

All In! A Lesson Plan on Risking It All

This All In lesson plan encourages us to think about what we are willing to risk as disciples. Jesus often challenged people about their values. The Pearl of Great Price and the Treasure are parables about what is important to us and to our Heavenly Father. This exercise helps us consider what is valuable to us. What do you think about risking it all to allow God to give us something truly valuable?

Opening Game for All In

Start this lesson plan on risking it all by playing [Show Me the Money \(see the complete instructions\)](#).

Follow up with a couple of questions:

- Who likes making large wagers? Who wanted to bet smaller amounts?
- Are you the sort of person who spends your money on one big thing or would you rather purchase several smaller things?

It is fun to gamble with play money. And many people learn that bigger bets can result in bigger rewards. In poker, there is a term called being “all in”. This means you bet everything you have. In today’s gospel, Jesus tells us that we must be “all in” on building the Kingdom of God.

Scripture Reading for Lesson Plan on Risking It All

Consider the message in this gospel:

[Matthew 13:44-52](#) (The parables of the Pearl of Great Price and the Treasure in the Field) – the Gospel Reading for the [17th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A](#)

Jesus said to his disciples: “The Kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it”.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away.

Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

Do you understand all these things? They answered, “Yes.”

And he replied, “Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.”

[Matthew 13:44-52](#)

Discussion for this Priorities Lesson Plan

We are going to focus on the first two parables, although this whole gospel points to the importance of being all in and risking it all that we have to be true disciples of Jesus.

Consider the parable of the treasure in a field. Jesus tells us that a man finds a treasure in a field. The man is so excited that he sells everything he has to buy the field with the treasure.

But think about it. The field costs everything he has! How much was the treasure worth? We don't know. But probably not worth every last penny this guy owned, at least from a money point of view. It is extremely doubtful that this man will recover the money he spent. But the treasure is valuable to him and he was willing to risk everything to get it.

The parable of the pearl of great price is similar. Once again, the man sells everything he has to purchase the pearl. This one seems to drive the point home even more. The people listening to Jesus would know that no pearl was really worth that much. The man would never be able to sell it for that much. So why was he all in?

It is important to remember that Jesus is not a financial advisor giving investment advice. Few things in life are worth risking it all. But Jesus wants us to know that the Kingdom of God is worth the risk. We need to pursue it with all we have.

Reflection Questions for All In Lesson Plan

Give everyone some paper and a pen or pencil. Have them find a comfortable place to sit.

Your house is on fire. You have just enough time to remove five items safely. Write down which five items you would take with you. Be specific. For example, don't say photos. Tell us which specific photo you would take.

Give them a few minutes to do this.

Now you are going to make a second list. You have just inherited \$100,000 from your long lost Aunt Gertrude. Make a list of everything you would purchase with the money.

Give them a few minutes to do this.

Now have them share these lists. Point out any common themes or unusual choices.

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- Look at the list of items you removed from the fire. Do you think you will still value these items in ten years? Why or why not?
- Look at both of your lists. Do you see any common themes? Are these things centered on entertainment, school, memories, faith, cost, yourself, others, etc. ?

Now close your eyes and imagine that your hands are full of all of the things you value. Some of the things have been “miniaturized” so they will fit! Anyway, all of these things are in your hands and Jesus is standing before you, holding a very large pearl or gem. This is something which he wants us to have and is important to Him.

Imagine taking some of the things you value out of your hands to make room for the treasure Jesus wants to give them.

- How do you feel about giving some of their things up?
- Does it make you feel anxious? Sad? Upset? Free?

Keep removing things from your hands until there is nothing left.

- What were the easiest things to give up?
- What was the most difficult?

Jesus wants to give us the treasure of a relationship with him. But sometimes things are getting in the way. We might want to sleep in on Sundays instead of going to Mass. We might want to be popular instead of standing up for the outsider at school.

Challenge for the All In Lesson Plan

This week, try to be aware of the things you are holding on to. What is keeping you from being all in with Jesus? When you become of something you value more than the Kingdom of God, imagine Jesus taking it from your hands and replacing it with something even better. Try risking it all and letting go.

Prayer for the Lesson Plan on Risking it All

Close with the [Suscipe \(Take Lord Receive\) Prayer](#).

More Resources

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[Matthew West – All In](#)

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