



WEEK ONE: Storing Up Treasures

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:19-21

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

REFLECTION

People gathered around Jesus on a mountainside to hear him teach. Jesus' message about treasures is found in what we call, "The Sermon on the Mount." He saw their hurt and pain and cared for them in many ways. One such way was teaching. Jesus taught how to faithfully live for God. Jesus surprised people with his stories and challenged them to rethink things they had always done. While it might feel easy to get back at someone who hurt you, pile up more than what we need, and worry about our stuff, Jesus shared another way.

Jesus said one of those ways is to not store up piles of treasure for ourselves. All our physical treasures like clothes, technology, jewelry, and toys will eventually be ruined, lost, destroyed, or forgotten. Those things just don't last. On the other hand, invisible treasures—like knowing how to give rather than take and love as God loves—cannot be destroyed. Treasures you store up through love you share last forever.

During the season of Lent, we slow down and figure out what is most important to us. Jesus called these things "treasures." Sometimes, our treasures can be seen and touched. Sometimes they are invisible. Jesus tells us we will find out where our heart is when we name our treasures. Another way of saying this is, "Your treasures reveal what is important to you." This Lent, we will think about our invisible and visible treasures. We will ask ourselves, "What is most important to me and my heart?"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do your treasures and collections say about you?
- How do you know when you have enough of something? What do you do when you have too much?
- What invisible treasures are important to your family? Why are they important?

ACTIVITY

Supplies: *Activity pages, one piece of construction or printer paper (to “store” your invisible treasures), scissors, glue or tape, and coloring materials.*

Print and gather your materials. To begin, read the story about a family and their two kinds of treasures on the first activity page. Then talk about the two types of treasures you have:

- If you had a heavy wooden chest with a metal lock, what would you store inside it?
- What are your most important objects you can see or touch?
- Sometimes the objects we value most are not valuable to strangers. Can you think of objects that are important in your family because they have special memories?

Invisible treasures are not just feelings. Invisible treasures grow when we make loving choices with loving intentions for each other and ourselves. When we choose to have a good attitude about something hard, take care of ourselves, help out a neighbor, or give something special away, our invisible treasure grows.

- If you had an invisible chest full of your invisible treasures, what would you store inside of it?
- What invisible treasures are unique to your family?
- If your wooden chest sank to the bottom of the ocean, what would you cherish from your invisible chest?

This week, let’s remember how Jesus encouraged us to put our energy and effort into filling our invisible treasure chest. No one can destroy or steal the love and joy we store there. And even if our physical treasures are stolen or destroyed, our invisible treasures survive.

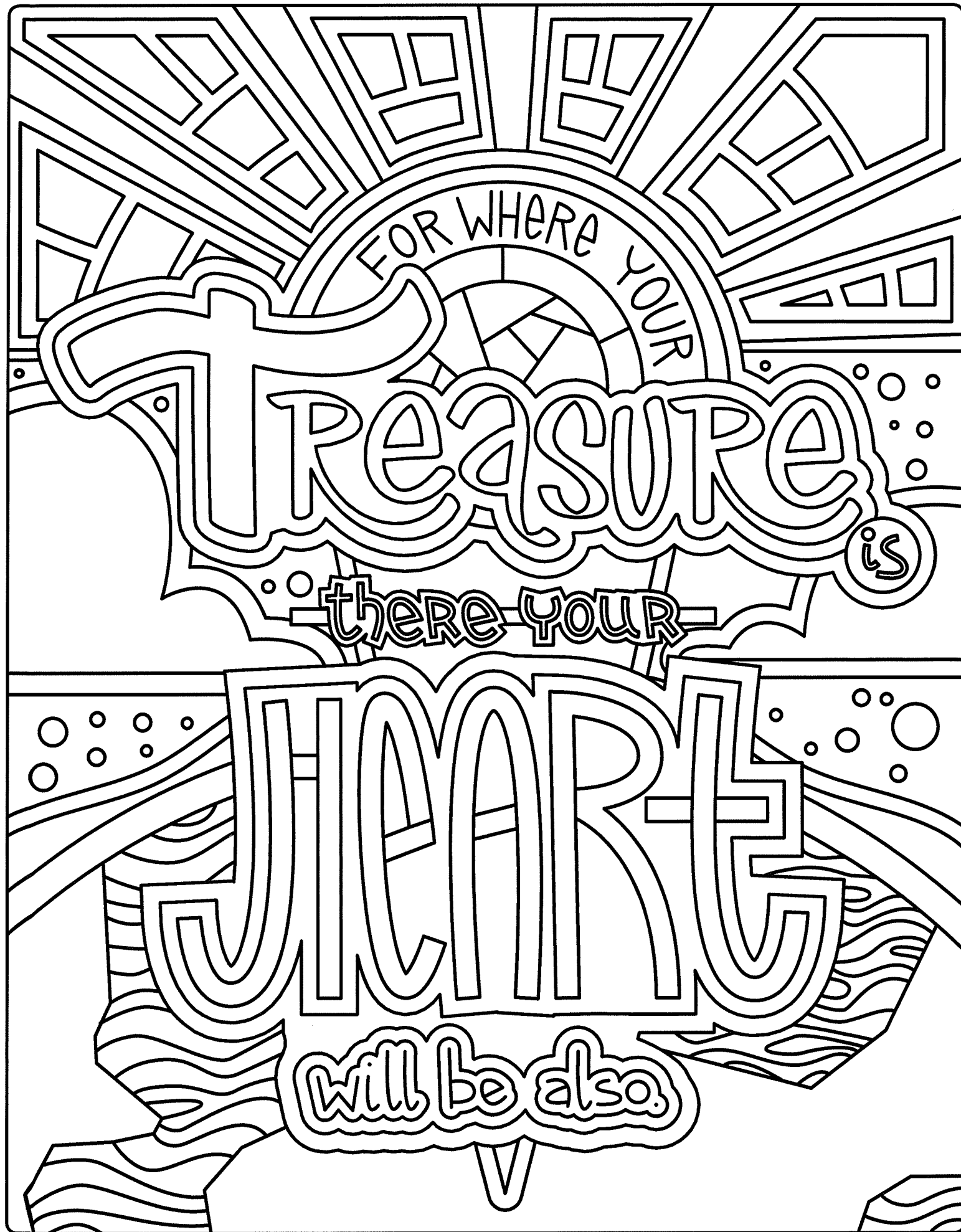
From your second activity page, cut off the top of the page that says, “Our Invisible Treasures,” and glue it to your paper. Then take a look at the “invisible treasures” on the rest of the activity page and think about ways to use them this week. For example, if you find a way to help others, cut out the bubble/heart/symbol/words for “help someone,” write out how you helped, and paste it onto your Invisible Treasures paper. Do the same with the other invisible treasures. What other invisible treasures do you have? Use the blank treasures to write your own. Print out this activity page as

