

**TEXT** Matthew 5:1-5; 8:5-10; Isaiah 29:19; 57:15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Isaiah 61:1-3; Romans 12:3

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be capable of telling the spiritual value, as well as the everyday worth of Jesus' teachings pertaining to humility, contrition, and meekness.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. — James 4:10

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. — Luke 14:11

**ANSWER**  
**TITLE:** **Whose Computer Is It?**

**SEARCH**  
**TITLE:** **Humility**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Blessed and happy are the humble-minded, the sorrowful, the lowly, the spiritually hungry, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peaceful, and the persecuted—seemingly the exact opposite of the world's standards. However, the blessing is not in the condition itself, but in the glorious rewards to come. Heaven is so infinitely superior to earthly life that Jesus regarded as a blessing anything that increased the longing for Heaven.

Blessed are the meek. Our word *meek* comes from the old Anglo-Saxon *meca* or *meccea*, "a companion or equal," because he who is of a meek or gentle spirit is ever ready to associate with the most humble of those who fear God. He feels himself superior to none, and knows that he has nothing of spiritual or temporal good but what he has received from the bounty of God, having never deserved any favor from His hand.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Humility

**TEXT:** Matthew 5:1-5; 8:5-10; Isaiah 29:19; 57:15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Isaiah 61:1-3; Romans 12:3

**KEY VERSE:** For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. — Luke 14:11

The love of God dwelling in the heart produces humility, a beautiful ingredient in a Christian's life. It is the complete opposite of self-exaltation or a proud spirit. It is not artificial or feigned, but is exhibited in each aspect of a true Christian's life.

## RESPONSES

1. God is against one who is proud. He hates even a proud look (Proverbs 6:16,17). When He resists someone, is it possible for that person to prosper? Your students should see that one cannot prosper spiritually, though he may prosper materially for the moment. On the other hand, when God gives grace or extends His favor to the one who is humble, that one will be happy and blessed, as shown in the Beatitudes.

2. As your class discusses this question, they should see that many times Scripture couples a humble attitude with answers to prayer. See Psalm 10:17 and James 4:6,10.

3. Allow time for students to respond. They should conclude that when a Christian is subject to others and esteems them properly, God will reward him. And it is very likely that people will also react to him in a positive manner. You may wish to bring out that true Christian love and humility will overlook an improper response from the other person. A good Biblical example of this attitude is seen in David's relationship to Saul.

1. How does God react to one who is humble, as compared with one who takes pride in his own accomplishments? See James 4:6.

2. In our Matthew 8 text, the centurion who came to Jesus showed a humble attitude by saying that he was not worthy to have Christ come under his roof. Why is it important for us to have a humble attitude when we come to Christ? Substantiate your answer by Scripture.

3. If one is living according to Philippians 2:3 and 1 Peter 5:5, in what way will his relationships with others be enhanced? Give at least one specific example.

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. Does humility come naturally, or will one have to make a special effort to humble himself before God and others? See James 4:10.

5. Jesus said that we should love our neighbor "as ourselves" (Mark 12:31). How can this teaching co-exist with humility?

6. Jesus is our perfect pattern. He is the Son of God, and worthy of all our worship and honor. What kind of an example in humility did He leave us? See Matthew 11:29 and Philippians 2:5-8.

7. How must a sinner come before the Lord when he desires to become a Christian? See Luke 18:13. Why does the Bible tell us in 1 Corinthians 1:26 that not many wise or mighty or noble men are called?

8. Is it possible for one to be proud of his humility? Is this true humility? Explain.

4. The command to humble ourselves should lead your students to conclude that though true humility becomes part of a Christian's nature, a special effort does need to be made when situations arise that might tempt us to show pride. The Bible states in several other places that we are to humble ourselves. See Luke 14:11 and 1 Peter 5:6. Ask your students to point out in each of these passages what reward God will give for humility. Impress on the students that the reward will be well worth the effort.

5. Discussion of this question should be based on the realization that a person can have self-respect without an attitude of pride or self-assertion. God has given to each of us a certain regard for ourselves. "No man ever yet hated his own flesh . . ." (Ephesians 5:29). At the same time, the Bible warns each one ". . . not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think" (Romans 12:3). As we love our neighbor as ourselves, we will seek his happiness and well-being just as we would seek our own. Humility co-exists with self-respect in that we do unto others as we would want them to do to us.

6. Bring out that when one thinks he has done something worthy of praise, he should think on Jesus' example. Though He was sinless and perfect, He humbled Himself and made Himself of no reputation, and became obedient unto death on the cross. Peter said we should follow His steps. See 1 Peter 2:21.

7. The steps to salvation can be plainly brought out here. One must repent and humble himself before he can be saved. The wise and mighty may find it more difficult to see their need. One must have a feeling of contrition or sorrow for his sins, before the Lord can take control of his heart (Psalm 51:17). This may be an opportunity for you or one of your students to give a personal testimony of conversion.

8. Discuss the fact that one who says he is humble and does not show a humble spirit, is in reality a proud person. Ask what specific benefits humility will bring into one's life. Bring out that true humility will not only bring a spiritual blessing from the Lord, but will bring a joy into our everyday lives, since we know we are following God's Word.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Who are the "poor in spirit"?

Why was Jesus so impressed with the centurion?

Is humility an action or an attitude? Explain.

What is the difference between being humbled and being humiliated?

What is the difference between humility and humiliation?

How did Jesus show humility?

How will humility help a person have a better life?

There are many ways that pride can get you into trouble. How can humility keep you out of trouble?

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Why?

- Every Christian knows what humility is.
- You will always get ahead if you are meek and humble.
- It is almost impossible for a rich person to be humble and meek.

In our ANSWER story, how did Rick Thurman demonstrate a spirit of humility?

## THINGS TO DO

Write the word HUMILITY vertically on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper. Have students volunteer to write phrases related to the theme, beginning with each letter of the vertical word. When writing has been completed, discuss the ideas. Example:

- H**ave a meek spirit
- U**nity with Christ and His people
- M**yself last
- I** will prefer others
- L**et go of pride
- I** need it!
- T**hankful heart
- Y**es, I want to be humble

Have students pair off, or divide class into small groups. Give a brief time for them to come up with an idea and then

act out a situation that might happen at home, school, or between friends that would illustrate how a humble attitude would smooth over a rough situation or cement a friendship. (Remind students that "humility" gives a soft answer, prefers the other person, sees the good in another person or an idea, etc.)

After discussing the lesson and relating the theme of humility to their own personal lives, have the students express their responses by writing a prayer or praise based on the lesson. Volunteers may read their prayers to the class. Example:

Heavenly Father, too many times I take being a Christian for granted and this makes me have the wrong attitude toward others. Please help me to have a true spirit of humility in my heart. I know You will help me, and I thank You for Your help. Amen.

## Answers for Answer

### Are You Humble?

Humility is having a modest and submissive spirit. The key verse tells what God will do for you if you are humble. The words listed make up the key verse. Find them in the word-find below and circle them. They read up, down, across, and diagonally. When you are done, see if you can write out the key verse on the lines below without looking it up.



*Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.*

**TEXT** Matthew 5:6-9,38-48; 18:23-35

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** 1 Samuel 26:7-11

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that mercy is essential to Christian living, that unless we extend mercy we will not receive it.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. — Luke 6:36

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh. — Proverbs 11:17

**ANSWER  
TITLE:** **An Unexpected Reaction**

**SEARCH  
TITLE:** **Mercy**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

One cannot reflect on the subject of mercy without thinking about the source of true mercy—our Father in Heaven. In Cruden’s Concordance we read that “Mercy signifies that essential perfection in God, whereby He pities and relieves the miseries of His creatures.”

