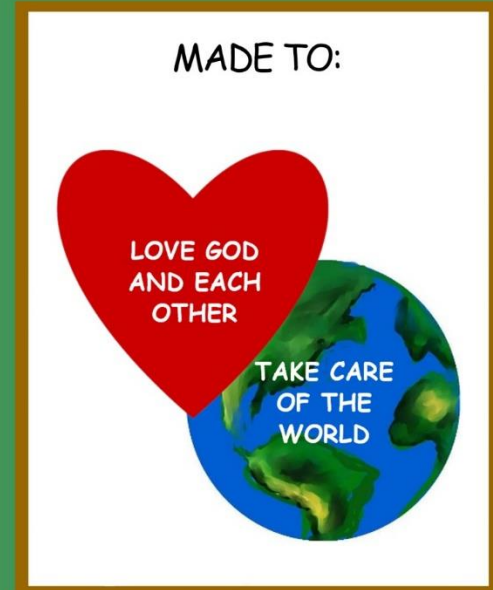




Real treasure:
Follow Jesus
God's love



Fake treasure:
Life without God
I decide right and wrong

Treasure hunt start

MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE

Objectives: To explain that: *The thing we want most in life is to be loved, because God made us to receive his love and to love him back. *God is the source of love. Only he can love us perfectly and only his love can ever fully satisfy us. *Because of sin, human love has become broken and selfish. But we can know God's perfect love because Jesus made a way back to God. *Only if we follow Jesus can we enjoy that perfect love that God wants to give us.

Review & "I Wonder" Questions: *Being made in God's image means that we are like God in many ways. (We are intelligent, creative, can speak, can love) *God made us for a loving relationship with him and each other, and he made us to take care of the world he created. ***I wonder** why there is a treasure map in this picture. ***I wonder** what is in the treasure boxes. Let's find out more in our lesson...

Lesson Props: Bag of chocolate coins, bag of empty chocolate coin wrappers

Lesson Summary: Today we are going to talk more about our loving relationship with God. Who likes going on a treasure hunt? How would you feel if you did a treasure hunt, but the treasure was (*hold up bag of wrappers*) a bag of empty chocolate coin wrappers? (*Children respond*) Yes, you would feel sad, disappointed, or even tricked, because even though the wrappers are nice and shiny, they are empty. (*Hold up bag of chocolate coins*) The real treasure, the chocolate, is missing! The empty wrappers are a fake, empty treasure.

This illustration can teach us something about real life. As you grow up, many people will tell you that life is easier and better without God. (*Point to treasure map*) They will say that you don't have to take the long, hard road of obeying God, instead, you can do whatever you want, and life will be great! They will say that life is better when each person can decide for themselves what to do and what is right and wrong.

This seems like an easier road with a greater reward. (*Point to fake treasure box*)

But the people who say those things, don't know that that is a fake treasure that will leave them empty and dissatisfied. In fact, that is the road of sin that leads to death. They don't realize that they were made for something much more special (*point to real treasure box*), and they can only find the **real** treasure if they follow Jesus.

What is the real treasure in life? God's love is the real treasure, and the Bible is our treasure map that leads us to God and his love.

There are many things we want, but the thing that we want and need most of all is to be loved. This is because God made us that way. (*Point to heart symbol.*) He made us to love each other, but especially to receive his love and to love him back. (*Point to real treasure box*) God's love is the only treasure that will fully satisfy us, because nobody else can love us as much as God does. God is the only one who knows us completely, and he is the only one who loves us perfectly. God is love, and he is the **source** of love. Because of sin, human love has become broken and selfish. But God loves us so much that he sent his Son Jesus to die for our sins so we can receive and enjoy his perfect love.

Although we will all face sad and difficult times, we know that God loves us, is always with us, and comforts us. When we have faith in Jesus and follow and obey him, then we will also be able to love Jesus **and** each other better. (*Point to heart on poster*) This heart on our poster reminds us that we were made to receive God's love and to love him back and enjoy him forever.

Suggested Questions: ***What does this lesson tell us about God?** (God loves us. God is the source of love. He wants to share that love with us.) ***What is the real treasure in life?** (God's love) ***Why do we want love most of all?** (Because God made us to receive his love and to love him back) ***Why can't human love ever fully satisfy us?** (Because it has become broken and selfish because of sin. Only God can love us perfectly.) ***How do we get to know God's love?** (Through following Jesus, who made a way back to God through his death and resurrection.) ***Will we always be happy when we know God's love?** (No, we will still face sadness and difficulty, but we will know that God loves us, is always with us, and comforts us.) ***What is our treasure map that shows us the way to God and his love?** (The Bible)

Bible Memory Verse: "We love because he first loved us." (1 John 4:19 – NIV)