

The Golden Rule

Matthew 7:12; 18:21-35

October
Week 2

2



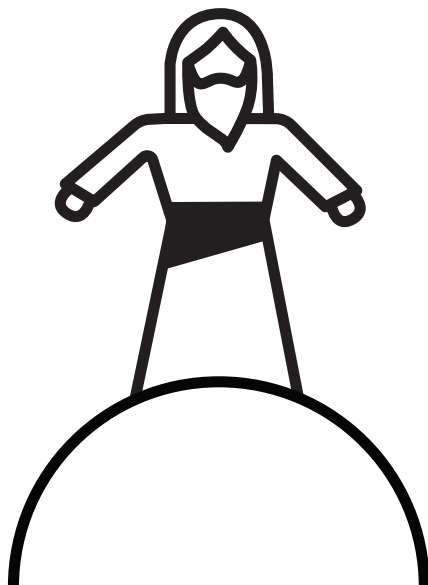
Teacher Background

What Happens: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says to treat others the way we want to be treated. This adage is known as the Golden Rule. Later, Jesus illustrates the Golden Rule with a story about a debtor who is forgiven a huge debt but won't forgive a small debt.

Why It Matters: This point, known as the Golden Rule, is commonly advised today even among unchurched kids. Chances are your kids have heard it before; but living it out is a different story. It's a lot easier to say it than do it! Use this lesson to help kids see the value of living according to the Golden Rule.

Think About: What's one thing someone has done for you that meant a lot to you? Do it for someone else!

Pray and ask God to open your kids' eyes to the love and grace he has treated them with, and pray that seeing how God has treated them will inspire them to treat others likewise.



Point

Treat others the way you want to be treated.



Key Verse

"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets."

Matthew 7:12

QUICK TIP

Think back to your childhood. How did Sunday school teachers or school teachers treat you? What stuck with you as positive, loving interactions? negative ones? Thinking about how you liked being treated as a kid—or didn't like being treated—can help you become a better Sunday school teacher.

This Lesson at a Glance



WHAT HAPPENS	KIDS DISCOVER
CHECK IN Connect about the week.	The importance of friendships at church.
SET THE STAGE Share about a topic related to the lesson.	The connection between their world and the Bible.
EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE Borrow and lend pompoms.	What it means to treat others with kindness and respect.
HANDS-ON DISCOVERY Observe a law of physics and apply it to how to treat others.	Oftentimes, what we give is what we get in return.
PLAY A GAME Play a mirroring game.	The way you treat others is often mirrored back at you.
PRAY TOGETHER Discover what the word <i>hallelujah</i> means, while praising and clapping for God.	God gives good gifts, and praise is a gift we can give back to God!

EASY SUPPLIES

- o Bible
- o pompoms (1 large handful for every 2 kids)
- o ping-pong balls or beach balls (1 per child)
- o upbeat music (optional)
- o music player (optional)
- o worship music
- o media player



CHECK IN (5 MINUTES)

- Thank kids for coming and have kids show their goofiest faces to each other.
- Make announcements and collect offering.
- Celebrate any birthdays by having kids say “Happy birthday” in a funny voice.

ASK: Tell about something you saw this week that you thought was beautiful. Share your own quick story first, and then let everyone share! For groups of more than six, have kids share in pairs so everyone has a turn to talk.



SET THE STAGE (5 MINUTES)

SAY: The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus’ most famous sermon! It’s called the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus stood up on a hill—or mountain—to preach. In that sermon, Jesus said to ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.**

ASK: What’s something you wish someone would do for you this week? Share your own quick story first, then let everyone share!

SAY: It’s usually easier to think about what we’d like others to do for us than to think about nice things we could do to help someone else. Maybe that’s why Jesus said ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.** Let’s find out more!



EXPERIENCE THE BIBLE (10 MINUTES)



SUPPLIES

- Bible
- pompoms (1 large handful for every 2 kids)



BORROW AND LEND

SAY: Let’s learn about one part of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount today. Jesus had a lot of important things to teach people who were there—and us, too!



Read Matthew 7:12.