From the very beginning, God showed His great mercy when He didn’t destroy Adam and Eve for their disobedience. Later He extended mercy to Cain, even though Cain deserved to die because he had slain his brother, Abel. Before the Flood, God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and could have justly destroyed the earth, but He granted mankind another one hundred and twenty years. The Lord instructed Noah to build an ark to the saving of his household and without doubt the mercy of God would have included any who believed the preaching of Noah and turned from their wicked ways.

The outstanding example of God’s mercy is the gift of His Son to this world to die for our sins. Pointed to from the fall of man in the Garden, foretold by the prophets, and confirmed in the New Testament, Jesus’ death on Calvary is the most memorable example of mercy ever presented to mankind!

As children of the living God, we are expected to be merciful and compassionate to our fellowman also. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7). So we see that if we expect to make Heaven our home, we must show forth the fruit of the Spirit which includes the attributes of mercy: love, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness. In Matthew 25:31-46, we read that those who stood before the judgment seat of Christ were judged by how merciful and compassionate they were to their fellowmen.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Mercy

**TEXT:** Matthew 5:6-9,38-48; 18:23-35

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE:** 1 Samuel 26:7-11

**KEY VERSE:** The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh. — Proverbs 11:17

Mercy is an attribute essential to Christian living, and unless we extend mercy, we will not receive it. Mercy shows compassion and forbears punishment, even when justice demands it. Mercy extends help to the lowly and even the undeserving.

## RESPONSES

1. Allow time for your students to give their definitions and examples. Some may mention Abraham and Lot, David and Saul, or Stephen.

2. If your students base their answers directly on the text in Matthew, they will no doubt bring out that *blessed* means “being spiritually happy,” and that being merciful guarantees receiving mercy. Ask your students to list some other blessings that come to those who follow the admonition to be merciful. If, perchance, we do not reap the benefits in this present life, God will surely reward us in the life to come. Help the students recognize that being merciful generally brings blessings day by day.

3. Without God’s mercy being extended to us we could not receive pardon for sin, for only the Blood of Christ atones for our sins. Works of righteousness do not. Rehearse with your students that the fruits of righteousness are the result of salvation, not the cause of it. Discuss how almost anyone can extend mercy once in a while; but God requires His children to be merciful at all times. See Micah 6:8.

1. In your own words, describe *mercy*. Give an example, either from the Bible or from personal knowledge, of one who has practiced this attribute.

2. God requires mercy in the lives of His children (Micah 6:8). What are the rewards for possessing this attribute?

3. Why is it that our own acts of mercy cannot save us, if the merciful shall obtain mercy? See Titus 3:5.

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. The parable of the Good Samaritan is a well-known example in the Bible of one who showed mercy. Read Luke 10:33-37, then write what specific actions the Good Samaritan did in order to offer mercy. In what ways might being merciful require our time, money, or personal effort?

5. In our text, what was the servant's attitude when the king demanded payment of the debt?

6. How did the king react when the servant had nothing with which to pay the debt? Contrast his reaction to God's forgiveness of the debt of sin.

7. After the servant had been forgiven his debt, he put a fellow servant into prison for a small debt. This was obviously an unmerciful act. Name some ways in which a person might be unmerciful, though not necessarily outwardly so.

8. If you had been the king, what would your attitude have been toward the unmerciful servant? What are some ways you might be able to show mercy?

4. Answers received should include: time on his part to help the injured man, money to provide for his needs, and—perhaps greatest of all—the personal effort on the Samaritan's part to bring the wounded man to a place of safety, as well as to health. In our day, being merciful might include spending time with someone who is ill or lonely, assisting financially when there is a need, or encouraging one who is despondent. It is interesting to note that the Good Samaritan extended his mercy to a Jew, one who under normal circumstances would not have ministered to a Samaritan. We, too, must be willing to offer mercy to everyone. Discuss how mercy is sometimes the response of the heart, without visible manifestation such as Abraham's intercession for Sodom (Genesis 18:24-32). This kind of mercy is commendable, and also needful.

5. He fell down before the king and pled for mercy. Discuss how pleading for mercy made a difference. If he had not done so, the servant's wife, children, and all that he had would have been sold and payment made. Actually, the debt was so great it could never have been paid. Parallel this thought to the mercy needed from God in regard to sin. Nothing a sinner could do, aside from pleading God's mercy, could ever atone for or pay his debt of sin.

6. The king forgave the debt. Have the students take note of the fact that though the servant was loosed from and forgiven the debt, he was still a servant. God forgives sin and removes judgment. But He goes one step further in His boundless mercy, and sets the soul at liberty. Instead of a servant, that one is made joint heir with Christ!

7. The students may bring out that a person might be judgmental and thereby mentally condemn another. An unmerciful, persistent thought can ruin the fellowship of people who have otherwise been friends and at the same time ruin their fellowship with God.

8. This is an open question to stimulate discussion on being merciful. The question can be used to summarize and wrap up the lesson.

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## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How would you define *mercy*?

Why do you think a Christian should be merciful?

Can you become a Christian, or remain one, if you refuse to show mercy to someone?

Name some ways in which mercy, or a forgiving spirit, can be shown in situations that occur in our daily lives.

What should be the attitude or manner in which we show mercy or forgiveness?

How does the attitude of “I’ll forgive but I won’t forget” fit in with what the Bible teaches regarding mercy and forgiveness?

In our text, how was the unforgiving servant judged by his master?

Considering all we have been forgiven at salvation, can we allow an unforgiving spirit within ourselves?

In our ANSWER story, how was Rich’s forgiving spirit toward Dan later rewarded?

What are some of the rewards for being merciful?

## THINGS TO DO

Set up a classroom court—select a judge, a jury, and a criminal. After making up a story of what crime was committed, have the judge and jury decide on the verdict and the punishment. Then ask what made them choose that particular punishment.

Bring some newspaper clippings of court cases, and discuss how the class feels about the punishment or lack of punishment that was given. Did the judge use mercy or judgment in the case? Was this good or bad? Explain.

Divide the students into two groups. Pass paper and pencil to each student, or to one person in each group. Using

their Bibles, have one group list Biblical examples of when mercy was shown and have the other group make a list of when mercy was not shown. Set a time limit. Be prepared with examples of your own to augment what the students have found.

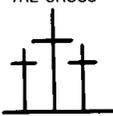
Forgiveness is an important part of mercy. Read in class or give out to the students the testimony tract, “For Another’s Crime” (No. 79A).

Set up a freeze sculpture by having students come up with poses to illustrate a scene depicting mercy. As an optional departmental activity, have each class present their freeze sculpture to the other classes.

## Answers for Answer

### Be Like Jesus

As Christians we are to be like Jesus and show mercy to others. What were the results when Jesus' mercy was added to the situations listed below? Look up the texts and write your thoughts on the lines provided.

