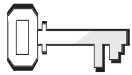


The Golden Rule



References

Matthew 7:1-12;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 298-314, 640; *Thoughts
From the Mount of
Blessing*, pp. 123-137



Memory Verse

"So in everything,
do to others what
you would have them
do to you" (Matthew 7:12, NIV).

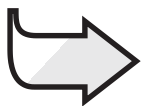


Objectives

The children will:
Know that true
Christians serve
others and don't
judge them.

Feel that everyone
is special to Jesus.

Respond by caring
about other people and trying to
understand how they feel.



The Message

Jesus helps me treat
others as I want
to be treated.

Monthly Theme

Jesus calls us to serve others.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Jesus is preaching the Sermon on the Mount, full of important lessons for people then as well as us today. Finding fault with others is condemned by Jesus. He talks about trying to remove a speck in another's eye when there is a plank in your own. He speaks of God's generous love and the rule of His kingdom: "Do to others what you would have them do to you."

This is a lesson about service.

God's generous love inspires us to treat others as we would want to be treated. This usually involves an act of kindness.

Teacher Enrichment

"The Sermon on the Mount, though given especially to the disciples, was spoken in the hearing of the multitude. . . . The disciples' place was always next to Jesus. . . . With a feeling that something more than usual might be expected, they now pressed about their Master. They believed that the kingdom was soon to be established. . . . As the people sat upon the green hillside, awaiting the words of the divine Teacher, their hearts were filled with thoughts of future glory. There were scribes and Pharisees who looked forward to the day when they should have dominion over the hated Romans, and possess the riches and splendor of the world's great empire. The poor peasants and fishermen hoped to hear the assurance that their wretched hovels, the scanty food, the life of toil, and fear of want were to be exchanged for mansions of plenty and days of ease. In place of the one coarse garment which was their covering by day, and their blanket at night, they hoped that Christ would give them the rich and costly robes of their conquerors. All hearts thrilled with the proud hope that Israel was soon to be honored before the nations as the chosen of the Lord, and Jerusalem exalted as the head of a universal kingdom.

"Christ disappointed the hope of worldly greatness. In the Sermon on the Mount He sought to undo the work that had been wrought by false education, and to give His hearers a right conception of His kingdom and of His own character" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 298, 299).

Room Decorations

This quarter is about Jesus. Use basic items to represent the times in which He lived. Create a flat-roofed house from a large appliance box; cover one classroom wall with paper and paint a green hillside. During the quarter you can add sheep, a lake, a cross, and a tomb to the mural.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness	up to 10	A. <i>All Eyes on Him!</i> B. <i>Giant Hug</i>	Bibles, eye drawing, paper, markers, crayons or pencils Bibles, 2 sheets of newspaper for each child, tape, scissors, arm pattern for "Giant Hug" (see illustration on p. 13)
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbooks Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy, He Is Our Song</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> box covered with gold paper none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	wooden board white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, or five pieces of yellow paper, tape Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>The Way of the Golden Rule</i>	strips of gold or yellow paper, marker
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Golden Spark</i>	gold or yellow paper; scissors; pens, pencils, or markers

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- large, simple drawing of an eye
- paper
- markers, crayons, or pencils

A. All Eyes on Him!

Post a large but simple drawing of an eye. Ask each child to copy it on their paper. They should color the iris the same color as theirs.

Debriefing

Ask: **What color are your eyes?** Have children share their eye drawings. **Have you ever had a speck of sawdust or something else in your eye? How did it feel?** (It hurt.) **In our lesson today we will talk some more about getting something in our eye. The lesson is about how we treat others. Let's find out how that should be from Matthew 7:12, our memory verse.** Read aloud. **Our message for today is:**



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- 2 sheets of newspaper for each child
- cellophane tape
- scissors
- arm pattern for "Giant Hug" (see illustration on p. 13)

B. Giant Hug

Give each child two sheets of newspaper and some tape. Show them how to tape the newspapers together to make a large sheet. Have them draw "giant arms" on the newspaper. (If possible, make a pattern of the arms at least 30 in. [75 cm.] wide out of heavy poster board [see illustration on page 13] for the children to trace around.) Have them cut out the arms, and walk around giving each other a gentle hug with the newspaper arms.

