

I Have Skeletons in My Closet



I have to be honest, Halloween is not exactly my favourite holiday. But one thing I really like about it is what happens afterwards. After the big rush (and sometimes even before) there are all sorts of skeletons on sale!

Why is this a good thing, you might ask? Why would I need to stock up on skeletons and stow them away in my closet?

It's simple...I'm a Bible teacher!

Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones

Bones and skeletons are great visual aids and conversation starters for the story of [Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones](#) from [Ezekiel 37:1-14](#).

I love to tell this story of hope. This vision has the vital elements needed for a dramatic story. The kids love the “creepy” image of dry bones lying all over a valley. They can relate to how Ezekiel must have felt when the bones began rattling and coming together. Tendons and flesh formed on them and finally God breathed his spirit into them. If Ezekiel was hopeless because his people were in captivity he could finally understand how God had the power to bring a nation back to life.

Teaching Items in Post-Holiday Sales Bins

As a teacher I am always on the lookout for items that will help me share God's Word in ways children can best relate to. No one has to spend a lot of money or buy new things to teach children about God. But if you live in a place where after-holiday sales provide extremely cheap items then this may be a great opportunity. What are the holidays where you live?

After Christmas

- Creche and manger scenes (angels, wise men, animals, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, the manger itself), pictures of Jesus as a baby, stars and spices like the wise men brought. The obvious uses are for stories such as [The Birth of Jesus](#) and [Wise Men and a Star](#).
- Gaudy plastic strings of gold and silver garland can make great “treasure” when you later tell the [Parable of a Treasure & a Pearl](#).
- Greenery, artificial trees, candles and even twinkling lights bought in after-Christmas clearance sales really come in handy for costumes and acting out Bible stories later on.
- You’re going to enjoy pulling twinkling lights out of storage when you tell the story of [Jesus Teaches about Salt and Light](#).

After Valentines Day

- Heart decorations of all kinds. These could be used when talking about the heart.
- Stories that come to mind are [Let My People Go!](#) , [John the Baptist](#) and [The Parable of a Sower and the Seeds](#)

After Easter

- This is the obvious time to find things like books and figurines to help you later tell the story of the [Burial and the Resurrection of Jesus](#).
- Since I teach infants and toddlers I sometimes use the little wind-up bunnies when I teach about [Day 6-God Created Animals & People](#).
- And I like to have a few plastic eggs on hand throughout the year so I can put verses or pictures inside and let the children hunt for them. They are also great for telling the story of death, burial and resurrection of Jesus with [Resurrection Eggs](#).

After Halloween

- Skeletons for teaching about [Ezekiel & the Valley of Dry Bones](#)
- Candy and lollies if you use those as game prizes.

After Thanksgiving

- We can give thanks throughout the year so I’ve sometimes used items on sale after this holiday to teach stories such as [Jesus Heals Ten Lepers](#).
- And all of plastic fruit comes in handy for teaching about [The Fruit of the Spirit](#).

Happy Teaching!

©Mission Bible Class 2011-2024 Copies may only be made for personal and ministry purposes. Not to be sold or profited from in any way. www.missionbibleclass.org



Hunting for Treasure



Children love the idea of finding hidden treasures. Honestly, don't we ALL enjoy the thought of finding hidden treasures?

Jesus must have known this when he used treasure and a valuable pearl to describe the Kingdom of Heaven.

*"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it".
Matthew 13:44-46 New International Version (NIV)*

In the [Parables of a Hidden Treasure and a Valuable Pearl](#), when a man found a treasure he hid it in a field and then sold everything he had to buy the field. Another man sold everything he had to buy a pearl of great value. Jesus said the Kingdom of God is like this. When we find God we should do everything we can to follow him.