SAY: Later, Jesus told a story that showed what he meant. Jesus wanted people to understand what it looks like to ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.** He said we should forgive people. He said it’s kind of like this.

Imagine I’m a king [or queen]. I have so much money that I can lend some out! These pompoms will be money.

Have half of your kids come up for a loan—a large handful of pompoms.

SAY: Now some of you have money, too! But the kids who don’t have money also need some. If you have money, find someone who has none and give that person *one* pompom.

Allow time until everyone has at least one pompom.

SAY: But you need to buy food and clothes, so you have to spend your money at the market.

Choose an adult or teen helper or an older kid to be the shopkeeper at a marketplace. Kids will give all their money to the shopkeeper.

SAY: When I let you borrow that money, it was just a loan! I wasn't giving it to you forever! So now it's time to repay the loan. I want my money back!

Go to the kids you lent money to and demand they pay you back.

SAY: What? You don't have any money? Well, that's what happened in the story Jesus told. Let's see what happened in Jesus' story to the man who couldn't pay back the loan.

 Read Matthew 18:26-27.

SAY: OK, I'll forgive your debt. That means you don't owe me anything—ever. But remember, you also lent some money. Let's see what Jesus said happened to the man.

 Read Matthew 18:28-30.

Have kids who borrowed money from you demand the one pompom they lent to another child. Then have them send all those kids to stand in the corner.

TALK ABOUT IT

Gather everyone together.

ASK: How do you feel about how you were treated in this story?

ASK: How would you have liked to be treated?

ASK: What can Jesus' story help us understand about how to treat people?

SAY: I treated the people I lent money to with kindness and forgiveness. But then they turned around and treated the rest of you in a different way! That's not fair!

Let's think of other ways you can ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.**

ASK: How would you want to be treated if you forgot to bring your lunch or lunch money to school?

ASK: How would you want to be treated if you borrowed something from a friend, then broke it by accident?

ASK: How would you want to be treated if you said something mean but then said you were sorry?

SAY: It's easy to think about how we want to be treated. We want people to show us kindness and forgiveness!

The guy in our story didn't treat others that way, even when he was forgiven. But with Jesus' help, you can ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.** So the next time you're not sure what to do, just think about how you'd like to be treated!



CELEBRATE SMALL

With fewer kids, you can make an even bigger impact by swapping out pompoms for something that has even more significance, such as real coins!



SUPPLIES

- ping-pong balls or beach balls (1 per child)

EASY PREP

- If you have posters or other decorative pieces hanging on the walls, take them down and tuck them safely away for the day.



QUICK TIP

If your class skews younger, don't worry about kids catching all the sciency connections. Use a ball as you demonstrate what you mean by the force we use when throwing makes a difference in the force with which the ball comes back.

OBSERVE A LAW OF PHYSICS IN THROWING A BALL

SAY: ➡ **Treat others the way you want to be treated** is often called the Golden Rule. This rule is so true that we can even see it in the physical world around us. Let's test a law of physics that'll also show us the Golden Rule in motion!

- Give each child a ball.
- Have kids spread out around the room and stand 10 to 15 feet away from a wall space without windows.
- Allow a few minutes for everyone to throw the ball at the wall with varied amounts of force and noting what they observe about how the ball bounces back to them depending on how it's thrown.
- Allow a few more minutes for everyone to drop the ball, sometimes just letting go and other times throwing it hard at the ground. Kids can observe how high the ball bounces back toward their faces based on how it's dropped.
- Then allow a few more minutes for partners to throw a ball back and forth to each other, applying a force that mimics the force of the throw they received.

TALK ABOUT IT

SAY: You might have thought you were just tossing a ball around, but you were also playing with science. Who knew throwing a ball was so sciency!

One law of science basically tells us if an object in motion—like the ball—hits another object—like the wall—the force the ball was moving with will be the force it bounces back with. Or at least pretty close!

ASK: How did you see this in action when you were tossing the ball against the wall or the floor?

ASK: How does that remind you of what happens when you treat others with kindness or when you're mean?