Debriefing

When they are seated again, ask: **What does a hug mean to you?** (Someone cares about me.) **How can you show someone else that you care about them?** (Help them; hug them; speak kindly; be respectful; pray for them, etc.) **Let's find and read our memory verse, Matthew 7:12, together.** Read aloud. **Today's lesson will tell us how Jesus wants us to treat others. And that is what our message is about:**



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Seek Ye First" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 67)

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)

"Make Me a Servant" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 126)

"Pass It On" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 130)—theme song for the month* with these words:

It only takes a spark to get a kind act going,
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing;
For Jesus made the golden rule; once I experience it,
I will be kind to everyone; I want to pass it on.



Mission

Ask: **If you did not know that Jesus gives you a happier life, would you want someone to come and tell you? (yes) Helping others learn about Jesus is treating them the way you would want to be treated.**

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.

You Need:

- box covered with gold paper (Write the "golden rule" on it.)



Offering

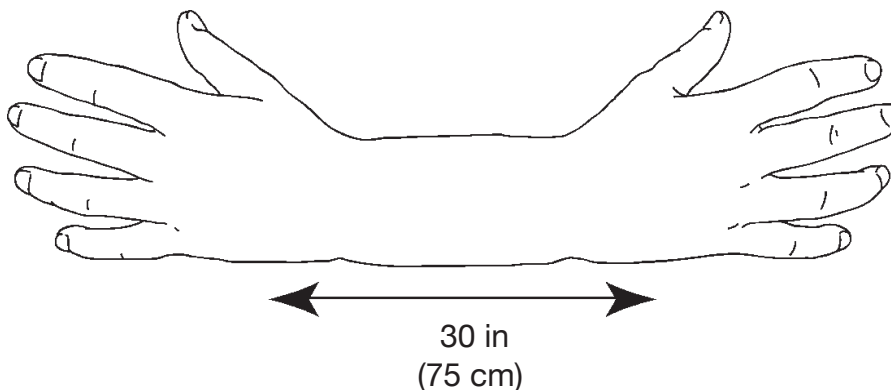
Say: **Knowing Jesus makes us happy. We share our offerings so that others will know Jesus and be happy too.**



Prayer

Where all can see, make a list of blessings the children say they would like to receive. Then, in keeping with the spirit of the golden rule, draw from that list to pray for specific people the children name.

*We recommend writing the words where all can see. These words will be used as a theme song for lessons 1-4.



2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- wooden board

Experiencing the Story

When you say: **They respond by:**
eye pointing to their eye

Say: **Close your eyes and try to imagine that you are hiking up a hill with Jesus and the disciples. You are looking for a place where many people can sit down. What does your place look like?** (There is grass, rocks, a few trees, and a wide space for lots of people.) **What kind of people are present?** (poor people, leaders, parents, children, rich people, all kinds of people) **Let's look at the scene through the eyes of a boy about your age. We will call him Ephraim.**

Have the children open their eyes as you tell the lesson story.

Read or tell the story.

Ephraim got up just before daylight and wondered if he would be pulling weeds in the garden all day. But just then his father said, "Today, we are going to spend all day listening to Jesus.

Ephraim was happy. He had heard that Jesus was the Messiah. He really wanted to hear what Jesus had to say!

Jesus was healing people by the seashore. More and more people kept crowding onto the beach. Ephraim and his family hurried to find a place. They watched as some church leaders arrived and frowned at the crowd.

Jesus began to climb the hill away from the beach. The people pushed along behind Him until they came to a quiet meadow. Jesus sat down near a tree. His disciples stayed near Him. All around Him people sat quietly as He began to

speak. The church leaders stood in the shade of a nearby tree. Sit down? Never! Their robes might get dirty. *Besides*, they thought, *we are better than the people sitting here.*

Jesus began to speak. He said, "Make the kingdom of God first in your life."

Ephraim thought, *The kingdom of God? What does that mean?*

"Don't judge other people and you won't be judged yourself."

