Preschool–Grade 6

The Golden Rule

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

Main point: Treat others the way you want to be treated. God is good to us, so we do good to others first.
Bible passage: Matthew 7:7–12. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." *Matthew 7:12 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each child (or one for every two children), a small rock, a piece of bread, a whiteboard or large paper, a marker, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the board.

1. Opening game: Want It or Not? (5–10 minutes)

Name one side of the room "I'd want that" and the other side "I wouldn't want that." Read each one, and kids walk to their side: 1) Someone lets you go first in line. 2) Someone laughs when you get an answer wrong. 3) Someone helps you carry a heavy bag. 4) Someone tells your secret. 5) Someone says, "Good job!" Then ask: *If you wouldn't want it done to you, should you do it to someone else? And if you would want it, who could you do it for this week?* Say: "Jesus gave us one sentence that answers all of these."

2. Bible story: Jesus Teaches the Golden Rule (15 minutes)

Kids open their Bibles to Matthew 5. When you reach a **Look up** line, a child finds the verse and reads it out loud. Tell the rest in your own words.

Where Jesus taught. Look up Matthew 5:1–2. Jesus saw the multitudes (the big crowds). He went up into a mountain and sat down, and His disciples came to Him, and He taught them. Matthew 5, 6 and 7 are all one long teaching. People call it the Sermon on the Mount.

Ask, seek, knock. Look up Matthew 7:7. Jesus said to ask, seek and knock. **Look up Matthew 7:8.** Every one that asks receives, he that seeks finds, and to him that knocks it shall be opened. Jesus wants us to keep coming to God in prayer.

Bread or a stone? *(Hold up the rock and the bread.)* **Look up Matthew 7:9–10.** Jesus asked: if a son asks his father for bread, will he give him a stone? If he asks for a fish, will he give him a **serpent** (a snake)? Of course not! **Look up Matthew 7:11.** Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" **Being evil** means that people are not perfect; everyone sins. But even people who sin give good gifts to their children. God is perfectly good, so how much more will He give good things!

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

The Golden Rule. Look up Matthew 7:12. The verse starts with **Therefore**, which means "so" or "because of this." Because God is so good to us, we should be good to others. **Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you** means whatever you want people to do for you. **Do ye even so to them** means do the same for them. Notice that Jesus said *do*: not only "don't be mean," but go and do the good thing first. **The law and the prophets** means the Old Testament Scriptures, the part of God's Word written before Jesus came. Jesus said this one sentence sums up how they teach us to treat people. People today call Matthew 7:12 the Golden Rule. That name isn't in the Bible, but the words are Jesus' own.

The people were amazed. Look up Matthew 7:28–29. When Jesus finished, the people were **astonished at his doctrine** (amazed at His teaching), because He taught them as one having **authority** (the right to say what is true), and not like their usual teachers, the scribes.

3. Questions to ask (10 minutes)

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

1. Jesus said to ask, seek and knock (7:7). What is something you can ask God for this week?
2. Why do you think Jesus used bread and a stone, and a fish and a snake, to teach about God (7:9–10)?
3. Matthew 7:12 starts with "Therefore." How does knowing God is good to you help you be good to others?
4. It's easy to be kind to people who are kind to us. What about someone who isn't nice to you? What would the Golden Rule do?
5. What is one thing you want people to do for you? Who could you do it for first?

Recall questions

1. Where did Jesus sit down to teach? *(On a mountain, Matthew 5:1)*
2. What did Jesus say a father would not give his son who asked for a fish? *(A serpent, 7:10)*
3. What did Jesus say "this is"? *(The law and the prophets, 7:12)*

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

Explain the old words: **whatsoever** means whatever; **ye** means you; **would** means want; **men** means people; **even so** means the same way; **the law and the prophets** means the Old Testament Scriptures. 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.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus said God gives good things to them that ask Him. 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: each day, do one thing for someone that you would like done for you, before they do it for you.

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. Matthew 5:1: Where did Jesus go when He saw the multitudes? *(Up into a mountain)*
2. Matthew 7:7: What three things did Jesus tell us to do? *(Ask, seek and knock)*
3. Matthew 7:8: What happens to every one that asketh? *(He receiveth)*
4. Matthew 7:9: If a son asks for bread, what would a father not give him? *(A stone)*
5. Matthew 7:11: What does our Father which is in heaven give to them that ask him? *(Good things)*
6. Matthew 7:12: What did Jesus say "this is"? *(The law and the prophets)*
7. Matthew 7:28: How did the people feel when Jesus finished? *(They were astonished at his doctrine)*
8. Luke 6:31: How does Luke say the same teaching? *("And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.")*

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for being so good to us and for giving us good things. Help us do good to others first, even to people who aren't kind to us. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks, "Does God give me everything I ask for?": Jesus said our Father which is in heaven gives **good things** to them that ask him (Matthew 7:11). A good father gives what is good for his child. God always knows what is good for us, so we keep asking, seeking and knocking, and we trust Him.

Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post