<b>THIEF ON THE CROSS</b> 	+ JESUS' MERCY = <small>(Luke 23:39-43)</small>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <i>He received eternal life in Heaven.</i> </div>
<b>TWO BLIND MEN OF JERICO</b> 	+ JESUS' MERCY = <small>(Matthew 20:29-34)</small>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <i>Their sight was restored when Jesus touched them.</i> </div>
<b>JAIROS' DAUGHTER</b> 	+ JESUS' MERCY = <small>(Luke 8:49-56)</small>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <i>The girl was restored to life that day.</i> </div>
<b>ZACCHAEUS</b> 	+ JESUS' MERCY = <small>(Luke 19:1-10)</small>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; border-radius: 10px; text-align: center;"> <i>Zacchaeus was saved that day.</i> </div>

**TEXT** Matthew 5:14-16; Daniel 6:1-28

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** John 1:1-9; Acts 13:47; Philippians 2:14,15; 1 John 1:5-9

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to tell why a Christian's influence, as he wholly follows Christ, is of utmost importance in this present world.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. — Matthew 5:16

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. — Ephesians 5:8

**ANSWER TITLE:** **A Shining Light**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **Christians as Radiant Lights**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

The sun is our major source of physical light. It provides temperatures necessary for life. With a surface temperature of 6000K (Kelvin scale) and internal temperatures approaching 16 million degrees, it converts about 4 1/2 tons of hydrogen into helium each passing second, thereby emitting radiant light of 1 1/2 million candlepower per square inch.

In addition, we find that the sun, through a process called photosynthesis, is also the continuing source of food for life on earth. The rate at which living organisms consume each

other (sea life, for example) is so great that they would all disappear from the earth within the lifetime of a single human generation if there was not a process for the regeneration of organic matter. God designed the miracle of photosynthesis, whereby the energy of sunlight is absorbed by the chlorophyll of sea and land plants to manufacture carbohydrates (organic food) from carbon dioxide and water.

Christ is our spiritual light. He provides for us spiritually what the sun does for us physically. We look to Him as our source of life and energy.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Christians as Radiant Lights

**TEXT:** Matthew 5:14-16; Daniel 6:1-28

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** John 1:1-9; Acts 13:47; Philippians 2:14,15; 1 John 1:5-9

**KEY VERSE:** For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light. — Ephesians 5:8

Physical light makes vision possible, provides for life on earth, results in warmth and comfort, and dispels darkness. In Genesis 1:2-5, we find that light was so important God devoted the first day of creation to making it in order to dispel darkness. Without physical light, death ensues. Spiritual light is even more important. Malachi the prophet refers to Christ as “the Sun of righteousness” (Malachi 4:2). Without spiritual light there would be no eternal life.

## RESPONSES

1. The source of spiritual life is Jesus. Ask your students how spiritual light and spiritual life are related. They should conclude that without light, there can be no life. Light is necessary for growth, both physical and spiritual. When spiritual light is “screened out,” the result will be spiritual darkness and eventually eternal damnation.

2. The world would be in spiritual darkness, and spiritual death would be the result. Discuss with your students the importance of Christians letting their light shine. Without this light, spiritual darkness would result in evil so intense that the world would be a terrible place in which to live. This situation of evil will be in evidence during the Tribulation, after the Church has been taken out of the world, and is evident in some areas of the world today.

3. He had an excellent spirit, and fault could not be found in him. Ask your students to compare Daniel’s example to Matthew 5:16 of our text. Emphasis should be placed on the words “good works.” What types of good works in our day can be a reflection of Christ’s light?

1. Read carefully John 1:1-9. What is the source of spiritual life? What happens when spiritual light is “screened out”?

2. Considering then the importance of spiritual light, what do you think would happen to your school, your work world, your community, and the world in general if all Christians failed to follow Christ’s command in Matthew 5:16?

3. Describe how Daniel, as the first of three presidents under Darius the king, “let his light shine.” Refer to Daniel 6:3,4.

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## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. The 2 presidents and the 120 princes sought to find fault with Daniel so that they might accuse him to the king. Daniel was not only faithful to his God, but he was faithful to his country and to the king's business. They could find no fault, but what scheme did they devise against him, and why?

5. Once the decree was signed by the king, how did Daniel respond?

6. The light from Daniel's life had generated faith in the king's heart in the only true God. How was this manifested in the king's words to Daniel?

7. What specific character trait radiated from Daniel causing the king to say in verse 16 and again in verse 20, "whom thou servest continually"?

8. How far did Daniel's light shine as a result of his steadfast faith and deliverance from the lions' den?

4. They had the king sign a decree that no man could ask any petition of any God or man except of the king. They did this in order to destroy Daniel, and thus extinguish his light. Discuss with your students the attributes of Daniel which made him so wise and thorough that his associates could find no fault in him except concerning his God. Continue the thought by discussing how we can cultivate these same qualities in order to be the same kind of godly witness that Daniel was.

5. He had a right purpose within him—to do as he had done before, rather than seek a secluded place in which to pray. What were some other courses of action Daniel could have taken? Help your students see that we should never be "ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Romans 1:16). Ask your students for some specific ways they might be able to let their light shine; for example, by publicly bowing their heads to give thanks for their food—keeping in mind that we don't pray to be seen of men, but are truly thankful for God's care and provision.

6. Though King Darius was heathen, Daniel's consistent godly behavior convinced the king of the power of God. Discuss with your students that the king's statement in verse 16 was made prior to Daniel's being cast to the lions—not the result of his witnessing Daniel's miraculous deliverance. Continue the discussion by paralleling this powerful witness to the value of light shining from Christians today. How powerful is the light from their Christian lives?

7. The character trait was consistency or faithfulness. Ask your students if they feel a sporadic witness for Christ is effective, and why or why not? Bring out that while a flashing light may attract attention, it is not an effective method of illumination. Just so, their testimony must be continuous in order to be effective.

8. Discuss with your students that through the marvelous light resulting from the deliverance of Daniel, the king decreed the whole kingdom should tremble and fear before God. Through the Biblical account, his testimony has continued even to our day. Help the students rehearse how the light of today's Christian can influence many; for example, missionary endeavors, work among the seamen, testimonies in the Light of Hope and the Higher Way magazines going throughout the world.

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## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How did Daniel let his “light” shine?

Why do people who choose not to serve the Lord shy away from those who are shining lights?

Can there be a little darkness with the light—a little sin in a Christian’s life? Why or why not? Bring out the point that light always dissipates darkness.

Why is a Christian’s behavior away from church important?

What is meant by being a witness?

What are some of the ways we can be a light?

What happens to our Christian witness when we say we believe something and then do the opposite?

Our key verse says, “Let your light so shine before men.” What does this mean?

Are good works enough to make your light shine? Or does there have to be something else? If so, what else?

Why is it important for a Christian to let his light shine?

How can you keep this light bright?

What do you expect of a person who is a Christian? Discuss how the answers indicate the importance of a Christian’s having a brightly burning light.

If we do not shine for God, how will others find Him?

In our ANSWER story, would it have been better for Larry to refrain from praying so he wouldn’t make those around him embarrassed? Explain.

## THINGS TO DO

To represent being a light for Jesus:

- Class members could write witness letters to friends or relatives.
- Class members could canvass a small section of your town or city for the Sunday school departments.
- If there are unsaved students in your class, ask a Christian student to prepare a testimony to be given during class time.

Have your students try to imagine they are living in the days of Daniel—several thousand years ago. What kinds of things do they think they would be recording for the daily newspaper? Tell them the following, “Here’s an assignment you just received from your editor: You are to go to the court of King Darius and report on what happens to Daniel for disobeying the decree by his praying to his God. Title your newspaper article, and make

sure you get all the details by reading Daniel 6:1-28.” Display the pieces in class next week. If you have some students who are uncomfortable with writing assignments, pair them with other students and allow them to be the illustrator.

Call the students in your class and ask them to clip one or two illustrations showing situations in which a Christian could let his light shine. Bring a large sheet of posterboard and assemble a collage of the pictures as you discuss each situation and the possibility for witnessing that it presents.

Take to class a package of new batteries and a flashlight which has no batteries inside. Show the class that the flashlight doesn’t work because there are no batteries in it. But when you put the batteries in, the light will turn on. We are like an empty flashlight and cannot shine for Jesus unless He is in our hearts.

