

Children's Readings

# Finding Treasure in God's Word

The Bible is like a treasure map. As we read the Bible together this week we will dig for texts that teach us about:

- T**reasure in the Bible
- R**elying on the Bible
- E**xploring the words
- A**pplying the Bible
- S**eeing Jesus
- U**nderstanding hope
- R**ight from wrong
- E**ncouragement



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# Why We Treasure the Bible

**Treasure Text: “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moths and vermin do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:20, 21).**

**G**emma had made a special little box and decorated it with pictures. She wanted Grandma to have it, because she loved Grandma. Gemma knew exactly where she would put it. She had noticed where Grandma put her treasures, so she placed it carefully on the shelf beside some other ornaments and photos that Grandma liked to look at.

Sitting on the shelf was a book. Gemma thought that this must be a special book because it was on the special shelf. But as she opened the pages she was very concerned because someone had written in the book and underlined some of the words and paragraphs. Gemma knew that you should never write or draw in books, so she asked Grandma why her special book was underlined and written in.

Grandma explained that this book was indeed a special book. It was called a Bible. Grandma said she read it every day. The words in it, particularly the underlined words, were treasures that she wanted to remember because they connected her to Jesus and His love for her. Grandma said that the words showed her how to love Jesus and how to be like Him. The messages gave her purpose for each day and hope for her future. Grandma said she could not live without reading the messages God gave her each day.

Gemma was excited. She also wanted to love Jesus and find out more about Him. She wanted the treasure words to make her life happier. So she asked Grandma to show her how to read and understand the Bible and live with Jesus as her best friend.

Grandma was also excited. She said that there was nothing more important than sharing the words in the Bible. She explained that the Bible was like having a treasure map, and that when

you spend time reading the Bible, it is like digging to find gold, silver, or precious gems.

In Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus urges us not to spend our lives trying to get treasures here on earth. We should rather spend our time and money on things that Jesus would have us spend them on, so that our treasure will be in heaven. Because where our treasure is, our hearts are there also.

In a story found in Matthew 13:44-46 Jesus told His disciples that heaven is like treasure in a field. You might want to sell all you have to buy that field so you can have that treasure. The joy of being with Jesus in heaven and living with Him forever is just as precious. To get to heaven we will be happy to give up lots of things in our lives and spend time reading the Bible.

## Let's Talk

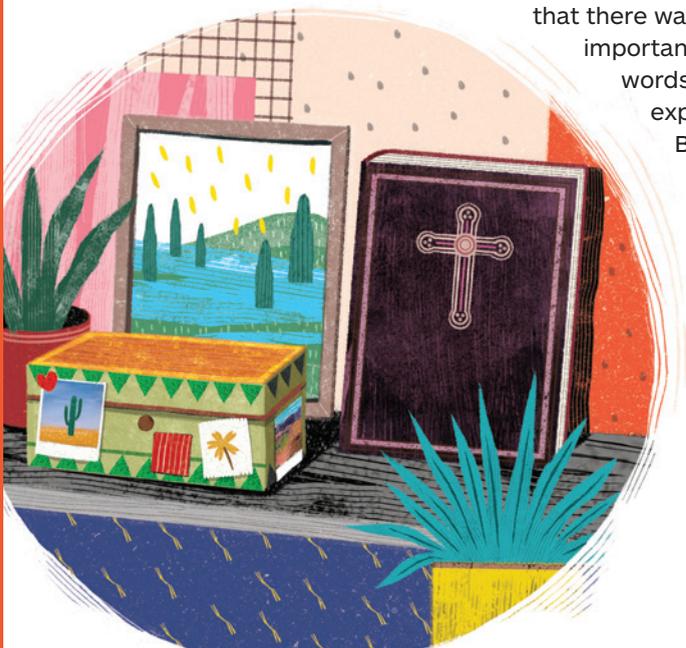
What could you spend your time and money on to receive the treasures offered in the Bible?

## Let's Pray

Ask Jesus to help you find the important treasures in His Word that you need to live a holy life. Thank Him for the treasures He's already given you.

## Let's Make

Draw a treasure map for around your room, church, or home. Hide Bible texts and show on the treasure map where to go to find them. When your friends and family have found them, read them out together.





## Read the Bible— It Can Be Trusted

**Treasure Text: “From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:15, 16).**

**G**randma showed Gemma where it says that the Bible is God’s book. It is called the Holy Scriptures because it tells us about God and how to give our hearts to Him and live for Him.

Grandma explained that the Bible was not really one book, but 66 smaller books written by different people, after God had given them ideas and words. The people wrote down what they remembered about what happened long ago, and some wrote about when Jesus was on earth. Some wrote songs or poems, and some wrote about things that were going to happen in the future.

The Bible tells us that the messages in the Bible didn’t just come from the writers’ own imaginations. “For prophecy never had its origins in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21).