Here are some ways to help children experience the Parable:

- Have children rewrite the parable using items of value to them. The treasure might be a million dollars or a huge diamond.
- [Print out this worksheet](#) for an interactive discussion about what we treasure.
- Write "God is MY Treasure" at the top of a poster board or large piece of paper. Bring catalogues, magazines, real estate ads and automobile ads to class and let the children cut out pictures of valuable things. Glue all of the pictures onto the poster. Discuss as you work.
- Make a treasure box and decorate it with glitter, beautiful stones, etc. Write "God" on the inside of the box.
- Use the "Crayon Resist" method to tell the story. [Instructions Here.](#)
- For review let the children choose a "treasure" out of a treasure box when they answer a question correctly.
- Ask a jeweller how much pearls cost. Ask if he or she knows the value of the world's most valuable pearls. Share the information with the class.
- Find out if your public library has good picture books about how pearls are formed. Bring the books to class to show the children.
- Play hangman using words from today's story (treasure, Matthew, pearl, merchant, etc.)
- Draw a vertical line down the centre of a chalk/white board. Title one column with "God's Treasures" and title the other "Man's Treasures". Ask the children to help you think of items to write in each column. Discuss the value of each. Read Matthew 6:19-21. (This application idea is called [Drawing Contrasts.](#))



Teaching Alongside the Creator



In the rush to find scissors and glue we should not neglect the natural supplies God has provided as teaching resources.

We do not teach alone. We join the Master Teacher, the Creator, who is already using his creation to draw people to Himself:

*The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.
They have no speech, they use no words;
no sound is heard from them.
Yet their voice goes out into all the earth,
their words to the ends of the world. (Psalm 19:1-4, NIV)*

and...

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. (Romans 1:20, NIV)

A student I supervise, Cristy, recently encouraged a group of teachers to bring God's teaching resources into our classrooms. Cristy sent a group of teachers outside the building to find and bring back items that teach about God. (She only allowed them 3 minutes!).

Here are the types items these teachers found:

- A leaf to illustrate the waving of the palm leaves when Jesus entered Jerusalem in his [Triumphal Entry](#).
- A rock to teach about the stone being rolled away from Jesus' Tomb in the [Burial and Resurrection Story](#).
- Various types of Soil to illustrate the [Parable of the Sower and the Seeds](#).

We thought this might be more of a challenge when we taught the same workshop in Metro Manila (Philippines). The church building we were in was surrounded by a parking lot devoid of plants and next to a busy street. Still, when Cristy sent the teachers out they quickly adapted and came back with a wonderful collection of both natural and other teaching items including items such as:

- Five stones to teach about [David and Goliath](#).

- Dust to show how God formed Adam from the dust of the earth when [God Created People](#).
- A salt shaker from the kitchen to illustrate that we are to be [Salt and Light](#).
- Coins from someone's purse to help children remember when [Judas betrayed Jesus](#).

Pointing out God's creation when we teach brings a profound richness into what we are sharing. In the years to come children may forget a picture used for illustration or a worksheet. But, for the rest of their lives they will continue to see leaves and stones and soil. Connecting these things with spiritual lessons now will mean that the lessons will be reinforced over and over.

I can just imagine the future when one of my students, as an elderly person, picking up a stone and telling his or her grandchild about how the stone was rolled away from the tomb.

I want to teach with the Creator!

©Mission Bible Class 2011-2024 Copies may only be made for personal and ministry purposes. Not to be sold or profited from in any way. www.missionbibleclass.org



Hand-prints for All Ages



I love reading about the bible character, Caleb. He served God his entire life.

Caleb and Joshua were the two spies that brought a good report back to Moses in the story [Twelve Tribes and Twelve Spies](#). Then, when he is an old man we read about him in [The Land is Conquered and Caleb Fights the Giants](#). Caleb did not let age stop him from fighting the battles needed to conquer the promised land.

When you teach this story invite some older Christian brother and sisters to attend your class and spend time with the children. Ask the guests to talk about their faith and how they serve God. They could talk about their prayer life or show photos of things they have done in their life.

Another way to help children and older people relate to each other is to have them participate in an activity together. Hand-prints are easy and fun!

Supplies for Handprints:

- Paper ([or use this template](#))
- Washable paint such as tempera paint
- Plate or other flat container to hold the paint (like a paper plate)
- Paint brush or cloth
- Damp towel to wipe the paint off when finished

Instructions:

1. Pour paint in flat container
2. Apply paint to hand with paintbrush or cloth
3. Press hand on paper and lift off carefully
4. Repeat for each person making a print
5. Set aside to dry
6. Be sure and make two sets so that both the older person and the child can keep a copy.

Other Bible Stories for this Craft:

- [Parable of the Mustard Seed](#)
- [Birth of John the Baptist](#)

©Mission Bible Class 2011-2024 Copies may only be made for personal and ministry purposes. Not to be sold or profited from in any way. www.missionbibleclass.org

