

Back to School

—→ with God ←—



Children's Talk

This talk is suitable for those who only have a short time with children and young people before they leave the service for their own activities. If you would like to further explore the theme of **God's Golden Rules** with children in Sunday School, Kid's Church or equivalent, see **BSG22 Children's Prayers, Activities, Craft**.

Introduction

This is the beginning of a big week for lots of people in our church family. Who can tell me what happens this week? (*encourage feedback*). That's right – schools and nurseries go back after a very long holiday!

I wonder, for those who went to school a long time ago – what was your favourite thing about school? Or, if you are currently a pupil, what do you enjoy doing most in school? (*encourage feedback*).

When I was at school my favourite thing was (*insert favourite*), but for some people their favourite thing was Storytime. At Storytime the teacher would invite all the children to sit around them on the floor and read to them. Or, the teacher would say to older children, "Take out your books and spend some time reading."

Stories are a great way to use our imagination, to explore new places and learn about others. Jesus loved stories. Quite often when he was communicating with his followers or with crowds of people who had gathered, he would tell them stories called parables. This is a special kind of story that has a hidden meaning within it.

The Bible tells us that one day a religious man came to Jesus asking some questions about the 10 Commandments. Remember, these are God's special rules given in the Old Testament to help God's people to love him and live well with other people. The man came to Jesus asking, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus answered the man's question by telling a story. Let's hear Jesus' story now.

Bible

Choose one of the following options.

- a) Watch a video of Luke 10:25-37 using one of the streaming options below from YouTube:
 - [God's Story](#): The Good Samaritan. Crossroads Kids' Club.
 - [The Miracle of Mercy](#): Saddleback Kids.

- [Lumo Bible Project](#): Gospel of Luke 10:25-37 (images from the film, suitable for all ages).

b) Lead children and young people (or older members of the congregation!) in a spontaneous drama of the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37).

You will need: a cloak, a map, a clerical collar (you could make one from white paper), two bibles, bandages/plasters, donkey mask, two coins.

(Invite a volunteer to be the man travelling – thank them and place the cloak around their shoulders and give them a map.) One day, there was a man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho (invite your volunteer to look at their map, then walk to the back of the church and back to the front again). While he was travelling along the road, two robbers attacked him (invite two volunteers to be the robbers). The robbers pushed the man (encourage the volunteers to act out what you are saying), tore his cloak from his body and beat him up (please just pretend to hit!!). They then they left him lying on the side of the road, almost beaten to death. (The man lies curled up on the floor and the robbers go back to seats, taking the cloak with them).

Some time later, a Jewish priest came walking down the road. *(Invite someone to be the priest. Put the clerical collar on them and hand them a Bible).* When he came near to the place where the man was lying on the ground, he saw him lying there. But he crossed the road and kept walking *(encourage the volunteer to act this out).*

Next, a Levite came walking along the road *(invite a volunteer and give them a Bible to hold).* A Levite was someone who worked in the temple helping the Priest – today that would be someone like a Sunday School leader, or a Church worker. You would expect them to help, wouldn't you?

The Levite saw the injured man lying there on the ground. He had a look – but then he too crossed the road and walked away on the other side, far away from the man *(encourage the volunteer to act this out).*

Finally, a Samaritan person appeared. A Samaritan was someone who lived in a different country, and he was a traditional enemy of the man who was lying hurt. He came riding along on his donkey *(invite an adult to be the donkey by putting on the mask and crawling on their hand and knees; invite a small child to ride on the back of the donkey).*

When the Samaritan came to the place where the hurt man was, he looked at him and felt pity for him. He got down from his donkey and knelt beside him *(act this out).* Then he cared for the man's wounds *(invite Samaritan to place plasters on the injured man or bandage his arm or leg)* and once he had done that, he lifted the man up and put him on his donkey. He led him to the nearest inn *(act this out).*

When they arrived at the inn, *(invite a volunteer to be the Innkeeper)* the Samaritan paid the innkeeper two large silver coins *(the Samaritan hands over the coins)* and said, "Take care of him until he is well, and if you spend more money, I will pay you back the extra the next time I'm here".

Then the Samaritan man got back on his donkey and rode away *(act this out).*

Application

At the end of his story, Jesus asked, “Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbour to the man who was attacked by robbers?” How would you answer that question? (*encourage feedback*)

It was the Samaritan! This would have shocked the religious man who asked the question. The Priest and the Levite would have been expected to help. They were good men, worshippers of God. The Samaritan had a good reason to pass on by, because the injured man was his enemy – but he didn’t. He saw a person in need. And he stopped.

I wonder, who would you normally pass by? Who would you never talk to because you don’t like what they wear, or where they come from, or how they speak? This is challenging! What does it look like to be a Good Samaritan in our nurseries, schools, colleges, universities, or in our community? If someone needed help, would we help them no matter who they were?

The Samaritan didn’t just help. He was extravagant in his help. He shared his donkey, he spent his money, he invested his time. He didn’t give the man a quick dose of first aid – he went far beyond what would have been considered reasonable. Luke 10:33 says he had compassion on him. Does that remind you of someone else? It is a picture of Jesus’ love for us – coming to earth from the glory of heaven, setting aside his own comfort, going to the cross for us, who don’t deserve his love and forgiveness.

Jesus ends the story by telling the religious man to go and do likewise. Jesus was wanting him to love like he loves, and he calls us to do the same today. As his followers, in school or wherever we may be, he calls us to Love the Lord our God with all our heart – and to love our neighbour as ourselves. These are God’s Golden Rules!

Prayer with a response

We are now going to have a series of prayers for different aspects of school life. Each prayer will end with the phrase ‘help us to love you’, after which everyone will respond by saying together, ‘Help us to love you, and love our neighbour’. (*Display PPT Slides 20 and 21 from BSG22 All-Age Service PPT Slides*)

Heavenly Father, we praise you for your great love for us in Jesus, who left the glory of heaven to die on a cross, bearing our sins, and being resurrected to glory. **Help us to love you, and love our neighbour.**

We confess that we are like the Expert in the Law. We are so often self-righteous and proud, with hearts that are far from pleasing you. Please forgive us. **Help us to love you, and love our neighbour.**

Thank you for the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Help us to be good neighbours. May we reach out to others with joy, compassion and kindness, flowing out of love for you. **Help us to love you, and love our neighbour.**

Heavenly Father, strengthen and bless those who are going back to school. May they know that you love them, that you go with them and that you are ready to help them each day. **Help us to love you, and love our neighbour. Amen.**