As an opener, blindfold a student volunteer. Spin the student around about five times and then ask him to find the door. As he falters without physical light, point out the necessity of spiritual light through example, testimony, and the Bible in order to find the right pathway through life. Quote Psalm 119:105, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

## Answers for ANSWER

### This Little Light of Mine

Figure the answer for each math problem on some scratch paper. Then find the letter that matches your answer on the candle and write the letter on the line above the math problem. The first word has been done for you. When you have solved this puzzle you will find out what you are when you are following Jesus.

Y E A R E T H E  
7+7 3-3 1+2 8+4 4-4 9+4 4+3 6-6

L I G H T O F T H E  
8+1 19-3 3+3 6+1 11+2 9+1 1+1 15-2 9-2 0+0

W O R L D A C I T Y  
16-1 5+5 9+3 7+2 2+2 2+1 3+2 8+8 9+4 8+6

T H A T I S S E T O N  
8+5 9-2 5-2 14-1 8+8 15-4 6+5 3-3 10+3 6+4 10-9

A N H I L L C A N N O T  
6-3 3-2 10-3 19-3 5+4 12-3 3+2 6-3 7-6 15-14 14-4 9+4

B E H I D  
6+2 8-8 3+4 10+6 3+1

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
E	N	F	A	D	C	G	H
8				9	10	11	12
B				L	O	S	R
				13	14	15	
				T	Y	W	
				16			
				I			

**TEXT** Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 8:3,4; Galatians 3:19-29

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Romans 10:4-9; Galatians 2:16; 1 Timothy 1:8-11

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that the Mosaic Law had a time and place, but its main purpose was to point to Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of the Law, and lead men to Him.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. — John 1:17

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. — Galatians 3:24

**ANSWER TITLE:** Meeting the Requirements  
**SEARCH TITLE:** Christ and the Law

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Though certain religious ceremonies of the Law were done away with, the precepts upon which the Law was founded still stand. The precepts of the Law are what the Psalmist praises in Psalm 119, and it is the precepts of the Law which the scribes and Pharisees failed to keep, choosing to follow ceremony instead.

The Law, as God gave it through Moses to the Children of Israel, was framed exclusively for the Israelites. It was to constitute their moral, ceremonial, and civil code when they became established as a nation in the Promised Land. It was known as God’s covenant with Israel and, as such, it was never imposed on any other nation or people.

Because Israel failed to keep the covenant made at Horeb, God promised He would make a New Covenant. God said of the New Covenant, “I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people” (Jeremiah 31:33 ). In Hebrews 8:6, we read that this is a “better covenant,” and that it was established upon “better promises.” Under the New Covenant, we find that the Christian is Christ’s message in the flesh, “known and read of all men” (2 Corinthians 3:2,3). That is because God’s Spirit has written His law, “not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” With the establishing of the New Covenant, Christ became “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Romans 10:4).

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Christ and the Law

**TEXT:** Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 8:3,4; Galatians 3:19-29

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Romans 10:4-9; Galatians 2:16; 1 Timothy 1:8-11

**KEY VERSE:** Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. — Galatians 3:24

## RESPONSES

1. The Law was given to reveal sin and point to Christ. Your students should understand that the Law was only a means of disclosing sinful propensity, not of producing it. Discuss the similarity of this to a beam of sunlight revealing particles in the air. The particles were already there, but the light revealed their presence.

2. The Law was made for the lawless. It regulated sinners and protected the nation of Israel. Discuss how civil law is designed to protect people today, governing the actions of men. Ideally, those who disobey the laws of our country are judged and then sentenced if they are found guilty, thus protecting others from further crimes. Under the Law, Israel was a theocracy. As long as they obeyed God as their King and Ruler, all went well. His laws regulated the lives of the nation. They were happy and prospered when they followed the Law. They were in trouble when they did not.

3. In making a sin offering, animals were slain and the blood shed. So was Christ slain and His Blood shed. Also, as the bullock was taken outside the camp, so Christ suffered outside the gate to sanctify His people with His Blood.

4. Your students' responses to this question should bring out that *to fulfill* means "to carry out, or to complete." Discuss with the students how the Law was a shadow—a promise—of good things to come (Hebrews 10:1). Ask your students what it takes to make a shadow. Bring out that some substance is required as well as light. Jesus' death and resurrection added the substance which completed the Law. This sacrifice gives the Law its true meaning, leading men through repentance to justification.

The word *schoolmaster* comes from the original Latin word *paedagogus* or *pedagogue*—the entrusted servant who watched over a boy until he was grown. The pedagogue's duty was to protect the boy in all his activities. A schoolmaster held an important place but it was not intended that the schoolmaster be retained after the young man came to maturity. Thus it was with the Law of Moses. It was given by God and was good; it was needful for Israel until Christ came. But when Christ came, the days of the schoolmaster (the time of the Law) were completed.

1. For what reason was the Mosaic Law given? See Galatians 3:19.

2. For whom was the Law made? See 1 Timothy 1:9,10.

3. The rituals of the sin offering as found in Leviticus 8:15 and Hebrews 9:19-22 pointed to sin. How did these also point to Christ? See Hebrews 13:11,12.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. What did Jesus mean when He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"?

5. The observance of the Law required more than ceremonial sacrifices. In Galatians 3:22-26, what is the key word used in every verse? Why was that word significant in the salvation of those under the Law, as well as in the salvation of us today? See Habakkuk 2:4 and Romans 1:17.

6. What does it mean to be *justified*? Considering Galatians 2:16 and Galatians 3:24, by what are we justified?

7. How does righteousness, which is by faith, operate? See Romans 10:9,10.

8. What was one of the indirect results of the Law? See Acts 10:28. How was this indirect result abolished through Jesus Christ?

5. The key word is *faith*. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Discuss with your students how people under the Law served God by making the sacrifices commanded by the Law, thus looking forward by faith to the promised Messiah. When the people obeyed the Law from their hearts, they felt the witness of God's Spirit. Ask the students what action brings God's witness to the hearts of men today. The answer is, "having faith in Jesus Christ and obeying the Word of God." The verses in Habakkuk and Romans bring out that faith was and is necessary to worship God under either the Old or New Testament.

6. To be *justified* means "to be freed from blame, to be acquitted." We are justified by faith. Discuss with your students the difference between the means by which men were justified through the Law and justified through Jesus Christ. Through the Blood of Jesus our sins are blotted out and the stain of sin removed from our lives.

7. The one who believes in his heart and confesses the Lord Jesus with his mouth shall be saved. Use this question to generate a discussion of how much easier it is to serve God under grace than under the Law. Have the students tell of the requirements of the Law in the blood sacrifices—how an animal, without blemish, had to be brought to the altar and slain by the priests, not just once in a person's lifetime, but at various times in order to meet the ceremonial requirements. Ask the students to detail the steps of coming to God under grace: coming to God with prayer and faith in Jesus Christ, believing that God has raised Him from the dead.

8. The Jews believed the Law meant they should isolate themselves from the nations round about them. Jesus' sacrifice broke down this isolation and made it clear that the Gospel is for all men everywhere. Discuss how Jesus fulfilled the types and shadows of the Law by the sacrificing of Himself, also fulfilling the promise God made to Abram: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Ask the students the extent of the Jews' isolation of themselves from other nations. Review with your class how God broke down this "wall of partition" between Jews and Gentiles. Wrap up your lesson by asking the students: "What is Christ's plan for His people today?" Answers could include: "Ye are the light of the world," "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," "Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth."

