will tell what kind of persons we were on earth.” Puppet says, “You mean, even a billion years?” Leader says, “Even a trillion zillion gazillion years!” Puppet tosses the can away and says, “Forget the time capsule! I’m going to start laying up treasure in heaven by living for God!”
Let’s Play!—Beanbags Around the World!

**Supplies:** two or three beanbags, depending on your group size

*A note: All your hard work won’t be worth a pile of beans unless you are investing in eternity!

**Note:** There is a “twist” to the games in this unit. While the games stand alone as fun activities, each winner will be given an important choice. The winner gets to choose: (1) keep the prize now, or (2) draw a name from everyone present to give the prize away to and instead get a prize at the end of the unit. There should be no pressure to make one choice or the other. They have earned the prizes, but on the last week of the unit the prizes they earn will be much better! (Don’t tell them that.)

Depending on your group, you can use all the children or choose fifteen to twenty kids to play. (A smaller group can play using one beanbag.) This is simply a version of “hot potato,” except with potentially more than one “hot potato” if you start with a large group. The children stand in a circle around the seating area. If you have a large group and all the children play, have the kids leave their seats and stand in a circle around the room. A leader whose back is turned to the game controls some music, either on a CD or MP3 player or from a sound booth. Pass the beanbags out around the circle, equally spaced to begin. When the music starts, the children pass the beanbags to the person to the right.

**Options:** Have beanbags going in different directions to add some confusion. When the leader controlling the music stops the music, kids who are holding beanbags, or were the last to touch one, are out and must return to their seats. Keep the kids equally spread out. When you get down to a handful of kids, you can either make the circle small or have them toss the beanbags around the circle. If a player throws it hard or misses the intended player, he or she can be called out by a leader for a “bad toss” so that the person trying to catch isn’t penalized by a bad throw. When the game gets down to two players, when the music stops, whoever is holding the beanbag or tossed it last is out, and the remaining player wins!

**The Point:** This game started out with a lot of players, but when the music stopped, someone was always out. Toward the end, only a few remained. The same is true in life. There are a lot of people in the world, but “when the music stops” (an expression for when life is over) it is those who have been living for God who will be the winners. The Bible says only the few will get to heaven and be rewarded. Will you be one of them?

Be sure to give the winner the choice of getting a prize now or drawing a name to give their prize away.

**TIME TO GIVE REWARDS:** In this final week of the unit, at the end of class, read the names of those who throughout the unit chose to give away the rewards that they had earned. Have them come up on stage if they are present and commend them. Give them a bigger prize as their reward for being generous and patient. If no one did (!), then have a super-big prize that you would have given if someone had chosen to wait. Talk about how God is asking us to be generous and serve others, and sometimes that means choosing to give up things that we are entitled to. But we do it out of love for others. When we live this way, God says that He will be rewarding us later, and that reward will be better than anything we can have now.
**Connect with Your Kids**

Do you have something from your childhood or a family object you are saving and hope to always have? Think of it this way: if your home were on fire and you could grab only a few things, what might you grab to keep safe? Show the item if possible, and talk about why it is important to you and why you’d like to keep it always. Of course, you can only save something until you die; after that, only treasures that have been laid up in heaven will keep forever.

**DiscipleTown Visitor**

**Mary the Marathon Runner:** *Dressed to run a race.*

**Props:** marathon medal, throne, crown, bottle of water

*[Set up the throne on the stage. Suspend crown above the throne with fishing line as if it were sitting on an invisible head. Place the water bottle within easy reach for Leader. Mary enters panting, as if she has just finished a race. She’s wearing the marathon medal.]*

**Leader:** Hello there! Are you okay? Do you need some water?

**Mary the Marathon Runner:** Yes, thank you. [Leader hands over bottle of water to runner. Mary takes a quick drink.]

**Leader:** You should rest after your run! You even won a medal! Congratulations.

**Mary:** I can’t rest. There is one more thing I have to do.

**Leader:** Would you like to talk about your race with the children?

**Mary:** Maybe someday, but there is something more important.

**Leader:** [Confused:] I don’t understand. You just won a race; you should celebrate!

**Mary:** [Smiles.] Celebrating is exactly what I am doing. [Walks to throne. Taking the medal off, she bows and reverently lays the medal at the foot of the throne. Returns to Leader.]