Ephraim thought of the church leaders standing under the tree. Those men believed they were better than the poor. Ephraim wondered, *Will Jesus' kingdom include poor people? Will there be a place for me and my family?*

Then Jesus taught a lesson about finding fault and judging people.

Jesus said, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's **eye** [*Children point to eye.*], and pay no attention to the plank in your own **eye**? [*Children point to eye.*] [*Children point to the wooden board you are displaying.*] How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your **eye** [*Children point to eye.*], when all the time there is a plank in your own? [*Point to plank.*] You hypocrite (pretender), first take the plank out of your own **eye** [*Children point to eye.*], and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's **eye.**" [*Children point to eye.*] Ephraim grinned as he imagined how it would look to have a big plank in his eye. Everyone was laughing—except some of the rulers.

Jesus spoke of God's love. Then He announced a rule of His kingdom. "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."

Ephraim looked around. Some people were still smiling. Others were not.

He understood now. In Jesus' kingdom, everyone would treat everyone else

fairly. They would not find fault with each other. Instead, they would want Jesus to help them remove their own faults and help them live to serve others.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did Jesus mean when He said that we should take the plank out of our own eyes before looking for the speck in the eyes of others?** (be more concerned about my faults than someone else's)

Say: **In Jesus' story, which is bigger—the plank that is in my eye, or the speck that is in the other person's eye?** (the plank) **Who has the bigger problem, or fault?** (me)

Remember that when you judge others, you may have an even bigger fault than they do! It is like having a plank in your eye. Our message can be our guide. Let's say it together:



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

Memory Verse

Write the memory verse on the white/chalkboard or sheets of paper taped together as shown in the box:

"So in everything	do to others	what you would have	them do to you"	Matthew 7:12.
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Divide the class into five groups. Each group crouches in front of one section of the verse. As you point to the first group they

quickly stand, say their portion of the verse, and crouch down again. Continue pointing to each group in order. Have groups change places and repeat. (Adapted from Christy Weir, ed., *The Big Book of Bible Games* [Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 1996], p. 64.)

Bible Study

Ask the children to find the Bible texts and answer the following questions (adults assist as needed):

1. How did Jesus treat people, including His enemies? (Matthew 5:44)
2. Why did Jesus speak so firmly to some of the people who were listening? (Matthew 7:4, 5)
3. How does God treat us when we pray to Him? (Matthew 7:7-11)
4. Since we are part of God's family, how will we treat everyone we meet? (Matthew 7:12; try to say at least some of this from memory.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel about a God who treats you so well?** (I love and appreciate Him, and want to make Him happy by treating others as He treats me.)

Is it always easy to treat others kindly? Why? Who will help you to treat others well, even when you don't feel like doing so? Let's answer with today's message:



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

You Need:

- white/chalkboard
- markers/chalk or
- five pieces of yellow paper
- tape

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- strips of gold or yellow paper 1 inch x 6 inches (2 cm x 15 cm)
- marker

The Way of the Golden Rule

Give each child a “golden” strip of paper. Say: **This is a golden rule. Let’s write the golden rule on it: “Do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12, NIV).**

Let’s think about that as we look at some situations.

Prepare some examples from the children’s everyday life. Give them an opportunity to role-play and apply the golden rule to each situation. Examples:

1. A new boy joins the Pathfinder Club. He is shy and doesn’t know anyone. How can you apply the golden rule to help him feel welcome and accepted?
2. Someone is gossiping about one of your friends. How can you apply the golden rule?
3. Someone, who is not good at sports, is chosen to be on your team.

The team is unhappy about the choice because it reduces their chance of winning. How can you apply the golden rule? As time allows, continue by making your own suggestions.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you ever been unkind to someone?** (yes; can’t remember, etc.)

Why is it sometimes hard to live by the golden rule? (Because we are naturally selfish. That is why we need Jesus’ help.)

Who will help you do what is not natural for you to do?

Say: **Let’s read Philippians 4:13.** (I can do everything through him [Christ] who gives me strength.)

Ask: **What have you learned today about the golden rule?** (Accept answers.)
How will it change the way you treat your friends this week?

