

**TEXT** Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31; Numbers 12:1-13

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14

**OBJECTIVE** The students should be able to explain why the Golden Rule is the key to a successful relationship between one person and another.

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

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. — Matthew 7:12

# Golden Rule

## REFERENCE INFORMATION

The dictionary defines *rule* as "a prescribed guide for conduct, action, usage (as of words); a regulation." *Golden* is described as being "of precious rarity." The value of the Golden Rule can best be appreciated if we will consider what the world would be like if everyone practiced it. Yet the people who consistently practice it

are rare indeed. The Golden Rule can be followed only by those in whose hearts the love of God abounds, that *agape* love presented in Scripture as the very nature of God. It is a spontaneous, unselfish love, and implies the worthiness of the one loved. In the world today, is there anything more rare or precious?

## YOUR OPENER

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Golden Rule

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31; Numbers 12:1-13

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Romans 13:10; Galatians 5:14

**KEY VERSE:** Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. — Matthew 7:12

The commandment to love one another is the great principle that guides us in the life of discipleship. Our lesson today centers around the key verse which is often referred to as the Golden Rule. Practice of this principle will help us in business dealings, in our home life, and in all communication with others, for it underlies every personal relationship. In serving others, we serve ourselves, because people like to deal with those who believe in and practice the Golden Rule.

- 1. Write the definition of the word *rule*. How does it apply to our lesson?
- 2. A certain lawyer asked Jesus the question, "Which is the great commandment?" His answer is found in Matthew 22:37-40. What is the similarity between our lesson text and Jesus' answer?
- 3. Look up the following verses and compare each with the Golden Rule. Give an everyday situation which would be an example of each of these verses:  
Proverbs 15:1  
Romans 12:8  
Romans 12:14  
Romans 12:21

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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## RESPONSES

- 1. Your students' definitions should bring out that a rule is a prescribed guide for conduct or action. Thus, God's prescribed course of action for His followers is outlined in the key verse. Discuss with your students the fact that the Golden Rule gives us a simple formula for determining how we should treat others in whatever situation we find ourselves.
- 2. The students will see that love is the hub of Christian relationships and that our love toward God directs our actions toward our fellowman. The similarity is shown in the fact that both the Golden Rule and Jesus' instruction to the lawyer express the same truth. What benefits will be received if we make this the rule that regulates our conduct toward others?
- 3. Your students' examples of these verses should illustrate that all of the Scriptures point to our relationship with others. The Golden Rule is applied in each case.

4. How did Aaron and Miriam violate the Golden Rule?
5. Explain how Moses' response to Aaron and Miriam was correct, according to the Golden Rule. See Galatians 6:1.
6. Jesus is our example of One who lived by the Golden Rule. We are told that we should follow in His steps. How did He respond to being reviled and suffering at the hands of others? See 1 Peter 2:21-23.
7. How will the proper response to any type of action by our fellow men mean the difference between victory and defeat?
8. Many feel that if they keep the Golden Rule, this qualifies them for Heaven. Give scriptural evidence to substantiate or refute this premise.
- Thought Provoker:** "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Proverbs 16:7

4. They violated the rule governing respect for the Lord's anointed. The students will see that God is not pleased for us to criticize or find fault with others. This is not how we would wish to be treated. Ask your students to offer other examples of disobedience or obedience to the Golden Rule given in the Bible. Possible suggestions might include the Good Samaritan, Joseph's brothers, Joseph himself, Rahab, Abraham and Lot.
5. Moses used a spirit of meekness to restore Miriam by asking God to remove the affliction which had come upon her. Discuss what the normal ungodly reaction to such a situation would be and contrast it to Moses' behavior. What effect did this have on Miriam and Aaron? What might be the result of our following Moses' example?
6. When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not. Instead He committed the case into the hands of God who judges right.
7. Allow time for your students to give their thoughts on this. Likely they will bring out that showing kindness (practicing the Golden Rule) can often completely reverse the normal progression of a problem situation. Even if the problem does not end to one's liking, still he has victory in knowing that he has handled the situation in a God-directed way. Discuss with your students that little kindnesses we perform every day show whether we are doing unto others as we would have them do to us. If someone mistreats us, and we in turn do a good deed to him, we may win that person by our love.
8. Allow your students to explain their answers, using the Scriptures they have found. They will conclude that living the Golden Rule in their own strength is not sufficient to qualify them for Heaven. Some possible Scriptures to support this position would be Luke 13:3, John 3:3, and 1 John 1:8,9.

YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How do you feel about loving someone when you know that they don't care for you?

Explain how charity, forgiveness, mercy, and gratitude all fit into the Golden Rule.

What is one ingredient that you need in order to carry out this commandment successfully? Why is this ingredient (love) important and from where do you get it?

Why do you think it is so important that we keep this rule and apply it to our everyday living?

Name some things which you could do for others that you would like to see them do for you.

Should you always expect others to do for you what you did for them? Why or why not?

In our ANSWER story, what in Dwight's behavior was a puzzle to Tommy?

## THINGS TO DO

Have two people act out each of the following situations, then discuss with class.

1. Someone knocks the books out of a Christian's arms.
2. Someone tells a lie about you.
3. A handicapped person is walking slowly toward a door, you are in a hurry and they are in the way.
4. Someone accidentally drops some money and walks on. What should you do?
5. Someone is trying to beat you to a place to sit down.

Set up a line of dominoes and show how each reacts to the other when they are bumped and fall down. How may our good examples have a "domino effect" on others?

Show your students a mirror, and tell them that whenever they expect something from someone, they should look into an imaginary mirror and ask themselves if they would do the same for others.

Bring to class a large posterboard (cut into the shape of a cloud representing someone's thought) or a chalkboard. Write the following sentences (or similar ones) on the posterboard or chalkboard:

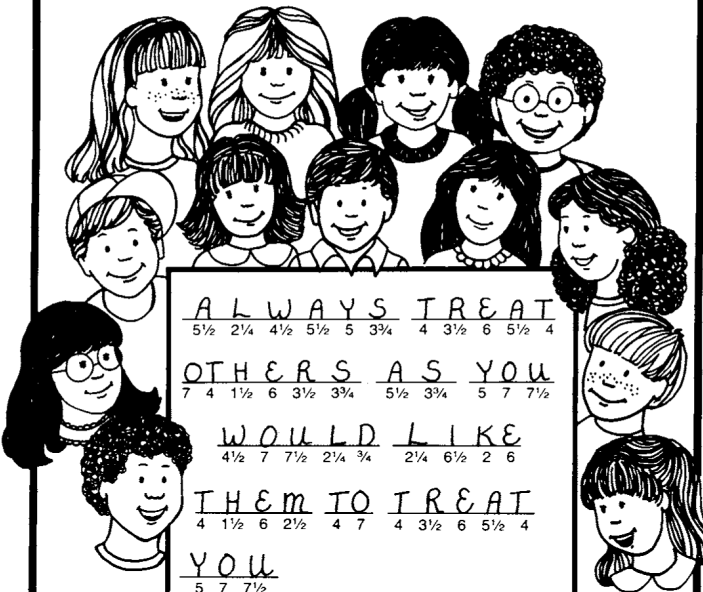
1. Remember me at Christmas.
2. Share your chocolate bar with me.
3. Be kind to me.
4. Don't forget my birthday.
5. Sit beside me and talk with me.
6. Walk me home and keep me company.
7. Help me with my homework.

Also write on a slip of paper, large enough for all your class to see, God's Golden Rule, to show that we can reverse our self-centered thoughts and direct them to other people. Present these thoughts to the students and tell them to find one thing that is wrong with all of them. Ask someone to point out the fault (the words "me" and "my" are used too many times). Have them read the Golden Rule and then have them correct each sentence by crossing out the me's and my's and replacing them with names of their schoolmates and friends.

## Answers for ANSWER

### 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.



ALWAYS TREAT  
5 1/2   2 1/4   4 1/2   5 1/2   5   3 3/4   4   3 1/2   6   5 1/2   4

OTHERS AS YOU  
7   4   1 1/2   6   3 1/2   3 3/4   5 1/2   3 3/4   5   7   7 1/2

WOULD LIKE  
4 1/2   7   7 1/2   2 1/4   3/4   2 1/4   6 1/2   2   6

THEM TO TREAT  
4   1 1/2   6   2 1/2   4   7   4   3 1/2   6   5 1/2   4

YOU  
5   7   7 1/2