**Leader:** I’m not sure I understand what just happened. I thought you said you were here to celebrate!

**Mary:** I am, and I did. You see, God has given me the ability and skill to run and to run well. I work hard to sharpen that ability by practicing, working out, and eating well. Then, when I win a race, I bring my reward, and I give it as a gift to the One who enabled me to win it in the first place.

**Leader:** That is very noble of you!

**Mary:** No, please don’t say that! I would lay down my life if He asked me to do that. No sacrifice I could make is equal to the one He made for me. I will always give my all and give all my rewards to honor Him because He is my reward. I may run races in this life, but the truth is, all of life is a race. I will run this race the way I run my running races—with the end in mind. What happens on earth matters little if I forget what is happening in eternity—if I forget WHO is waiting at the finish line. Thank you for allowing me to celebrate! [Exits.]
Let’s Search!—Bible Dash

Supplies: Bibles

Ask all kids with Bibles to participate, or invite a few volunteers to come to the front. As children hold Bibles closed with hands on covers, state the Bible reference twice, then on the command “SEARCH!” have the students race to locate the verse. Once they have a finger on the verse, they can stand and call out, “FOUND IT!” Have the first child read the verse aloud while you project the verse on a screen via PowerPoint. See suggestions below for comments on each verse. Keep your comments brief and to the point of the lesson.

• Matthew 16:27 Jesus will someday judge our lives.
• Matthew 25:21 We hope to hear this someday.
• 1 Corinthians 4:5 Praise will come later from God.
• 2 Corinthians 5:10 We will all give account for good and bad.
• Matthew 6:19–21 Store up treasures in heaven.
• Revelation 3:11 A crown awaits you!

Paul’s Power Principle: Eternal rewards—the only things that last forever!

Let’s Learn!—My Eternal Rewards

Have an adult leader come out dressed in pajamas with a pillow and a large stuffed animal. When asked what he/she is doing, he/she answers, “I’m off to run a marathon!” and exits.

Something didn’t seem right about that marathon runner. What was wrong? Allow for responses.

Read 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. How many of you play on a sports team? What sports do you play? Allow for responses. Do you have practices?

Let me guess what you do at your practices. You order pizza, watch movies, and eat popcorn, right? When the kids respond in the negative, cut them off and try again. Oh, wait—you set up board games and play them while listening to music? Allow kids to respond again. (You may want to try several ridiculous suggestions until you finally ask them what they do.)

Do you work hard, or do you kind of goof off and mess around? When they answer that they work hard, ask why. (They want to win/do well!)

God says we should approach life the same way! We should live in such a way that when we get to the “finish line” (heaven) we will be winners! That's why Paul was able to say (read 2 Timothy 4:6–8). We ought to be living with that “finish line” in mind.

Read 1 Corinthians 4:2. God has given us time, talents, and skills and resources, and He expects us to use them in ways that will invest in forever!

When your parents give you a job to do, if you have a good attitude you work hard at it because you are hoping to hear, “Wow, what a great job you did! Very good!” It feels
good to hear things like that. Imagine hearing that from God at the end of your life!

Just as in the parable of the talents we read on the first week, we want to hear God say to us, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” (Matthew 25:21)

Suggested Bible Narrative
Mark 12:41–44 (also Luke 21:1–4)—The Widow’s Mite

Supplies: offering plates or other plates with a raised edge, child ready to give a penny, leader ready to give a large amount of cash or write a big “check”

Have an offering time (even if you don’t usually do so). Pass plates seeking donations from the kids for the children’s ministry. As the plate is passed, have a child you arranged with before the service to put a penny into the plate. In the middle of the offering, have one leader make a really big deal about how he or she is putting in a large amount of cash (waving it around so everyone sees) or write a very large check and show it to a few kids before dropping it in proudly. After the offering, ask the kids what they thought of how that leader acted. Then notice the penny and comment on how you saw the child who put it in, and the child didn’t make any fuss or draw any attention but just gave it. Ask the kids which they think was the bigger gift. Discuss the results and talk about how we know God is more pleased with the penny than He is with the big gift. Why? Read the short passage and explain.