Say: **Let’s say our message together:**



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Golden Spark

Ask the children: **What is a spark?** (something small, bright, and burning that comes from a fire, or could start a fire). Help the children draw a spark on the golden or yellow paper and cut it out.

Have each child hold their spark and sit in a circle. Teach them the following song ("Pass It On" [*He Is Our Song*, No. 130]) with new words (see below).

As they sing, have them pass the golden sparks they made to the child on their right and receive another spark from the child sitting on their left. Keep singing until all the children have their own sparks back.

It only takes a spark to get a kind act going,
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing;
For Jesus made the golden rule; once I experience it,
I will be kind to everyone;
I want to pass it on.

Ask the children to write on their spark the name of a person for whom they will do something special and unexpected in the coming week.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you thought of something kind that you will do for the person whose name is written on your spark?** (yes; not yet, etc.)

Who has plans? (Accept responses.)

What do you plan to do? (Accept responses.)

What will Jesus help you to do all week? Say: **Let's say our message together.**



JESUS HELPS ME TREAT OTHERS AS I WANT TO BE TREATED.

Closing

Invite the children to form a prayer circle. Pray that God will help them treat others the way they want to be treated.

You Need:

- gold or yellow paper
- scissors
- pens, pencils, or markers

The Golden Rule

References

Matthew 7:1-12;
The Desire of Ages,
 pp. 298-314, 640;
*Thoughts From the
 Mount of Blessing*,
 pp. 123-137

Memory Verse

“So in everything,
 do to others what
 you would have
 them do to you”
 (Matthew 7:12,
 NIV).

The Message

Jesus helps me
 treat others as I
 want to be treated.

Sarah frowned. The other girls in the lunchroom were pointing at her and laughing. Why were they always so unkind? Then the thought came to her: What would Jesus do? And she looked right at those girls and smiled.

Jesus taught that we should treat others as we want to be treated. Imagine that a young boy named Ephraim is listening to Jesus speak.

Ephraim got up just before daylight. Would he be pulling weeds in the garden today? Then his father spoke. “Today we will go to listen to Jesus.”

Ephraim was happy. He had heard that Jesus was the Messiah. And he really wanted to hear what Jesus had to say!

Jesus was healing people by the seashore, and the beach was filling up with people. Ephraim and his family hurried to find a place. They watched as some church

leaders arrived. The church leaders frowned at the crowd.

Jesus began to climb the hill away from the beach. The people pushed along behind Him until they came to a quiet meadow. Jesus sat down near a tree. His disciples pressed through the crowd to be near Him. All around Him people sat quietly as He began to speak. The church leaders stood in the shade of a nearby tree.

Jesus spoke calmly, but all could hear. “Make the kingdom of God first in your life.”

Ephraim thought, *The kingdom of God? What does that mean?*

“Don’t judge other people and you won’t be judged yourself.”

Ephraim thought of the church leaders who believed they were better than others. He wondered, *Could it be possible that God cares about humble people? Is there any place in Jesus’ kingdom for me and my family?*

Then Jesus taught a lesson about finding fault and judging people.

