

*Josh retaliated
with kindness.*

THE GOLDEN RULE

LESSON 154 → Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31; Numbers 12:1-13



“**S**trolling down the hall, Riley saw Josh reaching into his locker with a load of books. A grin spread over his face as he approached Josh and abruptly leaned against him.

“Do you know Eileen?” he asked in a loud voice. “Get it? I lean!” Josh staggered and then fell onto the hall floor surrounded by his scattered books. A shout of laughter rang out from Riley and a number of other kids who saw the incident. Josh scrambled to his feet, stuffed his books into the locker, and walked off with just a wry grin.

Later in the day, Riley saw another chance to tease Josh. He walked next to him down the hall, quietly talking until they came near Mrs. Aselton, who was notorious for giving out lots of detention slips. Then in a louder than normal voice Riley said, “Thanks, Josh, but you know we aren’t supposed to chew gum in school.” Mrs. Aselton heard him, as Riley had hoped she would, and stopped Josh. Riley dashed into the doorway of his next class.

He was constantly thinking up mischief to try to irritate Josh, determined to get him mad. He thought he had succeeded the time he “accidentally” bumped into Josh just as Josh picked up his loaded lunch tray. The tray landed on the floor and laughter erupted in the cafeteria. Josh turned red, picked up the mess



TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WANT TO BE TREATED.

And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. — Luke 6:31

and, after throwing it away, stood in line for his lunch for the second time.

Riley's problem was that Josh would not get mad, no matter what Riley did to him. Somehow, his failure to get a rise out of Josh made Riley more determined than ever. He wanted to see Josh get mad just like other kids did. Why did Josh act so happy and pleasant all the time?

Riley kept telling himself that Josh was just not all there or he would get mad. But somehow that explanation didn't really satisfy him. There was something different about Josh, all right. But he wasn't stupid. Josh was a good student. He just didn't react like the other kids around school.

One day Riley decided to try a new scheme. For sure this one would make Josh mad! Climbing a tree near the school, he settled himself on a limb with several well-filled water balloons. Josh always came by this way when he headed for the bus after school.

But things didn't work out as planned. While trying to steady the balloons and hold on to the tree branch at the same time, Riley lost his balance. Seconds later, he was lying on the ground, crying out in pain. Josh was one of the first to reach him. He saw that Riley's leg was bent at an unnatural angle, so he ran to the school for help.

The next day at school, Josh heard that Riley's leg was badly broken and he would have to be in traction for several weeks. He headed for the hospital right after school. As Josh entered the room, Riley looked up and scowled. "What are you doing here? I suppose you're going to say it serves me right. Well, I don't want to hear it. Just get out!"

Josh just stood there. "I'm sorry, Riley. I wasn't going to say anything like that. I just wondered how you were doing today. I brought you a Rubix cube and assignments from school. But I know you're not feeling much like talking, so I'll leave. Bye! Hope you're feeling better soon!" With that, he left. And Riley was left alone, more miserable than ever.

After school the next day, Josh dropped by again. Riley didn't say much this time, but at least he didn't sound off at Josh. After that, Josh came almost every day, bringing school work, sunflower seeds, beef jerky, and even a couple of books from the library.

Riley tried to act like he didn't care whether Josh came or not, but the fact was he did care. He was lonely. Josh was the only one from school who visited him. He was always smiling and cheerful. Before long, Riley found himself smiling in response, but deep inside, Riley was still frustrated. Finally, he couldn't stand it any longer: he had to find out what made Josh tick. When Josh showed up the next afternoon, Riley started in with no preliminaries.

"Why don't you get mad, Josh? Why don't you hate me after all the things I did to you? Why are you always so nice?"

Josh looked surprised at this abrupt greeting.

Tossing his jacket on the foot of the bed, he straddled the chair beside Riley without replying. At last he said, "Well, I guess it's because I'd like you to be my friend."

"But why, Josh? Why are you the way you are?"

Josh looked soberly at Riley. "I'm a Christian, Riley. Jesus took all the mad out of me when He saved me a couple of years ago. And He has told us we should live by the Golden Rule. I try to do that."

"You mean to treat others the way you want them to treat you?" Riley thought for a moment. "That must be it, then. I know I've been mean to you, but you always treated me nice no matter what I did. I'm sorry for the way I've acted."

Josh smiled. "It's okay, Riley. I'm glad we've got everything worked out between us." It works, he thought! It really works! Even if it takes some time. When you treat others the way you want to be treated, eventually they'll come around!

Lesson 154 Activity

PERSON TO PERSON

The Golden Rule tells us how to get along with others. To find out how to do that, use the ruler code and write the correct letter for each measurement given below.

$5\frac{1}{2}$ $2\frac{1}{4}$ $4\frac{1}{2}$ $5\frac{1}{2}$ 5 $3\frac{3}{4}$ 4 $3\frac{1}{2}$ 6 $5\frac{1}{2}$ 4

7 4 $1\frac{1}{2}$ 6 $3\frac{1}{2}$ $3\frac{3}{4}$ $5\frac{1}{2}$ $3\frac{3}{4}$ 5 7 $7\frac{1}{2}$

$4\frac{1}{2}$ 7 $7\frac{1}{2}$ $2\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $2\frac{1}{4}$ $6\frac{1}{2}$ 2 6

4 $1\frac{1}{2}$ 6 $2\frac{1}{2}$ 4 7 4 $3\frac{1}{2}$ 6 $5\frac{1}{2}$ 4

5 7 $7\frac{1}{2}$

$\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

B C D F G H J K L M N P Q R S T V W X Y Z A E I O U