Dee’s Disciple Tip: Everything we do in life has consequences. Some consequences are immediate. If you stay up late, it will be hard to wake up in the morning! Others take longer. If you study hard and do well in school, you will get better grades and in time get a better job and be better able to provide for a family. But for many things we do, we will not find out the consequences until eternity! Our actions, good or bad, will have an impact that will last forever! Both small and big choices affect people’s lives in ways that will impact eternity. That is why it is so important to think carefully about the choices we make. Sometimes there are things we want, but we realize that if we give them up, we will benefit in the long term. When we give something up for God, that is called a sacrifice. In the Old Testament, God’s people sacrificed animals; they gave them up for God. There are many other things we can give up for God. We can sacrifice our time, resources, reputations, or anything that may get in the way of doing what God asks us to do.

Character Trait of Sacrifice—Giving Up Something for God
What have you given up for God lately?
KeyVerse

Topic: God Rewards Us
Reference: Jeremiah 17:10

Preparation: Find pictures online of some really cool items you would love to own (a nice camera, a sports car, a pet, whatever). Make some of them humorous, like a monkey, rocket ship, your own water park, a box of paper clips, etc.

If you were the grand prize winner on a TV game show and won the ultimate prize that was ever given away, what do you think it should be? Show your ideas that you looked up and have images for. Have kids give a “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-down” to show whether they would want to win that.

What do you think God has in store as rewards for His followers? Allow for responses and do not correct any answers. Read 1 Corinthians 2:9. God’s Word says that no eye has seen, no ear has heard—in fact, no mind has even imagined—the things that God has in store for those who love Him!

Kids have pretty great imaginations! But no one can even imagine how wonderful it is going to be. That’s pretty amazing. If that isn’t motivating to live for God, I don’t know what is!
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**Dramatize the Point**

**Going the Extra Mile—Part 4**

**Transition dialogue for Leader:** If possible, try to transition to this sketch by ending with a comment something along these lines: *Don’t forget; this week we go for the extra mile.*

**Characters/Costumes:** Justus is in pajamas; the “old” Justus has gray hair, a button-down sweater, and slippers; Poor Billy is dressed in a fancy robe, wearing a crown.

**Props:** throne, crown, fancy robe, small stand or altar, silver or fancy metal tray, two or three jewels or shiny stones, cot or small bed, pillow and blanket, assorted humorous bedroom items (funny stuffed toys, funny slippers—be creative), music player with “dream music” clip

**Setup:** Put the throne on the stage. Suspend the crown over the throne with fishing line as if it’s sitting on an invisible head. Place an altar in front of the throne with the tray on top. Place the few gems on the tray. If possible turn the lights down low and shine lights from the stage outward to the crowd during the dream sequence. During the going-to-bed sequence, the throne room should be dark.

[Justus enters, talking to his stuffed animal while he starts getting ready for bed.]

**Justus:** Well, Mr. Fluffykins, today was an eventful day! First I went and paid the “ginormous” hospital bill for Michael; seems he is doing much better now. Hopefully his newly repaired arm doesn’t have the “theft app” installed. [Takes off his socks and shoes and puts on funny slippers.] Then, I served lunch at the soup kitchen. Let me tell you, some of those people really smell! I am sure I will get some good rewards in heaven for enduring that for two hours. Then, Mr. Fluffykins, I went down to the service at the park. I showed them all how to worship. I think I was the only one with the courage to raise my hands in a public place. I am sure God will be very proud of how I represented Him today. Not ashamed! Not me, proud to say! To end the day, I declined watching that horrible TV show everyone is watching these days. Not filling my mind with that junk! Well, it’s time for bed! Another big day of living for God tomorrow! [Looks around to make sure no one is watching, then in a mushy voice:] Oh good night, Mr. Fluffykins!

[Soon Justus is snoring. Play dream music. Lights go dark over cot and get brighter in the throne room. Justus, now in “old” hair and clothes, walks into the throne room, very bewildered, not quite sure where he is.]