One book in the Bible tells us about a boy called Timothy who found Bible treasure. He discovered the Bible through his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois. They knew how precious the words of the Bible were and decided that it was important to sit with Timothy every day and teach him how to “dig for treasure” in the Bible and give his heart to Jesus.

Because the Bible was inspired by God, Timothy developed a faith in Jesus that gave him courage and passion for sharing Jesus and leading other people to live for him.

People in Thessalonica believed Silas and Timothy when they told them about the Bible treasure and turned from loving idols and

started to love Jesus, the living God. Paul praised God for this. He wrote to the Thessalonians saying, “And we also thank God continually for you, because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human, but as it actually is, the word of God which is indeed at work in you who believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

Grandma asked Gemma if she knew what trust was. Gemma said it was like believing that Daddy would catch her when he told her to jump into the deep end of the swimming pool.

Grandma said that reading the Bible, trusting its words, came from God; and doing what it said was like reading and following a recipe and trusting that what you made would bake into a cake.

### Let’s Talk

What are some of the books and programs you have read or seen that you know are not real? What books and programs do you have that are real and true?

### Let’s Pray

Ask Jesus to help you focus on Bible stories that can help you grow, rather than on untrue stories that are just entertainment.

### Let’s Make

Arrange the chairs in a room into an obstacle course. Write directions for someone to read to help another person who is blindfolded get through the obstacle course. For example, write down how many steps left, how many steps right or forward, they need to take to get along safely.

# Explore the Bible— How I Read the Bible

**Treasure Text:** “In the same way, your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish” (Matthew 18:14).



**G**emma told Grandma about a time when she was with Mommy exploring a new park and they couldn't find the place birds were kept. They had to stop and look at a park map to give them directions to get on the right path. It was funny because they had been going around in circles when the aviary was only a five-minute walk away.

Grandma laughed and said that sounds like some people who try to find God and His purpose and joy for their lives. Sometimes they look everywhere and try lots of things, but God is so close. They just need to read their Bibles. Many people think the Bible is too hard to read, that it is too complicated. Sometimes they don't trust that the Bible is really God's Word for them. Sometimes they think the Bible is just full of rules.

The best way to start exploring the Bible is to pray first. God's Holy Spirit will help us understand what we read. When Jesus went back to heaven, He promised that He would send “the Spirit of truth” to be with us forever. “The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things,” He said. (John 14:17, 26).

*Dear Jesus, please help me today to understand what I am reading in Your Word, the Bible.*

Grandma told Gemma that she wished she could give her special Bible reading glasses so that when she put the glasses on she would see who God was and what He was like. If such glasses existed, they would show us that the most important thing about God is that He loves us. When we explore all the many words in the Bible, we need to wear our “God is love” glasses. It's easy to see God's love in these verses:

“And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God and God in them” (1 John 4:16). “We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19).

The Bible's key love message about God is that He sent His Son Jesus, to die for us: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:9, NIV).

God loves us so much that he will search for us like a shepherd searches for a lamb that has wandered away, become lost, and can't find its way home. God is both the treasure map and the treasure.

*Dear Jesus, thank You for loving us, even though we don't deserve it. Help us to see Your love in everything we read in the Bible.*

## Let's Talk

What other ways can you receive the Bible message other than reading?

## Let's Pray

Ask God to share His plan for your life as you faithfully study His Word.

## Let's Make

Design and make some special Bible reading “God is love”-glasses. You could make these from cardboard and clear plastic or cellophane. Or you could make them from bending pipe cleaners.

# Applying God's Treasure—the Bible Guides Me

**Treasure Text:** “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5, NIV).

**G**emma actually loved making things for people and being helpful at home and at school. But sometimes she just didn't feel like helping, and she sometimes felt that she made the wrong choices when people made her feel angry or sad. She said that she tried really hard at times, but it didn't seem to make any difference. She wondered if treasures in the Bible would help her love people more, and help her make the right decisions.

Grandma assured her that everybody makes mistakes, and that the treasures we read about in the Bible can help. The first Bible treasure to remember is that even though we don't feel any different, we just need to keep on reading the Bible. Jesus told His disciples that it works like a grapevine: As long as the branches (we) are connected to the vine (Jesus), the grapevine will keep producing lovely grapes (John 15:5). So every day we need to connect with Jesus through reading the Bible. This connection helps us act more like Jesus and make the right decisions every day. When the grapevine bears fruit, others will enjoy eating it too. When we bear Bible-treasure fruit, we can be a blessing to others.

Like the story that Gemma remembered from the Bible about a young Israelite slave girl who told her master about God's healing power when he was sick. Because she cared and shared her knowledge of God that she had from Bible treasures, her master, Captain Naaman, was healed. You can read this story treasure in 2 Kings 5:1-14.

