

TAKE A LITTLE TIME

By Rev. Doug Forbes

Children love to collect things. They really like having a special place to store their little treasures. Helping your students to make their own treasure chests will provide them with a fun activity and remind them of the Bible truth from your lesson.

For your treasure chest activity you need the following: Bibles, gold spray paint, various types of macaroni, newspapers, white glue, pencil boxes or other boxes with covers, white contact paper and colored markers.

Begin your project by having the children glue the macaroni on the top and sides of their boxes. Let the children be creative. They may wish to shape their macaroni into a cross, a flower or some other design. When the glue dries, take the boxes to the back lawn, place newspaper under them and spray paint the boxes gold. When the paint dries, cut a piece of white contact paper to fit inside the box cover and write the following verse on it:

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21, NIV)

Peel the backing off the contact paper and stick the contact paper inside the lid of your box. Every time the students open their boxes to look at their treasures, they will

be reminded of this spiritual truth.

To help your students fill their treasure chests, you can give them Bible verse coins, chocolate wrapped in gold foil in the shape of coins, or play jewelry. These treasures could be given out as prizes to answered questions as long as each child gets a few. An alternate idea would be to have a treasure hunt.

For your lesson have the students look up Matthew 6:19-21 in their Bibles. Discuss how these verses teach us to store our real treasure in heaven because it is the only place where it will be safe from thieves and decay. If your treasure is in heaven, your heart will be there, too. You can send treasure to heaven through your good deeds, gifts, kindness and helpfulness to your house of worship and others.

It's important to remind your students that eternal life is a free gift – we don't work our way into heaven (Ephesians 2:8-9). When we ask Jesus into our hearts, He makes us members of His family, and we want to live the right way. Let's live a life filled with good deeds because Jesus loves us and we love Him. Let's show God's love by a special act of kindness to someone this week. God said that when we do this, it pleases Him and we store up treasure in heaven that lasts forever. •••

Explore Homeschooling

By Shirley Minster © 2010

Because of an increasingly busy life that separates families, more and more parents are exploring the educational option of homeschooling. They have a deep desire to spend more time with their children and their children want to be with them. The children know that their parents love them, understand them, and want the best for them.

When beginning the exploration, parents usually discover homeschooled children first - the neighbor's son, the catcher on the Little League team, the girl in the Missionettes class. All these children are busy socializing with friends and neighbors. Interactions are natural and interesting. Then the explorers talk with the moms and dads of homeschoolers. The first question invariably is, "What about socialization?" Even though they have seen the children interacting with others, there is still the fear that once a child begins to homeschool, he will not exit the home until he finishes high school and that he will not know how to get along well in the world as an adult.

The experienced homeschooling parent points out that his child is in the ballpark, in the Sunday School class, on the swim team, and works part-time. He explains that there are more opportunities for meeting

people of all ages rather than those solely in the peer group. This natural way for relationships to develop is healthier than being sequestered with one age group and then having to learn later how to interact with many ages.

The second question often asked is, "What do I use for books?" This is a reasonable question because most parents recognize that the educational program needs materials to make it work well.

Following closely on the heels of this question, though, are the shakily uttered comments, "I don't know if I can teach my child. What if I don't understand something I'm supposed to teach?" The homeschool parent informs them that there are homeschool support groups and organizations that work with parents to get them started and to help them over the rough spots. It's normal to be concerned about teaching. In fact, a good teacher thinks about that all the time. One good thing about this conversation is that the experienced homeschooling parent understands the fears and concerns. Discussions about helping children find the answers and asking the right questions becomes the topic of conversation.

Homeschool groups discuss curriculums. Topics covered are costs, book contents, illustrations, activities to accompany the material, and use of computers. They recommend asking the children about the books and materials, too. After all, they are the ones using the materials and can be counted on to talk about their likes and dislikes of different programs. Involving the children is why parents choose to homeschool.

Once parents decide that homeschooling is the way to go, they usually have to notify the local school district or the state. In Maine, first-time homeschooling parents are required to fill in a very simple form called the Notice of Intent to Homeschool. A copy of this form is sent to the State Department of Education, and a copy goes to the local superintendent in your school district. Parents should also keep a copy at home, too, in their files.

The explorers then become settlers and begin the adventure of a lifetime. Regrets will be few, and joys will be many. The family becomes closer, and members enjoy one another's company. As the parents reflect on why they began exploring homeschooling, they realize that the learning adventure they originally started has come to fruition into a happier, more close-knit family. •••

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