**Old Justus:** Whoa, this place is huge! I wonder where I am. [Notices his clothes and realizes he has aged.] Wow, I am a lot older here. I have very bad taste in clothes. Yikes!

[After Justus has wandered around for a while, Poor Billy comes out. He is wearing a fine robe and a crown.]

**Poor Billy:** Hello there, Justus! It is about time you got here!

**Old Justus:** [Squints at Billy.] Oh, hi there. Do I know you? You do look familiar.

**Poor Billy:** You do know me, but that’s not important right now. Do you know where you are?

**Old Justus:** I’m not sure. Nothing here really makes sense to me.

**Poor Billy:** You’re in heaven, Justus. You’re on the way to the throne room.

**Old Justus:** Heaven? Really? That explains all the light and sparkle!
Poor Billy: It’s perfect here. I can’t stay away from the throne room. God’s presence is the best place in the universe to be.

Old Justus: With all that heaven is supposed to offer, this is where you like to be? [A bit surprised, then refocusing again.] Tell me, what did you say your name was again? I’m sure I know you.

Poor Billy: I didn’t. [Pauses.] You’ll need to make your own way to the altar in front of the throne. I’ll see you later.

Old Justus: Alone? Wait...who are you?

Poor Billy: I’m just Billy, Justus, The throne room is waiting. [Exits.]

Old Justus: [Watches Billy go and remembers who Billy was. As he reflects, he walks closer to the throne slowly till he stops in front of altar.] Billy! That’s Billy? But he was just a poor beggar, in everyone’s way. Begging for food and water from everyone. How is it he is wearing such a fine robe and crown? If he got all those rewards, imagine what God has in store for me!

[Justus arrives at the altar and finds the few jewels on the tray. Holding each one up, he speaks as though he is reading off of them.]

Old Justus: “Justus Riley, for being friends with Jeremy, even though the other kids in fifth grade laughed at you.” [Holds up another jewel.] “Justus Riley, for your faithful kindness to old lady Wilma who lived across the road.” [Realizes that these are his eternal rewards. Looking up and around, he begins to panic.] This is it? These are my rewards? [Picks up the final and biggest gem.] “Justus Riley, for your compassion in caring for Michael who was severely injured.” [A bit upset:] These are the moments that meant something? Poor Billy has more rewards than I do. I don’t understand this at all.

[Poor Billy enters again.]

Poor Billy: Justus, are you okay?

Old Justus: [Spins to Poor Billy, his gems in his hands.] Billy, I just don’t understand. I thought I was doing everything right. I want to go back and do it all over. I...

Poor Billy: Shhh. Justus. The good news is, you can go back and do it all over. You are one of the lucky ones.

Old Justus: I can?

Poor Billy: You’re only dreaming. Remember this, Justus, when you go back.

Old Justus: Remember what?

Poor Billy: The sacrifices you make for God’s greatest treasures are the things that count the most in this place.

Old Justus: God’s greatest treasures? What are they?

Poor Billy: People, Justus! God’s greatest treasures are people!

[Suddenly the lights go out in the throne room and go on in Justus’ bedroom. Justus sits upright in bed, as if scared awake.]

Justus: God’s greatest treasures are people! Love God, love others. It’s not about me—it’s about people. Thank You, God! Thank You that this was only a dream! Thank You for a second chance. Thank You for showing me the error of my ways. Thank You, God! It’s not my good feelings that make You smile, it’s my good deeds—done to help and love your greatest treasures, Your people. [Gets up, grabs Mr. Fluffykins, and heads out of the room.] It’s a new day, Mr. Fluffykins! It’s time for us to do things differently.
Object Talks—The Heavenly Rewards Show: Sacrifice

Supplies: video projection

The short video clip for this lesson features Karl, the Kidologist, presenting one of his classic “ToyBox Tales.” For the Grand Finale, Host Mr. Rich Richards returns and invites Stan back again for a final match up with rival Molly, the three time defending champ. The theme is Sacrifice. Will Stan ever learn the right way to earn Heavenly Rewards?