many times as you need or draw tallies/stars/hearts around each treasure you've added. How much invisible treasure can you create? Whose treasure might increase because of it?

PRAVER

Generous God,
You never run out of love.
You never get tired of giving.
Help us choose your ways of love and justice,
giving instead of hoarding up for ourselves,
and fill our hearts to overflowing.

Amen.



ACTIVITY STORY

Once upon a time, there was a family who lived on a boat. The family owned two treasure chests. One was a wooden chest with a heavy metal lock. In it, they stored all of their money, jewelry, and fancy clothes. This chest was precious to the family.

The other treasure chest was invisible. It could only hold invisible treasures. In the invisible chest, the family stored their love for each other, determination, hope for the future, and generosity. This chest was precious to the family.

The family protected both treasures. Sometimes, the invisible treasures, like generosity, would inspire them to give away some of their visible treasures. The invisible treasure would keep growing, no matter how much they gave away, no matter how empty the wooden treasure chest became.

One day, there was a leak in the boat. Water began rushing in. The family escaped and swam to shore while their boat sank.

They cried, "Everything we owned is gone! Our treasure chest! All of our money! We will never see it again!"

One family member looked over on the beach and saw nothing but her family. Her heart felt warm, even though her skin felt cold.

"Hey, everybody! Our invisible chest is here! It survived the sinking!"

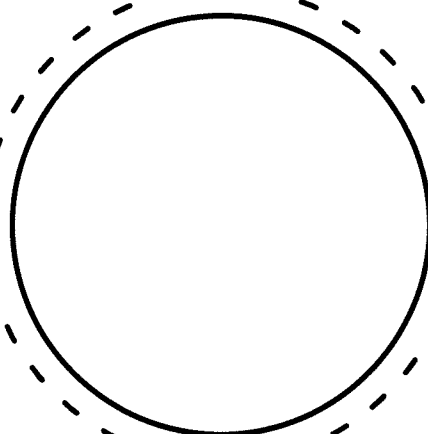
They looked around. Even though they were very sad to have lost their boat and their wooden chest of treasure, they still had their hope, love, determination, and generosity. That day, they picked up their even larger invisible treasure chest and they started again.

OUR

INVISIBLE treasures



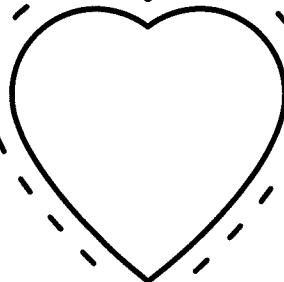
take care of yourself



give something you have to someone who needs it

give to a cause you care about

spend time together



help someone

care for a pet

