

The Good Samaritan

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Don't ask how few people you have to love. Be a neighbor to anyone who needs mercy, because God showed mercy to us.

Bible passage: Luke 10:25–37. Students read it out loud themselves, with Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.

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)* and "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." *1 John 3:18 (KJV)*

You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.

Before class: read Luke 10:25–37, Deuteronomy 6:5, Leviticus 19:18 and John 4:9. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses.

1. Opening game: Where Do You Draw the Line? (5–10 minutes)

Put a long strip of tape on the floor. One end is "I'd help for sure," the other end is "I'd probably walk by." Read each situation, and students stand where they honestly would. 1) Your best friend needs help with homework. 2) A kid you don't know drops their lunch tray. 3) A kid who teases you is left out of the group project. 4) Helping someone means you miss the start of your favorite game. Ask: *What made you move toward "walk by"? Was it the person, or what it would cost you?* Say: "A lawyer once tried to get Jesus to draw a line around who he had to love. Jesus answered with a story."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: Luke 10:25–29. Then have two students read **Deuteronomy 6:5** and **Leviticus 19:18**, the two parts of the law the lawyer was quoting. Old words in this part:

- **tempted him** (10:25): tested Him, trying to trap Him with a question
- **inherit eternal life** (10:25): receive life forever with God
- **how readest thou?** (10:26): how do you read it? What does it say to you?
- **this do, and thou shalt live** (10:28): do this, and you will live
- **willing to justify himself** (10:29): wanting to prove that he was right

Read out loud: Luke 10:30–37. Students take turns, a verse or two each. Old words in this part:

- **fell among thieves** (10:30): was attacked by robbers; **stripped him of his raiment**: took his clothes; **half dead**: badly hurt and near death
- **by chance** (10:31): it just happened; **passed by on the other side**: went past on the far side of the road
- **a Levite** (10:32): from the tribe of Levi, a helper at God's house (Numbers 3:6)
- **a certain Samaritan** (10:33): a man from Samaria. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9). **Compassion**: deep pity that moves you to help
- **bound up his wounds** (10:34): bandaged his injuries; **his own beast**: his own riding animal (the Bible does not say what kind)
- **on the morrow** (10:35): the next day; **two pence**: two coins (a penny was a day's pay for a worker, Matthew 20:2); **the host**: the man in charge of the inn
- **whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee** (10:35): whatever more you spend, I will pay you back when I return
- **shewed mercy** (10:37): showed mercy; **do thou likewise**: you do the same

Tell this in your own words: Notice the question Jesus asks at the end (10:36). The lawyer asked, "Who is my neighbour?", as if some people count and some don't. Jesus asked, "Which of these three **was** neighbour unto him?" The question is not who deserves my love, but whether I will act like a neighbor. The lawyer answered, "He that shewed mercy on him" (10:37).

3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. The lawyer already knew the right answer (10:27–28). Why do you think he kept asking questions? Do we ever know the right thing and look for a way out of it?
2. The priest and the Levite served at God's house, but they passed by (10:31–32). What does that teach about the difference between knowing about God and loving like God?
3. The Samaritan helped someone from a people who would have nothing to do with him (John 4:9). Who is the hardest person for you to show mercy to?
4. Count what helping cost the Samaritan (10:34–35). What does showing mercy cost you at school, at home or online?
5. Jesus changed "Who is my neighbour?" into "Who was a neighbour?" (10:29, 10:36). How does that change the way you look at people?
6. 1 John 3:18 says to love "in deed and in truth," not just in words. What is one deed you could do this week?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words: **thou shalt** means you must, **thy** means your, **as thyself** means as much as you love yourself (Luke 10:27). **Not in word, neither in tongue** means not just by talking; **in deed and in truth** means by what we really do (1 John 3:18).

Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Luke 10:27 this week; keep working on 1 John 3:18 next week too.



5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "The man on the road could not help himself. He needed someone to come to him. The Bible says God did that for us: 'But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Romans 5:8, KJV). **Commendeth** means shows. God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: '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) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-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 utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."

Pray with the students, 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.

6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Who is "on the side of the road" in my life right now: someone left out, hurting or needing help?
 2. What is keeping me from stopping for them, and what would it cost me to help?
 3. Write a short prayer asking God for compassion and courage to show mercy in deed, not just in words.
- If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: do one real act of mercy for someone who can't pay you back, and don't tell anyone at school about it.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for coming to us with mercy when we could not help ourselves. Forgive us for the times we walked by. Give us eyes to see people who are hurting and hearts that stop to help, in deed and in truth. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks, "Should I stop and help a stranger?": answer honestly and wisely. Showing mercy never means putting yourself in danger. With strangers, the best help is often getting a trusted adult or calling for help right away. Most chances to be a neighbor are with the people you already see every day.