Featured Verse: Luke 6:38

Let’s Talk!—Small Group Discussion

Supplies: play money (enough for each student to have $2,000), paper and pen, small prizes (candies or toys), six notecards labeled 1–6; on back write option descriptions below

Pass out a pen and paper to each student in your small group. Have them write the numbers 1–6 down the left side of the page. Next pass out $2,000 in play money to each student. Explain that you are going to give them six options for spending their $2,000. They have to spend their money on one of the six items. They need to listen to all six choices before making their decision. They can use the piece of paper to keep track of the numbers they like. Lay out the six notecards on the floor as you read them.

Option 1: Purchase a brand-new computer and gaming system.
Option 2: Help a friend buy a dresser for his or her bedroom in exchange for 100 items of clothing.
Option 3: Pay for new clothes and food for a less fortunate student in your neighborhood.
Option 4: Buy all new clothes for yourself.
Option 5: Buy new toys; half the toys you get to keep, and half the toys you give to a friend.
Option 6: Buy very expensive shoes and coats for a kid in your neighborhood who has been very mean to you.

You may need to reread the options for the children. Give them one minute to decide how they are going to spend this $2,000. When time is up, go around and have each student put the $2,000 on the option he or she has selected.

If a student chooses options 3 or 6, give the child a reward. When the other children question why they didn’t get a reward, show them that they got their reward already by choosing options 1, 2, 4, or 5 because the option they chose was for themselves. Share that this is the way heaven is. Our rewards will be based on the things we sacrifice and get nothing for here on earth. Look up Matthew 6:2, 5, 16, and 21 and discuss the fact that there are rewards for many things; but eternal rewards require humility, meekness, selflessness, and sacrifice to obtain.

Use these questions to discuss the day’s topic within your small groups:
1) Was this an easy choice to make or a hard choice? Why?
2) Reread options 3 and 6 and ask why they think a reward was given.
3) What does sacrifice mean?
4) Why is sacrifice hard for us to do?
5) What are some things we can do to help ourselves be willing to sacrifice for God?
6) Is there something you are willing to give up to help someone else now?

DiscipleTown Super Citizen

Award a Super Citizen certificate to a child who demonstrated forgiveness, patience, or extra grace in dealing with others rather than retaliating or tattling.
Let’s Pray!
Dear Jesus, thank You so much that You were willing to make the greatest sacrifice of all for us. You gave up Your throne, Your rights as God, and Your very life here on this earth so that we could become Your children. Help us to have the same attitude as You—being willing to give and sacrifice so that others will know Your love. Teach us how to walk in Your ways. We love You, Jesus, and we want our thanks to show in our lives. In Your name, amen.

Cy’s Challenge: Do something you know will impact eternity. Be creative!

Let’s Review!
Use these questions to review the lesson with the children:

1) Name one way to earn rewards in heaven.
2) How long do heavenly rewards last?
3) Why was God pleased with the widow’s offering?
4) Define the character trait, sacrifice.

For the Home
DiscipleTown Table Talker: Give each child a copy of this week’s DiscipleTown Table Talker. As you show them how to put it together, encourage the kids to ask their parents to lead family devotions three times this week.

Parent E-mail: Copy and send the e-mail below to help your parents connect with their kids during the week. Send them early in the week, but not on Sunday. As a courtesy, be sure parents have opted to receive these e-mails. Review and edit as necessary to reflect the lesson elements you have used. You can also find this e-mail as a Microsoft Word document in your download bundle.

Dear Mom and Dad,

In the last of our series learning How to Earn Eternal Rewards, we came across a difficult concept. We talked about living for eternity and how that requires sacrifice. Sacrifice goes the extra mile and says, “I will do this for you at cost to myself.” This is what Christ demonstrated on the cross. He paid an unpayable debt for us so that we could in turn have a relationship with the Father.

As you broach this challenging subject with your child(ren) this week, use the DiscipleTown Table Talker to give you ideas on where to start the conversation. Share stories from your own life of times when someone’s generosity to you cost them. Share how you felt. If you have made such sacrifices, share why you did it, and give your child(ren) eyes to see such opportunities in their own lives.

As we finish this series, we have learned that God’s kingdom is often backward from how things are on earth. The things He values, our world does not value; and the things He rewards have little weight here on earth. Living in light of eternity should be our aim in all we do, knowing full well that God rewards all those who work for His kingdom.