Grandma explained that all the good things we do come from Jesus, and that we should thank Him for helping us. “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4).

Gemma really wanted to be like Jesus. Grandma explained that it takes a lifetime to be like Him, and it's only through our daily reading and prayer that we grow little by little: “And we are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which

comes from the Lord who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Stay connected to Jesus through reading His words and He will give you His heart, His voice, His hands, and His feet so that we can share His love with others.

## Let's Talk

If you could spend a day with Jesus, what would you talk about? Where would you go? What would you do?

## Let's Pray

Ask Jesus to send someone to you today with whom you can share some of the treasure words you have discovered in the Bible.

## Let's Make

Study the lifecycle of a monarch butterfly or a frog. Notice the big changes that are made by God's power. We also have this power to change when we ask for it and are connected to Jesus through the Bible.



# The Bible Shows Me Jesus

**Treasure Text:** “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21, NIV).

It's interesting to find out why we were given our names and what they mean. Gemma was excited to find out that her name in French means “jewel,” and in English it means “precious stone.” When God's Son was to be born, an angel of the Lord appeared and told His earthly father, Joseph, that he was to give Him the name “Jesus.” It was specially chosen by God because it means that He would be the Saviour of the world.

The Bible uses many names for Jesus, and they all reveal who He is, His character, and His mission. Grandma asked Gemma to go and get her Bible, so they could explore the verses and find the different names for Jesus. They wrote all the names down on a big piece of paper. Here are some of them:

**Immanuel, Matthew 1:23:** “The virgin will conceive give birth to a son, and they will call him **Immanuel!** (which means, ‘God with us.’) God didn't want to be a distant God, He wanted to live among us. Jesus was God on earth.

**Son of God, John 3:16:** “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only **Son**, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” At Jesus' baptism God confirmed Jesus as His Son. “And a voice came from heaven: ‘You are my **Son**, whom I love; with you I am well pleased’ ” (Mark 1:11).

**Son of man, Mark 10:45:** “For even the **Son of Man** did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Jesus is also called Son of Man. Jesus was God but He was born from an earthly mother, Mary. That makes Jesus very special because He was the Son of mankind, and He was also the Son of God.

Word of God, John 1:1, 14: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word** was God..” “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.” Jesus revealed God to us. He was the Word of God. In the beginning, He spoke the world into existence! “The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth” (Colossians 1:15, 16, NIV). Not only did Jesus inspire the Bible, which is God's Word to us, but

Jesus is the Word of God. If we know Him, we know God.

There are many more names for Jesus in the Bible. Ask your parents or teachers to help you discover some more of them. Here are a few places to start:

**Lamb of God:** John 1:29, 36

**Alpha and Omega:**

Revelation 22:13

**Bread of Life:** John 6:35

## Let's Talk

Find out what your name means, and why you were given that name.

## Let's Pray

Ask Jesus to help you understand the precious meaning of all His names as you study the Word of God.

## Let's Make

Write names of Jesus on strips of paper that are the same length. Make a paper chain and hang it between a picture of Jesus and a picture of you and your family.





## Understanding the Treasure of Hope

**Treasure Text:** “For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope” (Romans 15:4).

**G**emma loved school, but she always looked forward to the holidays. This year they were going to fly to visit Grandma. Mommy bought the tickets months before the trip, and it seemed to Gemma as though the holiday was never going to arrive. She told Grandma this on the phone.

Grandma tried to encourage Gemma. She explained that looking forward to something was called having hope. You plan for it, buy your tickets, and pack your clothes. Grandma also wished that the holidays were already here. Grandma promised to give Gemma a big hug at the airport.

Grandma and Gemma talked about the hope that the Bible gives. Because Adam and Eve decided to listen to Satan, Romans 1:25 tells us that people started to worship and serve created things rather than God as the Creator. People began to do lots of things that were wrong and hurtful, and not spend time learning about God and trusting Him. But because God loves us so much, He made a plan to save those who would turn to Him. God’s plan would stop Satan and sin from hurting people. God’s Son, Jesus, would come to earth as a baby. Even though Jesus never did anything that was wrong, He died for our sins, so that we could be forgiven and live with Jesus in heaven forever. God’s love gives us hope that we will go to heaven and be able to live with Him forever. Grandma shared a treasure text with Gemma where Jesus said:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And . . . I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:1-3).

As Gemma thought about the holiday, she thought how nice it will be when Jesus comes. Then she and Grandma could be with Jesus forever. Suddenly Gemma couldn’t wait for Jesus to come. She phoned Grandma and told her. Grandma was so happy to hear that Gemma was excited for Jesus to come. “We have a wonderful hope, Gemma,” Grandma said. “It’s a hope that makes my heart sing. It is the hope that one day Jesus will be seen in the sky, and He will even wake up the dead people who loved Him.”

“After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever” (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

Gemma said she couldn’t wait! Can you?