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What exactly was the Mosaic Law? How was it given to mankind?

How did the Mosaic Law point to Christ?

Why did the Pharisees think they were righteous?

How did Jesus fulfill the Mosaic Law?

Are there any laws that Christians must follow if they believe on Jesus Christ? If there are, what are they?

In our ANSWER story, what act of Joshah's brought feelings of guilt and the need to seek forgiveness?

When did the Mosaic Law end? Under what law is mankind now living?

The Mosaic Law was written on stone. Where does God write His law now?

List some of the major differences between the Mosaic Law and the New Covenant of the Gospel?

## THINGS TO DO

Take to class a tool or kitchen appliance that is hand operated and one that is operated electrically; for example, a meat grinder, food processor, blender, or can opener. Demonstrate the use of both, showing that each did the job, but the power tool is so much of an improvement over the other that if we have a choice, we probably won't go back to the one that has no power. Just so with the New Covenant. When God's commandments are written in the heart, by grace we are able to live pleasing to God.

Pass out a pencil and index card to each student. Have students read pre-selected verses, looking for main ideas. Then each one should write a "telegram version," summarizing the message of the passage in as few words as possible. Share these abridged editions. Scripture passages concerning the Law: Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 8:3,4; 10:4-9; Galatians 2:16; 1 Timothy 1:8-11. For example:

Full verse — "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." — Galatians 2:16

Telegram Version — Works of the Law do not free a man from blame. We are set free through faith in Christ.

Have two students act out the parts of a Pharisee and a Christian. The Pharisee could ask the Christian these questions:

Why aren't you sacrificing animals anymore?

How do you receive forgiveness for your sins?

Who gives you authority to live your life in this new manner?

Choose a product or an advertisement of a product which claims to be a "new" or "improved" version. Relate this to the New Covenant in Christ Jesus.

## Answers for ANSWER

### The Law and Jesus

The main purpose of the Mosaic Law was to point to Jesus Christ, who would fulfill that Law and lead people to Himself. The words on the list below pertain to the Law and Christ. Find them in the puzzle and circle them. Remember, they may read up, down, forward, backward, and diagonally.

GOD  
LAW  
EARTH  
GRACE  
JESUS  
MOSES  
TEACH  
TRUTH  
HEAVEN  
SINFUL  
SPIRIT  
SCRIBES  
PROPHETS  
FULFILLED  
PHARISEES  
COMMANDMENTS

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

**TEXT** Matthew 6:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Luke 6:38; Hebrews 13:1,2

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that benevolent giving or the giving of alms is more than giving money. Alms also means doing kind deeds for the unfortunate and should be done without thought of reward.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Freely ye have received, freely give. — Matthew 10:8

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse. — Proverbs 28:27

**ANSWER  
TITLE:**

# A Difficult Decision

**SEARCH  
TITLE:**

# Benevolence — Giving

## REFERENCE INFORMATION

The sect known as Pharisees had been founded many years before Christ to preserve strict adherence to the Law of Moses. As time progressed, many traditions and interpretations of the Law prevailed to negate the actual spirit of the original Law. In Jesus' time, many Pharisees were not sincere of heart and conscience, as evidenced by Christ's condemnation of their hypocrisy and their

hatred and malice toward Him. As Jesus exposed the motives behind the Pharisees' giving, He cautioned His disciples to avoid falling into the same trap—the seeking of recognition of men for their philanthropy. We are to do what we do out of a heart of love for our neighbor, seeking no recognition except that given by our heavenly Father.

## YOUR OPENER

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# Benevolence — Giving

**TEXT:** Matthew 6:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Luke 6:38; Hebrews 13:1,2

**KEY VERSE:** He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse. — Proverbs 28:27

## RESPONSES

1. As your students discuss the first question, they should conclude that liberality and the showing of kindness to others stem from a genuine love and compassion for others. In response to the second question, your students may respond by mentioning certain categories of people such as neighbors, family, those in need, and brethren in the church.

2. Help your students see that the Lord can direct their giving. Through prayer, the Lord may lead them to contribute to the mission field, or perhaps to give clothing to a needy family down the block. Encourage your students to expand this list.

3. Let the group supply several answers. The point should be that compassionate deeds are evidences of a fruit-bearing Christian life, and an opportunity for outreach. Ask the students to give examples, either Biblical or from their own personal knowledge or experience, where an act of kindness resulted in the conversion of a soul.

As you study this lesson you will be impressed with the fact that the early disciples gave not just ten percent of their income, but according to, and even beyond, their apparent ability. The Church at Jerusalem was impoverished because of severe persecution, and the Church of Macedonia— itself in poverty—had set an example of liberality and generosity by gathering a substantial gift for the saints of Jerusalem. In mentioning this gift, Paul was exhorting the Corinthian church likewise to give sacrificially. But in addition to the giving of money, the disciples gave of their time and effort to care for the widows, and shared their possessions with the orphans and the poor among them.

1. Why should we engage in benevolent giving? To whom should we give?

2. Needs are many, and our financial gifts can only extend so far. How can we decide to whom our gifts should be given?

3. *Alms* means “to practice mercy or beneficence—to show compassion.” It is the same word used in the account in Acts concerning the crippled man at the Temple gate who looked for alms from Peter and John. It is also the word used to describe the good works of Cornelius who, according to tradition, may have been the one who built a synagogue for the Jews at Capernaum. It is closely related to the word translated *almsdeeds* used with *good works* to describe the deeds of Dorcas who, through Peter’s prayers, was raised from the dead. In the light of this definition, how should the term “alms” be reflected in Christianity today?

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. In Luke 21:1-4, Christ commended the poor widow who gave her all. But we must be financially responsible in providing for our own needs and for the needs of those in our care. In light of this, how much should we be willing to give?

5. In considering giving, it is good to think about the blessings God has bestowed on our lives. List here some of the gifts you have received from the Lord, both material and spiritual.

6. Using this list, what things can you give benevolently?

7. The problems in our everyday world range from poverty, hunger, and criminal activities to illness, wars, etc. What is the Christian's responsibility in doing something about these problems? How can an individual help?

8. In your own words, write out the verse given in Matthew 6:3 and explain what it means.

4. The discussion here should center on the necessity to hold with a loose hand whatever God has blessed us with. No formula is spelled out in Scripture giving exact amounts or percentages. But we must remember that God knows exactly how willing we are. He also reads the thoughts and motives of our hearts which determine how much and to whom we give. After all, He is the One from whom we received it to begin with.

5. With the aid of the students, develop a list. Some "gifts" may include mental and physical health, family, special talents, material possessions that contribute to our comfort and convenience. Spiritual gifts may include the experiences of salvation, sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, guidance, comfort. There is also the universal gift of time.

6. Guide the discussion as to how the previously listed gifts can be given back in service to the Lord.

7. As your students discuss these questions, they should see that their personal responsibility must be directed by the Holy Spirit. When God brings a specific need to their attention, they should endeavor to meet that need. Specific methods of involvement, such as contributing to food drives, participation in a neighborhood crime watch, and volunteering time at centers for those afflicted by disease and poverty, could be mentioned. But it should be stressed that God must direct in our involvement. It is possible to overextend ourselves or channel our efforts into areas which would not be the best way of utilizing our physical and financial resources.

8. Encourage your students to share their paraphrasing of this verse. The point should be made that giving without expecting recognition for the gift is one evidence of the sincerity of the commitment to benevolent giving.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the meaning of the word *alms*?

What is the meaning of the word *tithes*?

Is it possible to be so poor that you can't give anything?

