

The Good Samaritan

Sunday School Lesson for 3rd to 5th Grade, 45–60 minutes

Main point: A neighbor is anyone who needs help, and God wants me to show mercy, even when it costs me something.

Bible passage: Luke 10:25–37. Read it before class.

Memory verse: "And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." *Luke 10:27 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), paper and a pencil for each child, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, two coins, and one take-home sheet for each child.

Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Walk By or Stop? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "walk by" and the other side "stop and help." Read each situation, and kids walk to the side that shows what they would want to do. 1) A kid drops all their books in the hall and you are late for class. 2) A new kid is sitting alone at lunch, and your friends are calling you over. 3) Your little brother can't reach his cup, and you are in the middle of a game. 4) A classmate who was mean to you yesterday falls and scrapes a knee. Ask: *Which one was hardest? Why?* Say: "Jesus told a story about three men who saw someone in trouble. Only one of them stopped."

2. Bible story: Who Is My Neighbor? (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Luke 10. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

The lawyer's question. A lawyer, a man who knew God's law well, stood up and **tempted** Jesus, which here means he tested Him (Luke 10:25). **Look up Luke 10:25.** ("Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" **Inherit** means to receive.) Jesus asked him what the law said (10:26). The lawyer answered with two commands from the law: love God with everything you are (Deuteronomy 6:5), and love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus said, "Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live" (10:28). **Look up Luke 10:29.** The lawyer was "willing to justify himself," which means he wanted to prove he was right. So he asked, "And who is my neighbour?"

The man on the road. Jesus told a story. A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves. They **stripped him of his raiment** (took his clothes), wounded him and left him half dead (10:30). **Look up Luke 10:31.** A priest came down that way. When he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. Then a Levite, a helper at God's house (Numbers 3:6), came to the place, looked at him, and passed by on the other side too (10:32).



The Samaritan. Most Jews and Samaritans did not get along at all. **Look up John 4:9.** ("For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.") **Look up Luke 10:33.** A Samaritan came where the man was, and when he saw him, he had **compassion**, which means he felt deep pity and wanted to help. He went to him and **bound up his wounds** (bandaged them), pouring in oil and wine. He set him on his own **beast** (his own animal; the Bible does not say what kind), brought him to an inn and took care of him (10:34). **Look up Luke 10:35.** The next day (**on the morrow**) he gave two pence to the **host**, the man in charge of the inn, and promised to pay back whatever more he spent. **Hold up the two coins.** A penny was a worker's pay for one day (Matthew 20:2), so two pence was about two days' pay.

Jesus' question. Jesus asked which of the three was a neighbor to the man who fell among the thieves (10:36). **Look up Luke 10:37.** The lawyer said, "He that shewed mercy on him." Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise." Jesus turned the question around: not "Who is my neighbor?" but "Will I be a neighbor?"

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

Thinking questions (no single right answer; let kids talk)

1. The lawyer wanted to know who he had to love (10:29). Why do you think he asked that?
2. The priest and the Levite both saw the man (10:31–32). What reasons might people give for walking by someone who needs help?
3. Helping cost the Samaritan his oil and wine, his time, his seat on his animal and two days' pay (10:34–35). What does helping cost you sometimes?
4. Jesus made the hero someone the listeners did not get along with (John 4:9). Who is hard for you to be kind to?
5. How can a kid be a good neighbor at school, at home and at church this week?

Recall questions

1. Where was the man going? (*From Jerusalem to Jericho, Luke 10:30*)
2. What did the Samaritan pour on the wounds? (*Oil and wine, 10:34*)
3. Who showed mercy? (*The Samaritan, 10:33, 10:37*)

4. Memory verse: Erase a Word (5 minutes)

Explain the old words: **thou shalt** means you must, **thy** means your, **soul** means all of who you are inside, **neighbour** is the old spelling of neighbor, and **as thyself** means as much as you love yourself. Read the verse on the board together. Erase two words and read it again. Keep erasing two words at a time until the board is empty and the class can say it alone. Then kids say it to a partner.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The Samaritan showed mercy to a man who could not help himself. God did that for us. God loves you. The Bible says: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means all of us have done wrong, and none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, which means God came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day (1 Corinthians 15:3–4). How do we obey the gospel? 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means to turn away from sin; our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are **buried with Jesus in baptism**, all the way under the water, in Jesus' name. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we come up to live a new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives the words (Acts 2:4). The Bible calls this being born again (John 3:5)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: do one kind thing for someone who can't pay you back, and one for someone who is hard to be kind to.

6. Activity: Bible Look-Up Race (10–15 minutes)

Kids work in pairs with one Bible. Read a reference and a question. The first pair to find the verse and read the answer out loud wins the point.

1. Luke 10:25: What did the lawyer want to inherit? (*Eternal life*)
2. Luke 10:26: What did Jesus ask the lawyer? (*"What is written in the law? how readest thou?"*)
3. Leviticus 19:18: What does this verse in the law say to do? (*Love thy neighbour as thyself*)
4. Luke 10:30: What did the thieves take from the man? (*His raiment, his clothes*)
5. Luke 10:32: Who came next after the priest? (*A Levite*)
6. Luke 10:34: Where did the Samaritan take the man? (*To an inn*)
7. Luke 10:35: How much did he give the host? (*Two pence*)
8. Luke 10:37: What did Jesus tell the lawyer to do? (*"Go, and do thou likewise"*)

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for showing us mercy in Jesus when we could not help ourselves. Open our eyes to see people who need help, and give us kind hearts to stop and help them, even when it costs us something. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks, "Should I stop and help a stranger?": answer simply and safely. Kids help best by telling a trusted grown-up right away: a parent, a teacher or a police officer. Grown-ups can do the stopping. Kids can be good neighbors every day by helping and including the people around them.

