

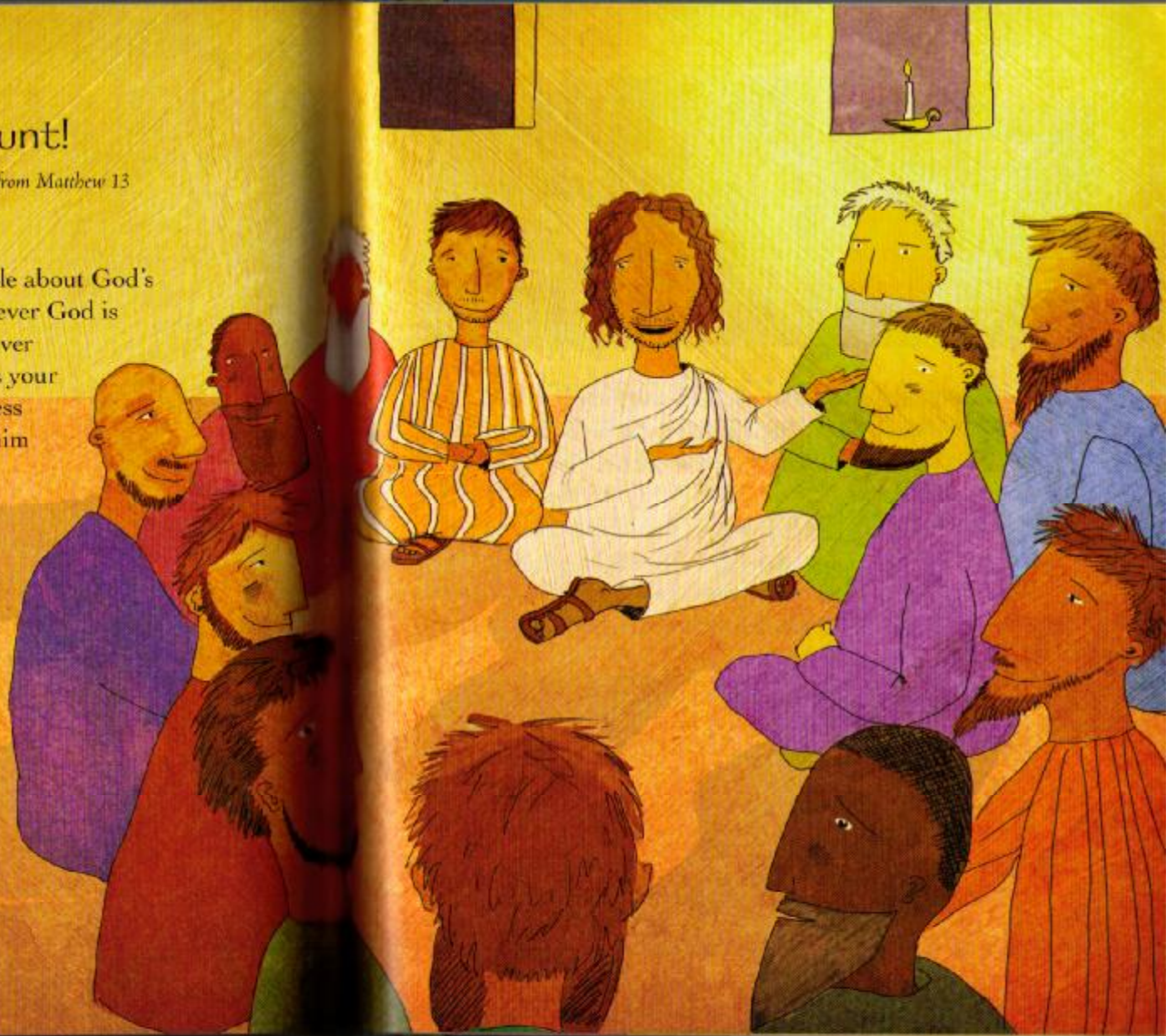
## Treasure hunt!

*The story of the hidden treasure, from Matthew 13*

ONE DAY JESUS was telling people about God's kingdom. "God's kingdom is wherever God is King," Jesus told them. "It's wherever God is in charge. It's where he fills your heart up with his Forever Happiness and you stop running away from him and you love him."

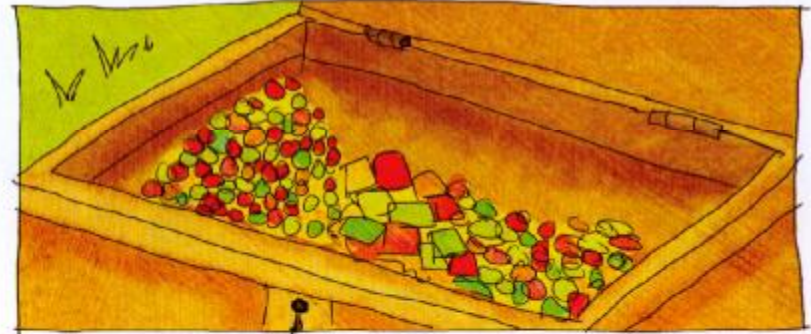
But sometimes people couldn't understand things very well. So Jesus helped them by telling them stories called "parables."

Jesus said, "God's kingdom is like a hidden treasure!" and then he told them this story ...



