

*Treasures of the Heart**Teacher's Page - Lesson Summary*

Grade Level: High School

- Objectives:**
- **Understand** that the Early Church worked ceaselessly to offer the Body of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to all the known world.
 - **Identify** the similarities between missions of the Early Church in scripture and the present day OCMC missions.
 - **Explain** that missions are supported by treasures of finance, time and talent of the Orthodox faithful and is a response to our Heavenly Father's desire that all come to know Him.
 - **Investigate** what types of treasures you are storing up.
 - **Respond** to the needs around the world by collecting funds and giving of your time and talents for the work of the Mission Center by using the Mission Coin Boxes.

- Overview:**
- Begin the lesson with the Mission Prayer.
 - Have a student read the Bible passage and then paraphrase the verse in their own words.
 - Activity #1 - [The Second Handout](#)
 - Activity #2 - [Letter from the Field](#)
 - Activity #3 - Coin Boxes
 - Close with a prayer.

- Materials:**
- OCMC Mission Prayer
 - New Testament Bible(s)
 - Copies of all student pages
 - Coin Boxes

*Treasures of the Heart**Teacher's Page - Activities*

Pray: The Mission Prayer

Read Verse: “...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

Activity #1:

- Pass out The Second Handout.
- Use discussion prompts to encourage conversation as you read each point.

Activity #2:

- Pass out the Letter from the Field.
- Complete the letter, either by role-play, orally or in writing.
As you introduce this activity, encourage the students to see missions as 1.) a goal of the early Church 2.) an activity supported with their treasures of finance, time and talent 3.) the fulfillment of Christ's Commission to take the Good News to all people and 4.) the continuation of our rich Orthodox mission history.

Option #1 - Role Playing

Break the class into groups of three or more.

Ask each group to prepare a brief role-play which incorporates parts of the provided letter.

Some Ideas: 1) One student is St. Paul or an early missionary saint, writing at a desk and reading the letter aloud. Other students act out the letter (and their conclusion). 2) American students in 2007 read the letter and dialogue about how the Church views missions. 3) The letter is being discussed by a group of missionaries and mission supporters in heaven (past and present missionaries). 4) A news anchor telling a news story while others act out his narration or a field reporter delivering a special report, interviewing others and watching as they act out their narration.

Option #2 - Written or Oral

Read the provided part of the letter out loud and discuss.

Ask the students to complete the letter, in small groups or individually.

Activity #3: Have your class assemble the OCMC Coin Boxes and discuss how the collected funds will be used to support the ministries of the Mission Center to spread the Gospel around the world. Send the boxes home with the students and ask them to fill them and then return the boxes within a month. Extra Coin Boxes are available by emailing a request to coin-box@ocmc.org or calling 904-829-5132 or 1-877-GOFORTH (463-6784).

Conclude: Finish by asking the students to offer a silent prayer that they may be given the spiritual strength to respond to the Gospel message in their own lives.

Follow-up: Organize the class to perform role-play performances for all Sunday School classes or the entire community to celebrate that Missions are alive in the Orthodox Church.

A Prayer for Missions

*God of truth and love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
hear our prayer for those who do not know You,
that they may come to a saving knowledge of the truth
and that Your Name may be praised among all peoples of the world.*

*Sustain, inspire and enlighten Your servants
who bring them the Gospel.
Bring fresh vigor to wavering faith; sustain our faith
when it is still fragile.*

*Continually renew missionary zeal in ourselves and in the Church;
raise up new missionaries who will follow You
to the ends of the world.*

*Make us witnesses to Your goodness,
full of love, strength and faith
for Your glory
and the salvation of the entire world.*

*Through the prayers of St. Paul, St. Fotini,
Sts. Cyril and Methodios, St. Kosmas, St. Innocent,
St. Nicholas of Japan
and all the missionary saints,
have mercy on us and save us.
Amen.*

The Second Handout

"...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Matthew 6:20, 21

1. Earthly treasures are things we want on earth, but are temporary.

- They might be cars, houses, sound systems, computers, ipods, jewelry, or ?
- **Talk about your earthly treasures.**
- They are subject to destruction - moth, rust or thieves and have no permanence or durability - we cannot take them with us.

2. Heavenly treasures are acquired on earth, but last eternally.

- They might be increased piety, prayer life, development of character and moral excellence, Fruits of the Holy Spirit, love of God and people and/or sacrificial service to others.
- They are the actions that bring us close to God, make us better people and prepare us for eternal life. Heavenly treasures forever.
- **Talk about your heavenly treasures.**

3. Take these steps to lay up heavenly treasures!

- Read something that brings you closer to Christ! - Try "From Darkness to Light" by Anne Field.
- Develop your 'inner Christian' so that Christ shines from within you to all the world.
- Memorize something! Try I Cor 13 (the whole chapter!).
- Pray about something! Throughout the Bible, we hear Christ's concern that all nations know Him. *"Go - make disciples of all nations - baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit - teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you - I am with you always"*.
- Discipline yourself! The Saints tried to live according to the example of Christ; we should do the same.
- Do something! Take your Coin Box home, fill it up with your change and bring it back to Church.
- Give some treasure away! Encourage your youth group to visit a nursing home or visit shut-ins from your parish.
- After high school, go on a short-term missions trip!

"Then He said to His Disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest'."

Matthew 9:37

Missions 2007

OCMC helps Orthodox Christians respond to Christ's call to preach, teach, baptize, minister to the poor and make disciples of all nations. As the official international mission agency of SCOBA (Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops of America) the Mission Center responds on behalf of all the faithful to Christ's Great Commission.

OCMC

- Recruits and Supports Missionaries (2 yrs or more) to serve new or struggling Orthodox Churches.
- Sends Mission Teams (2 - 4 weeks) to evangelize, teach, build, minister and bond with our Orthodox brothers and sisters around the world.
- Supports 300 Mission Priests (SAMP) in 19 countries.
- Provides financial assistance through Agape Canister Grants for philanthropic needs in the mission field.

Letter from the Field

To my beloved friend and fellow laborer,

I thank my God, making mention of you in my prayers, hearing of the many things you have passed through lately. You know from my last letters how those who follow Christ are persecuted. You heard about how the towns people got so agitated at me just because I follow Christ. It was like 'mob justice'. Remember how I told you about all the new believers in Antioch? They ended up taking up a collection which really made a big difference in what we were able to do. They call themselves 'Christians' now because they follow Christ.

Did I tell you what happened in Ephesus? There was preaching, baptizing, teaching... it was all so amazing to see people accept Christ as the Son of God. The message of Christ is so intense, so fulfilling! Without Christ, human existence seems so gray, so material. Imagine living your life thinking that gods live in small silver ornaments - that they must be worshipped and receive sacrifices! I thank God that He sent His Son, Christ, to offer each of us salvation. I think again and again of the transformed lives I have seen when people 'put on Christ.' There are miracles, healings and of course, a few attacks on us, but we continue to preach the Good News of Christ.

I am planning to go back to some of the places I visited years ago. I am so glad that spreading the Good News becomes so important to people once they have become followers. There is still a lot of work to do. The entire world must know that Christ loves them and offers them peace, truth, real happiness and joy.

Sure, there are some guidelines He gives us, but you know, they are all there for our own good. There are differences between earthly and heavenly treasures. Earthly treasures are temporary and often lead us astray. I urge you to work hard to lay up the kind of treasures that are stored for all eternity. From what I know about people where one's treasures are, there their heart is also. If you are concerned with eternal things, with living the sacrificial life that Christ asks us to live and fulfilling His Will, then your heart is with Him!

{FINISH LETTER}

In His Service,
A servant of Christ