As long as you give and people know that you do, is that all that is important? Discuss attitude in relation to 1 Corinthians 13:3 and 2 Corinthians 9:6,7.

Do you think it is important to teach young children lessons on giving? Why?

Can you name other ways of giving besides the giving of money?

How might you individually, or as a class, give to others in need?

What is the difference between giving something that is costly and of great value as opposed to giving something of little or no value?

How do you feel when you hear someone bragging about some good deed that he has done?

## THINGS TO DO

Organize a class project to help a needy person or family. Some possible ideas: collect canned goods and arrange a pretty box or basket with the donations; plan a day to help an elderly person with yard work or house-cleaning; take some homemade cookies to a shut-in, and sing some songs and read the Bible to him.

On the classroom wall, paste Post-it notes naming special jobs for kids who would like to help. Each child may remove the note with the job he wants to complete.

Use part of your time in Sunday school to plan a service activity. Some service activities are: 1) Visit nursing homes and/or homebound church members. 2) Prepare special music for a Sunday school prelude. 3) Provide a service, such as a clean-up day, to beautify the church.

Make a Kindness Tree with your class, using either the outline of a tree on your bulletin board or a real tree branch. Cut out a number of small leaf shapes from construction paper. Have your students take turns telling of a kindness someone else did for them or a person they know about. For each deed mentioned, write a brief description of the deed on one leaf and attach the leaf to the tree. If you wish, the name of the doer can be written on the reverse side.

Organize a class effort to reach out with tract evangelism in different areas of the city.

Bring broken or unusable objects for each of the students in your class. The more decrepit the better. Bring these "gifts" in a brown bag. Bring another bag filled with pieces of paper that have a promise on each piece (one slip of paper for each student). In class, offer each student a gift. When you hand each student an object from the bag—a broken radio, an outdated sweater, a rusty wrench, etc.—they may laugh or groan and ask what kinds of gifts these are. When they decide they don't want the gifts, offer each of them a promise from your other bag. Which gift is better? Why are material objects not always the best things to give? The promises can be something you will do for each student such as I will pray for you this week, and I will help you in class.

## Answers for ANSWER

### What Can I Give?

The giving of alms means doing kind deeds. It is done without expecting a reward. Think of at least one thing you can give to someone using the things mentioned below. Write your ideas on the lines in the boxes.

Time:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Mouth:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Feet:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Heart:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hands:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TEXT** Matthew 6:5-8,16-18; 17:14-21

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE** Isaiah 58:1-11

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to relate that fasting and prayer are powerful tools when seeking the whole will of God and the demonstration of His power.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. — Matthew 17:21

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. — Joel 2:12

**ANSWER TITLE:** **“I Will Fast and Pray”**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **Fasting and Prayer**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Fasting is abstinence from food for a period of time. Fasting may be either voluntary or involuntary. It may be for a religious reason or for some other purpose. In this lesson, we will focus on fasting for religious reasons.

Under the Mosaic Law, only one fast was instituted and that was on the Day of Atonement. The Children of Israel were to fast from the evening of the ninth day of the seventh month until the evening of the next day. It was to be a day of rest and drawing close to the Lord.

After the captivity, four annual fasts were held in memory of the calamities the Jews had suffered. During the Feast of Purim, a day was set aside for fasting to commemorate the fast of Queen Esther and the Jews before she appeared before the king to plead for her people. There are a number of instances in the Old Testament where the people fasted in times of need or great danger.

Religious fasting was done as a sign of mourning for sin, its objective being to placate the wrath of God and win His favor. We read that the heathen King of Nineveh called for a three-day fast to avert the judgment of God foretold by Jonah. The effectiveness of this time of prayer and fasting was evidenced by the fact that the city was not, at that time, overthrown.

There are not many references to fasting in the New Testament. Jesus did not tell us to fast on certain days or so many times a year, but rather when we fast we should do it secretly before God and not appear unto men to be fasting. Jesus severely condemned the hypocrites who made a show of their fasting. Since they did it to be seen of men, Jesus said that they had their reward. The true believer who will set aside time for prayer and fasting will most certainly be rewarded for his effort.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Fasting and Prayer

**TEXT:** Matthew 6:5-8,16-18; 17:14-21

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 58:1-11

**KEY VERSE:** Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. — Joel 2:12

## RESPONSES

1. God said that He was not pleased with this type of a fast. The Israelites of Isaiah's time and the Pharisees of Jesus' time sought God's favor by fasting, but were not willing to do as He had commanded. Today, too, some fast to try to please God without obeying His Word. Others fast for the purpose of losing weight. This should not be confused with spiritual fasting.

2. Jesus condemned those of His day, and called them hypocrites, because of their insincerity. Since they did these things to be seen of men, they already had their reward, and had no reward from the Father in Heaven. We should help the students see that prayer and fasting should never be done to impress someone else.

3. Ezra and his band fasted because they needed safe passage to Jerusalem, and this was granted.

Nehemiah desired to go to Jerusalem, and needed the king's permission. This he received. Esther fasted so that the king would receive her, and she did receive favor in his sight.

Ask your students what we can learn from these examples, bringing out through discussion that, in each instance, fasting was accompanied by earnest prayer.

Fasting is the abstaining from or giving up of one's food for a period of time, for the purpose of humbling oneself before God with a spiritual burden or request. It is usually accompanied by earnest prayer. Jesus brought out the need for prayer and fasting in the account in Matthew 17:21 when His disciples were unable to heal a father's sick son.

1. What did God say about the value of fasting and making our voices heard by Him in prayer if the lives we live before others are not consistent with God's Word? See Isaiah 58:3-7.

2. What was Jesus' attitude toward prayer and fasting when it was done to be seen of men?

3. The questions of when and why we should fast can best be approached by considering some Biblical examples of circumstances where fasting was necessary in order to bring about an answer to an urgent need. Describe the circumstances brought out in the following Scriptures, identifying the petitioner, the need, and the results in answer to their fasting:

Ezra 8:21-23,31

Nehemiah 1:4-11; 2:1-6

Esther 4:15-17; 5:1-3

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. Sometimes stressful circumstances reveal to us the need for a time of prayer and fasting. Are there other times we should fast? What instructions did Jesus give His disciples, both by word and example, as to when and why they should fast? See Matthew 9:14,15 and 17:21.

5. What action will Satan take when we purpose to pray and fast before the Lord for some special need? See Daniel 10:3,12,13.

6. How did Job feel concerning the importance of food during the time of his great trial? See Job 23:12.

7. Does fasting and prayer guarantee that a person will receive the desires of his heart? Explain your answer.

8. Read Acts 13:2,3 and Acts 14:23, two instances when the Early Church fasted and prayed before the Lord. What was the purpose of these fastings, and what were the results?

4. While oftentimes fasting may be done after a particular need is seen, Scripture indicates that fasting also helps to maintain a closeness with God and the needed power in our lives. Jesus told the disciples of John that after the Bridegroom was taken, then would His disciples fast. After He healed the man's lunatic son when His disciples could not, He told them that in such circumstances only prayer and fasting would bring the answer. He went before His Father for long periods of time in prayer, sometimes all night, persevering. Bring out that this instruction and example was for us as well as for His disciples.

5. Your students will see from the example given in Daniel that this man of God received no answer for twenty-one days because the enemy stood in the way of the answer. In our day, too, Satan will try to hinder when we are seeking God for a need. If possible, have your students relate some personal examples of times when this occurred. Guide the discussion to the conclusion that Satan hates to see someone who is resolved to receiving an answer from the Lord, even to the extent of fasting. He will always do all he can to oppose them.

