

# The Gold Rush

## Faith Supplement



## Striking Gold: The Impact and Legacy of the American Gold Rush

## Memory Verse

*Hebrews 13:5 (NIV):* "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"

## Relevant Scripture

*1 Timothy 6:10 (NIV):* "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

*Matthew 6:33 (NIV):* "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

## Instructional Goals

- **Understand the spiritual risks of greed:** Students will explore how the pursuit of wealth can lead to spiritual and moral pitfalls.
- **Learn the value of contentment:** Students will reflect on the importance of being content with what God has provided.
- **Recognize the provision of God:** Students will learn to identify and trust in God's provision in their lives, drawing parallels to how individuals might have experienced or missed this during the Gold Rush.

# The Great Treasure Hunt

## *Objective*

Teach students about the spiritual values of generosity, honesty, and trust in God's provision through a hands-on, interactive Gold Rush simulation, connecting these virtues to biblical teachings.

## *Activity Setup*

### 1. Materials Needed:

- Gold-colored items (could be painted rocks, gold foil-wrapped chocolates, or small gold-colored bags of treats).
- Clue cards that guide students to the next piece of "gold," some of which contain moral dilemmas or choices reflecting biblical principles.
- A map of the playing area divided into sections that could resemble historical Gold Rush sites.
- Props to create obstacles or stations, such as "Mountain Pass" or "Valley Floor," that can represent the trials and choices faced during the Gold Rush.

### 2. Preparation Steps:

- Before the activity, hide the gold items around the designated play area.
- Prepare clue cards that lead to the gold but also present the student with a choice.
- Generosity Clue: This card leads to a location where the student finds two pieces of gold and must decide whether to keep both or share with another team.
- Honesty Clue: This clue offers a shortcut to more gold, but only if they skip helping another team in need (representing a dishonest gain).
- Trust Clue: This card suggests a longer route promising greater rewards, emphasizing trust in God's provisions versus immediate gains.
- Set up the course with various obstacles and mark them on the map.

## *Prayer*

- Open with a prayer asking for guidance and contentment in life.
- Close with a prayer of thanksgiving for God's provision and a request for help to seek His kingdom above earthly treasures.

# The Great Treasure Hunt

## *Activity Guidelines*

- Divide the students into small groups, assigning each group a starting point and their first clue card.
- Explain the rules: Each group must make decisions based on the principles on the clue cards, reflecting their trust in God and their moral values.
- Groups navigate from one point to another, collecting gold and making decisions that will impact their final score not just by the quantity of gold but also by how they obtained it.

## *Biblical Integration*

- As students encounter different scenarios, relate their choices back to Scripture:
- Generosity: (Proverbs 11:24-25) Discuss how generosity leads to blessings, contrasting with the greed seen during the Gold Rush.
- Honesty: (Proverbs 12:22) Explore the long-term peace and respect that comes from honesty versus the temporary gains from deceit.
- Trust: (Proverbs 3:5-6) Emphasize trusting in God's plan rather than seeking immediate gratification.

## *Post-Activity Discussion*

- Gather students and discuss the outcomes of their choices. Ask how they felt about the decisions they made and what was challenging.
- Connect their experiences to the lives of the "49ers," who often faced similar choices between immediate gain and long-term well-being.
- Reflect on what the Bible says about the pursuit of wealth and how faith can guide us to make righteous choices.

## *Reflection*

- Conclude with a reflective exercise where students write down one lesson they learned about greed, generosity, or trust during the activity.
- Encourage students to think about how they can apply these lessons in their daily lives.