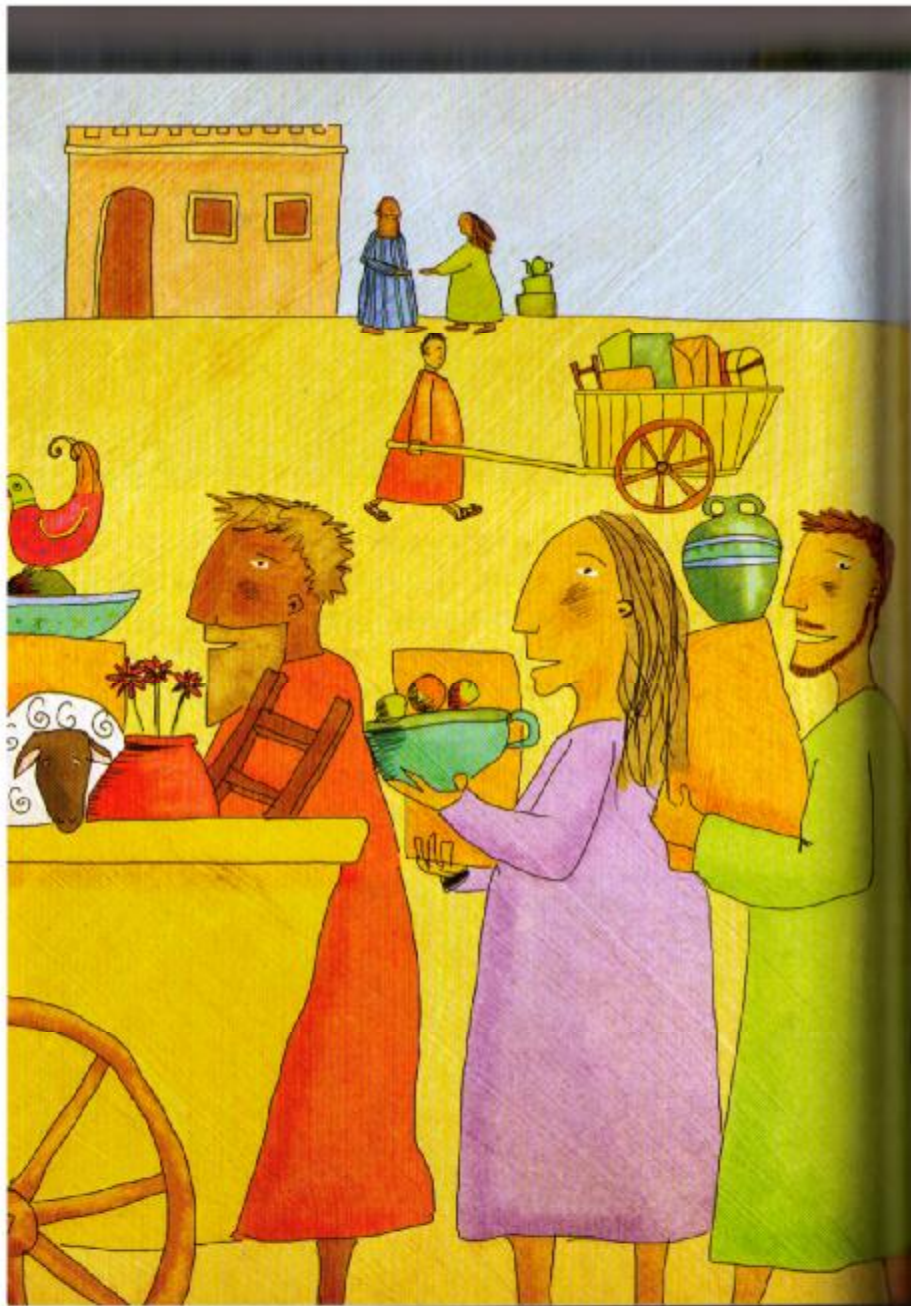


Once upon a time, there was a man working in a field, digging. So there he is digging, but what he doesn't know is that in that field there is buried treasure. So Dig, Dig, Dig ... Klink, Klank, Klonk. UH-OH! His shovel bumps into something hard. Hello, what's this? He picks it up, dusts it off — it's a chest. It's rusted and locked but — C-R-E-E-A-K — he pries it open. What he sees inside takes his breath away: beautiful, glittering, gleaming,



twinkling, sparkling, precious jewels! It's a treasure chest! He wants that treasure. He needs to get that treasure. He must have that treasure, somehow. Even if he has to sell everything he has so he can pay for it. He quickly buries the treasure again, runs home, and sells everything he has. He takes the money from the sale and goes and buys that field. Now he owns the field — and the treasure that is buried in it! He runs back and digs up the treasure again.





Jesus said, "Coming home to God is as wonderful as finding a treasure! You might have to dig before you find it. You might have to look before you see it. You might even have to give up everything you have to get it. But being where God is — being in his kingdom — that's more important than anything else in all the world. It's worth anything you have to give up!" Jesus told them. "Because God is the real treasure."

God had a treasure, too, of course. A treasure that was lost, long, long ago. What was God's treasure, his most important thing, the thing God loved best in all the world?

God's treasure was his children.

It was why Jesus had come into the world. To find God's treasure. And pay the price to win them back. And Jesus would do it — even if it cost him everything he had.

