

Lesson 7.15- Peacemaking: The Golden Rule

Topic: Becoming Peacemakers

Subtopic: The Golden Rule

3B. Be Holy

3C. All are Equal and Valued

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: Knowledge: Students will know that some attitudes and actions are peacemaking “fouls” which destroy peace.

Attitude: Students will desire to eliminate fouls in their lives and contribute to peace.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

References: Matthew 7

Memory Verse: Matthew 7:12a

“Do for others what you want them to do for you.”

Teacher Activities

Introduction: *Optional: Worship.*

As we listen to the scripture today, think about:

- Times you have and have not treated others as you would like to be treated
- Times others have given unexpectedly to you.

Bible Story. Discuss the Scripture reading with the students.

Application: Start the “fouls” list on the board and let students add to it. Ask students what happens in your class when someone shows behavior which is a peacemaking “foul.” After creating this list, start the “Golden Rule” list and have students add to it as well.

Evaluation: Do you model peacemaking attitudes and actions? Were students able to work together respectfully and point out peacemaking traits of other students?

Student Activities

Introduction: Discuss a question.

Bible Story: Student Readers read Matthew 7: 1-2, 12, 13-14, 21 and 24-27. Students discuss what the verses say about peacemaking.

Application: Help create lists of “fouls” and “Golden Rule” behavior.

Small Group Discussion

- Which fouls do you sometimes do? What could you do instead?
- Share times when you (or someone in the class) contributed to peacemaking.

Journal about what you learned today.

Evaluation: Were students able to identify personal peacemaking skills and attitudes? Do students recognize when their actions are “fouls” which destroy peace?

Extension Activities:

Worship. Continue starting class with worship songs and prayer time.

Wish Lists. Have the students each write down three things that they would want someone to do for them. After they have completed their lists, challenge them to do one of these things for a friend or family member sometime over the next week.

Drawing. Invite the students to draw pictures of students who are active in peacemaking-- illustrating the peaceful behaviors you want for the class. Create a classroom “Peace Quilt” with these pictures interspersed with the words which reflect these values to hang on the wall.

TEACHER NOTES

Today students will compare the Golden Rule to peacemaking “fouls”. The Golden Rule says to “*Do for others what you want them to do for you.*” Fouls are behaviors which lead to conflict.

Key Concept: Peacemakers do for others what they would want someone to do for them.

Bible Story: Chose Five Readers and let each one read one passages below. Make sure all the verses are read, even if some readers have to read more than one verse. Tell the class to think about how these verses contribute to peacemaking. After each passage is read ask, “**What does this tell us about peacemaking?**” The comments below will help you guide the student discussion.

Matthew 7: 1-2

Matthew 7: 12

Matthew 7:13-14

Matthew 7:21

Matthew 7:24-27

We build peace when we learn to treat others with respect, as Jesus explains when he tells us to “*Do for others what you want them to do for you.*” (Matthew 7:12a) In this Golden Rule, Jesus reminds us that our spiritual lives are not simply between us and God, but are reflected in how we treat others. We cannot simply hear God’s word, but we must live it as the foundation of our lives. The words, “Lord, Lord” are insincere and empty unless we do the will of God. To choose this narrow gate is hard, but it leads to life. It is the path of peace. To neglect this teaching is easy, but the result is destruction.

One of the dangers of emphasizing outward obedience to God and the need to follow the Golden Rule is the common legalistic human nature to judge others. We are warned of this danger when we do not “First take the log out of your own eye...” (Matthew 7:5a). The warning to not judge is held in tension with the concern to beware of false prophets who seek the destruction of God’s church. These deceptive individuals appear to be part of God’s flock, but in actuality they are ravenous wolves seeking destruction. They disrupt the peace of the community.

Application: *Fouls*. **There are certain behaviors which are not in unity with following the Golden Rule. These attitudes are peacemaking “fouls.” What is a foul?** (In sports it means, *contrary to the rules*. It can also mean *unpleasant* or *disagreeable* or even *dishonest*.) Have students name peacemaking “fouls” as you write them on the board. You may have to give some examples to get them started. *Possible answers include:*

- Lying
- Making excuses
- Name calling
- Teasing
- Whining
- Threatening people
- Not being responsible---making excuses
- Blaming others
- Retaliation or getting even
- Stealing

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- Hitting, pushing, kicking or fighting
- *Any others your class may want to add*

Talk about what happens in your class when someone shows behavior which is a peacemaking “foul.” Encourage students to hold each other accountable by saying, “That’s a foul,” when someone does one of the fouls above.

What are the actions which are consistent with the Golden Rule and are peaceful behaviors? *You may wish to start this list on the other side of the black board)*

- Honesty
- Compliment others
- Help others
- Responsible with assignments
- Be a good listener
- Apologize when wrong
- Respect others and their feelings
- Attack problems not people
- Be willing to forgive
- Do kind things for others
- *Any others your class may want to add*

Small Group Discussion

- Which fouls do you sometimes do? What could you do instead?
- Share times when you (or someone in the class) contributed to peacemaking.

Journal: Take a few minutes to reflect on today’s lesson and then write two things you have learned.