6. He esteemed the words of God's mouth more than his necessary food. This Scripture would indicate that Job used fasting as well as prayer in his time of trial. Bring out in discussion how Job's determined purpose brought about an answer from God. What might have been the result had Job neglected to fast and prevail as he did?

7. The obvious answer to this question is no. Your discussion should revolve around the thought that, when one is sincere and earnest in his petition, he will be willing to accept whatever answer the Lord sends. Sometimes it may be that what we are seeking would not be the best thing for us. God will answer, but it may not be the answer we had expected.

8. They were doing this for the purpose of learning God's will and received His Spirit on their lives and ministry. Since God changes not, we can expect Him to answer in the same way for us as He did for the early Apostles. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

In Matthew 6:5, what did Jesus mean by, "They have their reward"?

What did Jesus call people who fast just to be seen of men or to make a favorable impression on someone?

How do you think the Lord feels about any service or giving that is done with the hope of gain or to make a good impression on someone else?

Might even sinners benefit from prayer and fasting or is this only for Christians?

In our ANSWER story, for what reason did the young boy fast and pray? How did this affect his life?

Can you remember a time in your own life, or in that of a friend's or relative's, when some need was so great that fasting and prayer seemed to be called for?

## THINGS TO DO

With your class, compose a list of "Be-attitudes for Intercessors." A typical list may include: be persistent, be bold, be honest, and be unselfish.

Let students make suggestions and write on a blackboard things they always think of in pairs; i.e., salt and pepper, table and chairs, moon and stars. See how many they can come up with in a short period of time. Can they think of any that have to be together to be effective? Matthew 17:21 teaches that fasting as well as prayer is sometimes necessary.

When students come into class, be prepared to teach, but have one of your shoes off. When they have noticed and, of course, are expecting an explanation, show them why

one shoe is good. It serves a purpose by keeping that foot warm, etc. You might get along just fine for a while, but there will come a time when you must have two. (What if there were snow on the ground and you didn't have a car?) Sometimes there are needs in our lives that can best be met with prayer and fasting, or may be met only when we have added fasting to our prayers.

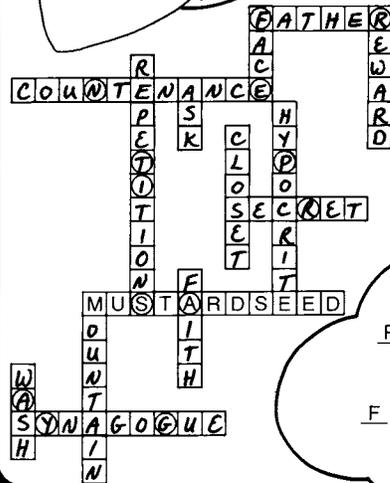
## Answers for ANSWER

### Powerful Tools



The words listed below are from our lesson. Place them where they fit in the puzzle. Unscramble the letters that are circled and fill in the spaces below to find two things that make a powerful tool when seeking God's will.

- ASK
- FACE
- WASH
- FAITH
- CLOSET
- FATHER
- REWARD
- SECRET
- MOUNTAIN
- HYPOCRITE
- SYNAGOGUE
- COUNTENANCE
- MUSTARDSEED
- REPETITIONS



P R A Y E R

AND

F A S T I N G



# Heavenly Investment

## RESPONSES

1. Allow time for students to give answers, which may include money and financial investments, houses, property, automobiles, household appliances, computers, sports equipment. You should conclude that many people in the world live without things that are regarded as necessities in the United States.

2. Our text brings out that moth and rust corrupt, thieves break through and steal. Discuss with your students the fact that earthly treasures are temporary—for this life only. Money can be spent, stolen, or invested unwisely, thus it is gone. Houses, automobiles, clothing all wear out and must be repaired or replaced. Ask the students to name an earthly treasure that does not have some potential for erosion or loss.

3. Material things cannot satisfy the soul. Ask your students to trace the progression of the acquiring of material things, starting with a tricycle for an example. The tricycle gives way to the bicycle, the first automobile gives way to a newer and better automobile, the starter home gives way to a larger, more expensive home. Many people seek for better-paying jobs in order to afford more things, never being completely satisfied with what they have. Some people may gain what seems to be a super abundance of earthly treasures, but if they do so at the expense of their souls, what is the profit? What can a man give in exchange for his soul?

4. Answers will probably include: seeing Jesus, eternal life, a mansion, streets of gold, the tree of life, as well as many other eternal values.

**TEXT:** Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12:13-21

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 13:44-46

**KEY VERSE:** Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. — Colossians 3:2

Solomon in his wisdom sought for “that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.” He proved that earthly treasures did not satisfy (Ecclesiastes 2:3-11). Jesus Christ teaches us about the true investment: “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:20,21). In a comparison of these two values, the person who is honest will recognize the need to choose the heavenly investment.

1. Name several things that in your consideration would be counted as earthly treasures. Then go back through your list and underline the items which are absolutely necessary to sustain physical life.

2. In the course of time, what could happen to each of the treasures you listed?

3. Earthly treasures are expected to bring happiness to the one who has them. While they may seem to bring contentment for a time, why does this eventually not work out? See Ecclesiastes 5:10.

4. What are some of the items you would include in a list of heavenly treasures?

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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5. If money cannot buy heavenly treasures (1 Peter 1:18), how does one invest in these important things? See Malachi 3:16,17; John 14:1-3; 1 Peter 1:19.

6. In Luke 12:17, what did the rich man think was his problem? How did the rich man propose to solve his problem?

7. What was the rich man's real problem?

8. Jesus drew a parallel between the rich man and the one who is not rich toward God. He said the rich man was a fool, and "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Why do you think Jesus said that?

9. Explain the meaning of our key verse.

5. One invests in heavenly treasures by yielding his heart, life, and will to the heavenly Father. Discuss with your students how heavenly treasures may be gained by believing in our Lord Jesus Christ, by following Christ and seeking those things which are from Above, by fearing the Lord and speaking often of Him. These are a few examples. Ask your students to furnish other examples of investing in heavenly treasures. They may cite Moses who esteemed the reproach of Christ as greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, the Apostle Paul who was persuaded that Christ was able to keep all that had been committed to Him, or Peter who had assurance of a heavenly inheritance.

6. The rich man was concerned that his barns could not hold his harvest. Ask the students how much storage the man already had. Discuss the possibility that, initially, the man may have thought he would be satisfied when the original barns were filled. Now they were filled, but the man was still worried: "What shall I do?" Bring out that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). In reference to the second question, the rich man planned to build barns big enough to hold all his produce. Enquire of your students how much earthly treasure really belongs to us. How much are we going to take with us when we leave this world? Has not God made every one of us stewards over that which He allows us to have?

7. He concerned himself only with earthly treasures and did not consider the welfare of his soul. Discuss with your students what the rich man's reaction might have been had he known his soul was to be required of him that night. Does anyone know how short or long his life will be on this earth? Ask your students, "How much is your soul worth?" Discuss with them the importance of taking care of their most valuable treasure early in life.

8. Discuss your students' answers, emphasizing that the rich man thought he could satisfy his soul with earthly treasures, that he would live a long time, that he could accomplish his plans without any problems, and that he had no thought about his soul's spiritual welfare. Bring out that all these things may also be the thoughts of people in our present day.

9. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Use your students' explanations to wrap up this lesson, reinforcing once again the importance of establishing the right priorities.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is a spiritual investment?

Where is the line drawn between possessing material goods and being possessed by them?

Why are some people obsessed with “keeping up with the Joneses,” as the saying goes?

What does the word *invest* mean?