SAY: A similar thing happens in how we treat each other, and that's where Jesus' Golden Rule comes in.

ASK: What did you notice when you tossed the ball with your partner and tried to return the ball the same way it was thrown to you?

ASK: Tell about a time you did something nice and got treated nicely in return. Share your own example first.

SAY: Often the way we treat others will be the way they react to us, so treat others the way you want to be treated.



PLAY A MIRRORING GAME

SAY: Today we're talking about how Jesus tells us to ➡ **treat others the way we want to be treated**. A quick game of Back Atcha will help us explore that!

- Form pairs. If you have an uneven number, you can partner with a child. Have partners stand facing one another about 3 feet apart.
- The older partner will be the "Actor." The other person will be the "Mirror."
- The Actor will silently make motions the Mirror must duplicate. Facial expressions, calisthenics, and animal impressions all have to be replicated as closely as possible.
- If you'd like, play upbeat music while kids play.
- After about 60 seconds, announce partners will switch roles.
- After playing another 60 seconds, ask kids to take a seat.

SUPPLIES

- upbeat music (optional)
- music player (optional)

TALK ABOUT IT

SAY: Great job! I can't tell you how much fun it was watching you do that!

ASK: Those of you who were Actors first: What, if anything, would you have done differently if you'd known your Mirrors would have the chance to get back at you, making you do the same things?

ASK: Those of you who were Mirrors first: How did it feel to then become an Actor and put your Mirror through a workout?

ASK: Tell about a time you did something mean and someone got back at you. Share your own age-appropriate story first.

SAY: The way you treat others is often mirrored back at you. That's why Jesus helps us ➡ **treat others the way we want to be treated**.



ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A PURPOSE (10 MINUTES)



SUPPLIES

- “Sermon on the Mount: The Golden Rule” Activity Page (1 per child) (page 123)
- “Sermon on the Mount: The Golden Rule” Coloring Page (1 per younger child) (page 124)
- dice
- pompoms (4 each of 4 colors per child)
- crayons

QUICK TIP

For younger kids, provide the Coloring Page and crayons as an alternative.

SAY: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught the Golden Rule: ➡ **Treat others the way you want to be treated.** Let’s see how you treat each other in this game.

Distribute the activity pages, pompoms, and dice. Kids will gather and follow the rules to play a board game that’s similar to Sorry! (If you have more than six kids, form two groups.)

ASK: When you had the chance to send someone back, did it matter if they’d sent you back before? Tell me more.

ASK: Now think about real life. How does the way people have treated you affect the way you treat them?

SAY: We often treat people the way they treated us. So if someone sent you back to start, maybe you wanted to send them back! But Jesus said to ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.** Even if people haven’t been nice to you, you can treat them the way you *wish* they treated you.

Give each child who played a set of pompoms to take with them so they can play at home using their own dice.



PRAY TOGETHER (5 MINUTES)



SAY: Today we heard Jesus’ teaching about how to ➡ **treat others the way you want to be treated.**

ASK: What’s something nice someone has said about you? Give a short example from your own life, then welcome a few responses. If kids struggle to think of examples, shower the group with a few compliments right now.

SAY: Like your friends praised you, we can praise God and thank him for forgiving us. You see, prayer isn’t just about asking God for things. We’re also praying when we’re praising!

The word *hallelujah* means “God be praised.” We sing that word in praise songs, and we read it a lot in the Bible. Today, as we pray, let’s shout “Hallelujah!” and say nice things about God.

Everyone crouch down low. Now we’ll praise our way around the room. When it’s your turn, pop up and praise God. You could shout things like “God is great!” “God helped me feel better!” or “God made elephants!” Then crouch down again. If you aren’t sure what to say, just shout, “Hallelujah!”

After someone praises God, we’ll all clap and shout, “Hallelujah!” Then it’ll be the next person’s turn.

Shout the first praise, and have kids respond with “Hallelujah!” Then motion for the next person to go. Direct kids when it’s their turn. If time allows, “popcorn praise” around the room again!

SAY: We praise God for all these things. And we praise God for loving us. **Hallelujah!**