### Let’s Talk

How would you explain hope to another boy or girl?

### Let’s Pray

Ask Jesus to help you give your heart to Him every day, so that you can go to heaven with Him when He comes.

### Let’s Make

Make a promise box. Make a little box and decorate it with drawings and stickers. Cut out small pieces of paper the same size and write your favorite hope texts on them. Roll them up and stand them in the box until the box is full. Read one text every day, or give the promise box to a friend.

# Right From Wrong—the Bible Helps Me Tell the Difference



**Treasure Text:** “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ . . . ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’ ” (Mark 12:30, 31).

**G**randma could see that Gemma looked worried. She had heard her fighting during a game with her brother that morning. Angry words had been spoken. When Mommy asked her to say she was sorry, Gemma had chosen to close her mouth so tight that no words came out. Now Gemma sat outside on the step looking sad.

Grandma knew that there were many Bible treasure texts that could help Gemma choose to do the right thing. She reminded Gemma to put on her “God is love” glasses. Then they opened Grandma’s Bible and began to read and talk.

In Mark 12 Jesus said that the greatest commandment was to love God with all the passion, time, and energy we have; and that the second greatest commandment was to love our neighbor as ourselves. Grandma explained that when we are not sure what to do, we should think, *I wonder how I can best love God and my neighbor?* “Gemma,” Grandma said, “I’m pretty sure that Jesus counts your brother and all the people in your life, even in your street and beyond, as your neighbor.”

“If you love your brother, then you will try to say nice things to him. When we start to feel angry we can walk away until we have calmed down. If we want to treat Mommy with Jesus’ love, then we will obey her. In Proverbs 15:1 we can read, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (NIV).

Gemma thought for a while and then went off to find Mommy. There were some “I’m sorry” words she wanted to say to her.

First John 2:3-8 tells us that we know Jesus if we obey His commands, obey His Word, and walk as Jesus did. Some of the most important commands from God were given through Moses to the children of Israel, and to us. Jesus lived these Ten Commandments. The first four tell us how to love God, and the second six tell us how to love each other. Grandma read the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 to Gemma and explained them to her.

Grandma said, “Gemma, everybody makes mistakes. But we can all ask God to forgive us, and work hard at staying connected to Jesus. Jesus promised that one day we will live and love as He does. First John 3:2 tells us that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see

Him as He is. “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” (Colossians 3:12).

## Let’s Talk

What is a good guide for working out what is right and wrong?

## Let’s Pray

Ask Jesus to help us say we’re sorry to others when we’ve been wrong.

## Let’s Make

Pack a box of clothes. Label each clothing item with an action or character trait. Some will be labeled with such words as gentleness, sharing, reading the Bible, and praying. Others will be labeled with such words as playing lots of video games, being selfish, lying, and stealing. Sort the clothes and pack the clothes we are packing for heaven into a suitcase.

# Encouragement From the Bible

**Treasure Text: “Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light on my path. . . . Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart” (Psalm 119:105-111, NIV).**

It was nearly time for Gemma to pack her bags and fly back home. She had enjoyed spending time with Grandma and finding treasures in the Bible. She was going to miss having Grandma to talk to. Grandma reminded her that the treasures that they had found were now in their hearts, so Gemma was going to take them home with her. Gemma had her own Bible, and she knew that Mommy and Daddy would help her find more treasures.

When we feel a bit lost and unsure of how to stay connected with Jesus, we can trust God’s Word. The Bible is like a light or a torch to show how to keep living the way Jesus wants us to.

Grandma explained that this world isn’t our forever home. We are all looking forward to going home to heaven. The closer this time comes, however, the more people will refuse to love God and follow Jesus. Without Bible treasures in their hearts they will find it harder to be kind to each other and help each other. The world is going to be a tough place to live in.

Jesus said that He is “light,” and that He is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Being connected to Jesus through Bible reading and prayer will keep our love for Jesus strong. We do not need to worry about our life. The real treasure of the Bible is that Jesus loves us. Matthew 6:33 tells us to “seek first his kingdom, and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Gemma remembered the story about a wise man who built his house on rock, and a foolish man who built it on sand. When the floods came, only the house on the rock stood firm. Jesus said that the wise man had heard

His words and put them into practice. Many people hear about Jesus and His love, but not many people accept this love and love Jesus enough to trust Him and live for Him.

Grandma told Gemma that Jesus wanted her to share His love and do good things for other people: “Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). It is so exciting to be God’s light and hope for people.

“Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:1).

## Let’s Talk

What eight treasures did we learn about this week?

## Let’s Pray

Ask Jesus for a deep understanding of His love for us.

## Let’s Make

Make a Bible bookmark. Write on it your favorite treasure text from this week. Decorate it with pictures or stickers. Tie on some pretty ribbon to hang below the Bible page you are reading.



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