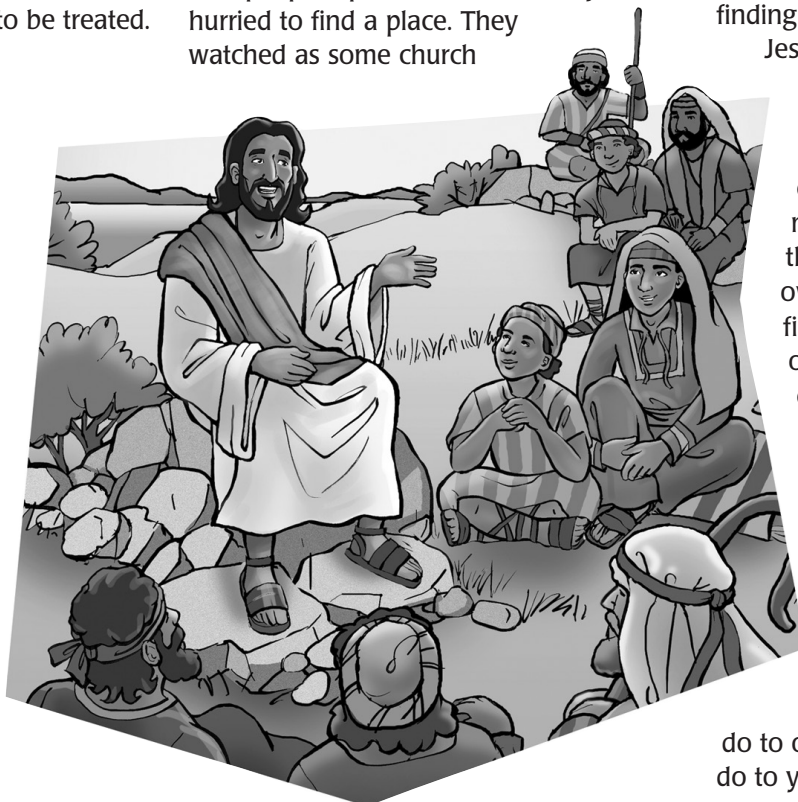
Jesus said, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye, and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take out the speck,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own? You hypocrite (pretender), first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

Ephraim grinned as he imagined how it would look to have a big plank of wood in his eye. Everyone was laughing—except some of the rulers.

Jesus spoke of God’s love.

Then He announced a rule of His kingdom. “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Now Ephraim understood. In Jesus’



kingdom, everyone would treat everyone else fairly. They would not find fault with each other. Instead, they would want Jesus to remove their faults. People would live to serve others.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, with your family, climb a hill and read your lesson story. Imagine that you are sitting on the hill on which Jesus sat as He preached His sermon.
- Read Matthew 7:12 together.
- Sing together "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129). Pray that Jesus will help you not to judge others.

Sunday

- Read Matthew 7:1, 2 for family worship. Then hold a family court as follows: Choose a judge. Choose a person to be on trial (defendant) and the person bringing the charges (plaintiff). The plaintiff makes up a story about the defendant (they didn't do the dishes, etc.). The defendant must tell why they did or didn't do what they are accused of. The judge strikes the gavel, says Matthew 7:1, then says, "Next case."
- We need to judge between right and wrong, but leave judging others to God. Read 1 Samuel 16:7 together.

Monday

- Read Matthew 7:3-5 with your family. Show with your hands the sizes of a speck and a plank.
- Draw around a ruler on paper. Add the different measures. Write your memory verse on it. Then cut it apart after each word. Mix the pieces, then put them in order. Use this each day this week.

Tuesday

- Together with your family, read and discuss how God treats people (Matthew 7:7-11).
- Feel a stone and a piece of bread about the same size. What is the difference? Would your parents give you a stone when you are hungry? Why would God do any less? Read Matthew 7:11 again.

- Think of someone you have treated unfairly. How do you think that person felt? How did you feel? Discuss this with your family.
- Review your memory verse.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Matthew 7:12 for worship. Read about the same idea in Luke 6:31.
- Have you done a kind act for the person whose name you wrote on the spark you made in Sabbath School? (Or make a spark-shaped cut-out and color it yellow and use it. Write on it the name of someone for whom you will do something kind.)
- Say your memory verse without help.

Thursday

- With your family, read in the Bible of someone who treated another person kindly. See 2 Kings 5:1-5 and Luke 10:30-35.
- Now read about someone who treated another person unkindly: Genesis 37:17-24; Matthew 18:23-34.
- How do you want to treat people? Say your memory verse in your own words.

Friday

- Use a plank and some sawdust as you tell your lesson story to your family at worship. At the end, say the memory verse together.
- Ask your family to write on a paper the names of five people they have treated fairly this week.
- Read Ephesians 4:32. Make a small "bonfire" from some wooden sticks (no real fire). Place the paper spark that you made on the "bonfire" as you sing "Pass It On" (*He Is Our Song*, No. 130) with the following words:
It only takes a spark to get a kind act going, /
And soon all those around can warm up in its glowing; /
For Jesus made the golden rule; once I experience it, /
I will be kind to everyone; /
I want to pass it on.