Preschool–Grade 6

The Golden Rule

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Treat others the way you want to be treated, because God is good to us.
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, a small rock, a piece of bread or a bread roll, 7 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 7 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at Matthew 7:9 and 7:12. Hide the rock and the bread in a bag.

1. Opening game: Mirror Me (5 minutes)

Kids stand in pairs, facing each other. One is the leader and the other is the mirror. The mirror copies everything the leader does: wave, make a funny face, smile big, give a thumbs-up, pretend to hand over a present. After a minute, switch. Ask: *When you smiled at your partner, what did your partner do?* Say: "What we do to other people often comes right back to us. Today Jesus teaches us how He wants us to treat people."

2. Bible story: Jesus Teaches the Golden Rule (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 7, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

One day Jesus saw big crowds of people. He went up on a mountain and sat down, and His disciples came to Him. Then Jesus opened His mouth and taught them (Matthew 5:1–2).

Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (7:7). *(Knock three times on a table.)* That means: talk to God and ask Him. Look for Him. Knock, like at a door. God hears you!

Then Jesus asked a question. *(Hold up the bag.)* If a boy asks his father for bread, will his father give him a stone? (7:9) *(Pull out the rock.)* Would you want to eat a rock? No! A good father gives his son bread. *(Pull out the bread.)* If he asks for a fish, will his father give him a serpent? (7:10) A **serpent** is a snake. No way! A father gives his child good things.

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The story continues: Jesus said that even people, who do wrong things, know how to give good gifts to their children. Then He said, "how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (7:11). God is even better than the best dad. He gives good things!

Then Jesus said the words people call the **Golden Rule**. **Read Matthew 7:12 from your Bible:** "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." Say: "That means: whatever you want other people to do for you, you do that for them. Do you want people to share with you? Share with them. Do you want people to be kind to you? Be kind to them first."

When Jesus finished teaching, the people were **astonished**. That means they were amazed at His teaching (7:28–29).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Where did Jesus go up to teach? *(A mountain, Matthew 5:1)*
2. What three things did Jesus say to do? *(Ask, seek and knock, 7:7)*
3. If a son asks for bread, will his father give him a stone? *(No! He gives good things, 7:9–11)*
4. Who gives even better gifts than the best dad? *(Our Father which is in heaven, 7:11)*
5. How should we treat other people? *(The way we want them to treat us, 7:12)*

4. Memory verse: Seven Strips (5 minutes)

Tape the 7 strips up in order: *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.* 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 part of God's Word that was written before Jesus came. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus said God gives good things to them that ask Him. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: '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 we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
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: every day, think of one thing you would like someone to do for you. Then do it for someone else first.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Golden Rule word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/the-golden-rule-word-search), the Golden Rule craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/the-golden-rule), or **Show It:** read a short situation and let two kids act out what the Golden Rule would do. 1) A friend drops all her crayons. 2) There is one swing and two kids. 3) A new boy sits alone at lunch. 4) Your sister is sad. After each one, ask: "Is that what you would want someone to do for you?"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for giving us good things every day. Help us treat other people the way we want to be treated, and be kind first. 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?": answer simply. Jesus said our Father which is in heaven gives **good things** to them that ask him (Matthew 7:11). A good father gives his child what is good for him, not a stone or a serpent. God always knows what is good for us, so we can keep asking and trust Him.

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