If you need any additional resources, please don’t hesitate to contact us this week.

Building young disciples,

[Your Name]
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Chip’s Snack Time!—No-Snack Snack

Supplies: any prepackaged, individually wrapped snack

Let the children know that today we are going to practice having a heart that is willing to sacrifice—to give something to someone else when it costs us something. Today they are going to pick a snack to take home to their sibling or their parent. Today they will go without a snack.

Teachable Point: Ask the children these questions: Do you want to give a snack to your sibling or parent? Is it okay if they have a snack, and you do not? Why is it hard to give a snack to someone else and miss out on one yourself? Why would God want us to do something so hard? God loves to reward those willing to do the hardest things, and His rewards are the best rewards we can ever hope to get.

Note to Leader: This will be challenging for your kids, but do not give in to the temptation to let them have a snack. Allow them to experience what it really feels like to sacrifice. Encourage them all to make this choice, not giving them an option to eat it now. You don’t want to allow them to reduce the emotional strain on themselves by choosing not to give it away. They may feel hungry, but hopefully they will learn that earning eternal rewards is worth a sacrifice.

Additional Ideas

Throwing Our Crowns—Supplies: enough paper or cardboard crowns for each of your students; a Bible

As kids arrive this week, give each one a crown. The Bible speaks of many “crowns” we can earn in heaven. Whether this is literal or figurative doesn’t really matter, because at the end of the Bible we learn that we will be so overcome with how amazing and glorious God is, that any crown we have earned we will lay at His feet. We will be so in awe of God that we will simply want to give to Him. The joy of having something to give ought to be our motivation.

Read Revelation 4:9–11. Have the kids all take their crowns and toss them toward the stage as an act of worship. You can set up a throne-like chair to represent Jesus in heaven if you’d like. The kids can take home the crowns after church.

If you’d like to explore this further with your students, here are some passages referencing the crowns Christians can earn:

Victory—preparing wisely for Christ’s return (2 Timothy 4:6–8)
Life—living with determination and discipline (1 Corinthians 9:24–27)
Righteousness—evangelizing and discipling others (Philippians 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:19)
Glory—staying faithful in persecution or death (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10)
Rejoicing—leading others selflessly and well (1 Peter 5:2–4)
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
The words in italics are notes for you and your puppeteers; they are not to be read aloud.

[Puppet* shows up with a coffee can that is filled with various items.]

Leader: Well, hello, [puppet’s name]!
Puppet: Good day!
Leader: You brought me coffee! Wow, you shouldn’t have!
Puppet: Ha ha, I didn’t, sorry! It’s actually my keepsake can! I keep all my favorite keepsakes and treasures in here.

Leader: Oh cool. I have a shoebox for mine! What have you got in there? Do you want to show us?

[Puppet can ad lib, giving brief descriptions of some of the trinkets in the can.]

Leader: So can I ask why you are keeping your things in a rusty old can?
Puppet: Well, I am making a time capsule. I am going to bury this can in my backyard so that 100 years from now when archaeologists dig it up, they will be able to study me and learn all about me. I am hoping that it will last for many, many years and provide great insights into what kind of person I was.

Leader: That sounds like a fun idea, but what do you think about laying up some treasures that will last a million years and tell what kind of person you were?

Puppet: [Excited] I would love that! Too bad it’s impossible!

Leader: Is it? The Bible teaches that we can lay up treasure and rewards in heaven that will last for all of eternity—well past a million years—and our rewards will tell what kind of persons we were on earth.

Puppet: Even a billion years?
Leader: No, not a billion!
Puppet: [Disappointed] Oh man!

Leader: Try a trillion zillion gazillion years!
Puppet: [Mouth drops open, and he quickly tosses the can away.] Forget the time capsule. I’m going to start laying up treasure in heaven by living for God!

Leader: I like your enthusiasm!
Puppet: I can’t believe I thought my can was what was important! Thanks for this reminder!

[Puppet exits.]

*PUPPET: Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at DiscipleLand.com.
Each DiscipleTown Unit will teach your kids an essential “how to” skill to become victorious disciples of Jesus!