



## On your marks

You'll need: an expensive briefcase or suitcase filled with as many objects as you have children which show that the person who owns it is very wealthy: e.g. gold jewellery, cheque book, toy horse, money.

Also a Bible and Bible Study notes or (if your group is older) scrolls to represent the Torah. (Decide which you're happiest with - the idea is to symbolise the man's religious faith and willingness to 'be righteous'.)

## Get set

Give the case a build-up - make it a bit mysterious. Say that you've got a case belonging to someone here, and you'd like the group to see what they can discover about the owner. Hand out the objects so that everyone has one object. They will probably deduce that the owner is rich and 'religious'.

Dish out the articles to your group and ask them to wave their object in the air if they hear it mentioned in the story.

## Go!

Say that someone very like the owner of this case once had a hard decision to make.

There was once a young man who had everything he wanted: lovely clothes, a beautiful house, and a gorgeous girlfriend. He had ... (list all the items you have).

Now you might think that this young man was a selfish greedy person. But he wasn't! He did his best to do what God wanted. He studied God's Law and thought hard about the ten best ways to live. He never hurt anyone. He treated his girlfriend like a princess and never chatted up any other girls. He was completely honest - when he was little he found a bag of gold coins by the side of the road - he took it straight to his mum and didn't keep a single coin for himself. He always told the truth, even when it got him into trouble. And he looked after his mum and dad as they grew older and made sure they always had all they wanted.

He should have been the happiest person in the world, with his ... (list the objects). But inside he knew that something was missing. He couldn't think of a name for it, so he gave it a name from his holy books, and called it 'eternal life'. The thing that was missing in his life was 'eternal life'.

'How do I find eternal life?' he asked his friends. But they just laughed at him. 'You've got all you want in this life! You've got... (list all the objects again). Don't worry about eternal life!' The young man grew very sad, and wondered if anyone could ever tell him how to find this 'eternal life' he knew was missing in his life.



One day his servant was pouring some wine into a golden cup and said to him, 'Master, have you heard that Jesus is just leaving town? He's even cleverer than our Pharisees. He might be able to tell you how to find this eternal life you worry about.'

The young man dropped his golden cup and ran as fast as he could to try to find Jesus. Perhaps this wise man could tell him what was missing in his life!

He was only just in time! Jesus was just striding out down the road, so the young man fell down on his knees in front of Jesus and blurted out, 'Good Teacher, do you know? What do I have to do to find 'eternal life'?''

Jesus was puzzled. Was this a Pharisee trying to trick him with his question? 'Why do you call me good?' he wondered. 'You know no-one's good except God himself. Listen, you know the ten best ways to live, the Ten Commandments - don't murder, be faithful, don't steal, don't lie or cheat, respect your parents...'

The young man shook his head. That was too easy! He said, 'But Teacher, I've done all that since I was a boy.' Jesus looked at him again and this time, the young man knew that Jesus had really listened to his question and knew that he meant it: he really did want to find 'eternal life'. And Jesus was about to give him the answer! The two looked at each other in a happy glow.

'There is one thing you need to do,' said Jesus gently. 'Go and sell everything you have, your ... (list the objects again) and give the money to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me.'

The Bible has a lot of stories with happy endings, but this isn't one of them. It says, the young man's face fell, and he went away sad, because, with his... (list objects) he was very rich.

Ask the group what they think Jesus meant by 'treasures in heaven'. Do they think these are worth more or less than the 'stuff' the young man needs to give up?

What might we have to let go of in order to have something even better - to 'have treasure in heaven?' or 'follow Jesus'? (Accept all suggestions, and encourage the children to think beyond simply material 'stuff' if they can).

Is this the same stuff as adults need to let go of?

(Harder question for older groups): What might the Church have to let go of to help people who don't already know Jesus follow him?