



LESSON 8: THE PRODIGAL SON

OBJECT LESSON: THE VALUE WE HOLD

SUPPLIES

- play \$1 bills (3 bills for each adult or teen leader)
- disposable cups of water
- washable markers
- a few examples of things \$1 can buy
- real \$1 bills (1 crisp and 1 crumpled and old)

Easy Prep

- Fill disposable cups with water to about half full.

Distress Paper Money

Today we're discovering that we are deeply loved—**God** loves us very, very much. Sometimes we might wonder if God loves us even when we do or say something wrong. Let's find the answer to that question by looking at some money. There's a fun way that money can teach us about God's deep love for us!

- Hold up the real dollar bills, and explain that the pieces of money are worth the same amount. Pass around the two bills, and invite kids to notice the difference between them. Explain that even though one is nice and new and the other is old and crumpled, they're still each worth one dollar.
- Call out things you think one dollar could buy at a store. Hold up some of the dollar items you've collected to help kids see what kinds of things a dollar can buy. Collect the real dollar bills.
- Show the play money. Explain these are play dollar bills but you'll pretend they're worth one dollar each.
- Set out pretend dollars, cups of water, and markers to share.
- Allow time for kids to distress the bills; kids can work together coloring on one bill, getting another bill soggy or even soaking with the water in the cup, and distressing the last bill by folding, crumpling, and even stomping on it.
- After groups have distressed all their bills, call for attention and hold up the dollar items one at a time. Allow groups to hold up the bill or bills they have that they think could still buy the item even after getting messed up.

Talk About It

Think whether you think your dollars might or might not buy anything after they get messy.

All of your dollar bills could still buy these things! We used play money so we could make messes with it that we wouldn't do with real money, but the truth is that even when real money gets crumpled, gets dirty, gets something gooey on it, or just gets worn out, it can still buy the things it could have when it was brand-new.

That means that even if a dollar bill gets messy, it's still a dollar bill. It didn't really change even though it looks like it did.

That's a lot like how God loves us. Even when we do or say something wrong and we feel like we've messed up, it doesn't change God's love for us one little bit. No matter what, we are deeply loved by God.