

Parable of the boxes:

A wise man called together the leaders of two villages.

"I'm going away," he said, "but I want to give you something very important for you to take care of." He presented the leaders each with a locked, golden box. "Inside each of your boxes is a very special treasure. I want each of you to guard the treasure and help the rest of your village to respect it."

Both men felt it was a great honor to be entrusted with this task. They were excited to care for the box and its treasure. Each set his box on top of a platform where his whole village could see it.

The first leader decided that because it was such a valuable treasure, he would adorn the box with precious jewels and beautiful cloth. The rest of the villagers loved to look at it, and soon began to add their precious things to it. They even started to store their own treasures on the platform, and soon the box was accompanied by the most special gifts and treasures the villagers had to offer.

The second man thought highly of the treasure, but got a little lazy and distracted and forgot how valuable it was. He left his box on the platform and paid it little attention. Soon, young mischief makers spray painted graffiti on its sides. Others banged nails into it and posted signs. Eventually, the box and the treasure it held were forgotten. Cobwebs covered the previously brilliant surface. It was finally sold to a man who needed a step stool for his barn.

Years later, the wise man returned and asked the leaders to bring him their boxes. The first came forward and gently placed the beautifully ornamented box at the feet of the wise man, who said,

"I gave you a plain golden box and you have kept its beauty and made it even more beautiful. You have respected the treasure inside and now great things will come to you." The wise man unlocked the box and filled the man's arms with precious gems and riches for his village.

The second village leader had a difficult time tracking down his box. It had passed through so many hands and taken on such a different appearance that when he finally did find it, he didn't even recognize it. But he brought it before the wise man, ashamed and embarrassed as he laid it at the wise man's feet.

"What is this?" the wise man asked? "Where is the precious golden box I asked you to care for?" The leader confessed that he had not taken care of it the way he should have. He forgot to take care of the outside and so his villagers didn't respect it or the treasure inside. The wise man said,

"What has happened to the treasure inside, I wonder?" The lock had been broken some time ago, and as the wise man opened the box, he found what he had expected: the treasure had rusted, and neither the man nor his village received a reward.

Senior Primary: Does anyone know what the box represents?

The box = our bodies

The wise man = Heavenly Father

The leaders = Us

The villagers = our friends

The Spirit of the World = our spirits

OR explain:

The box in the parable represents our bodies. Heavenly Father gave us our bodies and put our spirits inside. We are like the leaders who have been asked to take care of our bodies so that our spirits will be protected, clean, and free. Dressing modestly and appropriately helps others to know we respect our bodies and our spirits and are grateful for Heavenly Father's gift to us.

How does this help us understand the scripture of the month?(Viewing our bodies as temples helps us understand their great value in God's eyes) Discuss, then work on memorizing if there is time.

OR Print out a piece of paper with one of the quotes below and have the children draw self-portraits. Or have them draw their neighbors and switch papers when they're finished!

"My body holds my Spirit."

**"I will keep my body clean and modest on the outside
to show I respect what is on the inside."**

Junior Primary: Bring in two toys: one which has been well taken care of, the other which hasn't. Ask which toy was valued more? How do we know? (the owner took better care of it).

What do we value? Think of something you care for a lot -- how do you treat it?

Our bodies are a gift from God and are VERY valuable--you can't buy a new one.

What can you do to take care of your body? (Wash it, exercise it, feed, it, protect it, etc.)

What we put on the outside of our bodies shows how we feel about the inside.

Use the Modesty Checklist as a reference when you ask the following questions:

[My shoulders are covered. My shirt covers my stomach. My shorts or skirt go to my knees. I don't look sloppy. My hair is combed. My clothes are not saggy, torn, or holey to fit in with a style. Labels or words on my clothes are respectful, not rude or offensive.]

Fill a bag with paper clothes: shirt, pants, shorts, skirt, hat, shoes. As you have a child pull out an article, ask what do we know about dressing modestly with this item? (I think they know more than we give them credit for). Obviously, some are just for fun and you can ask them silly questions: can we wear shoes on our head? The key words are MODEST and APPROPRIATE.