What are some of the returns/profits of a heavenly investment?

According to Matthew 6:19, what happens to treasures we lay up for ourselves on earth? What are some of these earthly treasures people save for themselves today?

In Matthew 6:20, Jesus tells us that we should lay up treasures in Heaven. How do we invest in or store up treasures in Heaven?

In our ANSWER story, what caused Darla to begin to consider that perhaps she had placed too great a value on her bicycle?

## THINGS TO DO

Take to class two banks or boxes with slits in the top, some coins, and slips of paper describing work we can do for the Lord. Put coins into one bank, telling how the money can be taken out easily and spent. Then put the slips of paper into the other bank, explaining how these can never be “spent.” They are a heavenly investment, and God keeps record of them, and will reward the investor for them in Heaven.

Get several pamphlets and booklets from a bank on money market funds, IRA’s, etc. Compare what each one offers that the others don’t. How do God’s funds match up?

Choose several objects that were once new and are now ready to be thrown out; for example,  
 A battery — dead  
 An old shirt — moth eaten  
 A light bulb — burned out  
 An old toy — broken  
 A felt pen — dried up

Discuss the life span of these objects and how they all expire at some time. Talk about how God’s love is unlimited and consistent in every detail and never runs out.

From catalogs and magazines, cut out pictures of houses, cars, bikes, or anything that might be considered a treasure. Mount these pictures on construction paper. Wrap a small shoe box with gold foil and decorate it to represent a treasure chest. Put the pictures inside. Use this as a visual aid to explain to your class some of the things people in our day value highly. Discuss the probable length of time each item pictured will last, and compare this to the “treasures” which will last for eternity.

## Answers for ANSWER

### How Do You Rate?

Have you ever seen those charts that show you if the stock market has gone up or down? See the sample square. Let’s see how you rate in heavenly investments. Use the large graph below and answer each question. Draw a short line between each answer (up or down) to show where you stand.

	Do you . . .	Believe in God?	Love Jesus?	Read your Bible?	Believe the Bible?	Pray?	Witness?	Love your enemies?	Forgive?	Have patience?	Respect others?	Attend Sunday school?
Always												
Sometimes												
Seldom												
Never												

**TEXT** Matthew 6:25-34; 2 Kings 4:1-7

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Isaiah 43:1,2; Philippians 4:6,7,19

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that as we make the material cares of life subordinate to our service to God, He will manifest His providential care unflinchingly.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. — Philippians 4:19

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. — Matthew 6:33

**ANSWER TITLE:** **God Will Always Provide**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **Worldly Care and God's Providence**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

From the very beginning God has shown His loving care and provision for His children: to Adam and Eve in the Garden, Israel in the wilderness, Elijah in time of famine, the widow with the pots of oil, King David under many circumstances. The ninety-first Psalm tells of many ways that God provides for and protects His own. If we abide in Him, keep our trust in Him, and put Him first in our lives, we are assured of God's care and provision all our days.

Immediately prior to the Scripture text, Jesus warns against putting our trust in earthly treasures or neglecting God for money's sake (Matthew 6:19-24). God does not want us to trust in man or in money. We are admonished to trust in God. God has promised many blessings for those who trust in Him: a treasury of goodness (Psalm 31:19), peace in our souls (Isaiah 26:3), the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 25:34), and eternal life (John 10:28).

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Worldly Care and God’s Providence

**TEXT:** Matthew 6:25-34; 2 Kings 4:1-7

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Isaiah 43:1,2; Philippians 4:6,7,19

**KEY VERSE:** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. — Matthew 6:33

## RESPONSES

1. Let the group supply several answers. They should conclude that there is something more important than the clothes we wear or the food we eat. Ask your students what that is. Zero in on the need of being born again and serving the Lord in this life. If our lives are spent in the service of the Lord, He will provide all we need.

2. The question asked is, “Are ye not much better than they [the fowls]?” God created man in His own image, and in Isaiah 43:7 we find that God says of man, “I have created him for my glory.” John 3:16 tells us of God’s great love for man. Through these words we can know that we mean more to God than any other part of His creation.

3. Man is forever learning from nature—God’s creation. The beauty of the lilies is not only in their appearance, but also in the fact that they are totally dependent on God for all their needs. There is nothing they could do to improve their appearance. Jesus went so far as to say that the lilies are more glorious than even Solomon in all his fine array of clothing.

As we travel through life, we are called upon to make decisions as to whether we will put our faith and trust in God, or become absorbed in the cares of this life. If we choose God, He will take care of our necessities. In 1 Peter 5:7 we learn that we can cast all our care upon God because He cares for us.

1. In your own words, tell what is meant by the verse in our text which says, “Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?”

2. Matthew 6:26 indicates that God provides for the fowls of the air, even though they do not sow or reap. What question is asked in that same verse? Consider Isaiah 47:7 and John 3:16 as you answer that question.

3. Jesus tells us, in verse 28, to “consider the lilies of the field . . .” Why do you think He wanted us to focus on these seemingly simple things? What is important about the words, “they toil not, neither do they spin”?

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. Do you think the woman in our text (2 Kings 4) did a wise thing to come to Elisha with her problem? Why?

5. The sons were required to borrow empty vessels from their neighbors. What spiritual attributes did they exhibit when they did this and how does this parallel our spiritual lives today?

6. What did God do to provide for the temporal needs of this family? Relate an instance from your own experience or knowledge where God provided for a need in a miraculous way.

7. Verse 31 of our text in Matthew tells us to “take no thought,” of what we will eat, drink, or wear. What does that mean? What assurance can we find in verses 32 and 33?

8. As we consider Matthew 6:34, we can be assured that God does not condone a lazy, thoughtless, irresponsible attitude toward life. Read Proverbs 6:6-11, Ephesians 4:28, and 2 Thessalonians 3:10. What do these verses tell us about not neglecting hard work and earning a living?

4. Allow time for your class to discuss their answers. We know God supplied the need of the woman by giving Elisha counsel as to what she should do. Discuss with the class how there are times when we, too, are faced with problems regarding our needs. In a time like this, it would be beneficial for us to seek counsel of a godly person.

5. Typical answers may include faith, obedience, willingness. Continue the discussion by developing how we must practice these same attributes when we come before the Lord with a petition for our needs.

6. God multiplied the oil in the one pot to fill many empty vessels, and then the family sold the oil in order to pay their debt and have a living. Allow time for your students to relate similar examples from their own experience or knowledge, and summarize by pointing out that we can be confident God is still working miracles and caring for His people in this day.

7. We are not to be preoccupied and worried about food, drink, clothing, or shelter. We are assured that our heavenly Father knows just what we need, and as we seek God and His righteousness, He will see that these needs are met.

8. Each person, whether male or female, is charged to provide for his family, labor honestly, and share with the needy what he earns. And if he will not work, “neither should he eat.” The words, “Take therefore no thought,” mean, simply, don’t be overcome with worry about what will happen from one day to the next. Live one day at a time, and trust in God our Father when difficult times come and we are unsure of the future. As He takes care of today, He will take care of tomorrow also. Share Philippians 4:6,7 with your class.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the difference between worrying about the future and planning for the future?

If you are not supposed to seek after worldly possessions, what are you supposed to seek after?

How has God provided for a need in your life?

In Matthew 6:33, the end of the verse mentions that all these things shall be added unto you. What do you think "all these things" refers to?

Explain how the story of the widow woman is an example of God's providence. What might be some of the worldly cares God is referring to? List and categorize these responses. Example:

SELF

My looks

My own will

FAMILY

Concerned about my brother's or sister's opinion of me

FRIENDS

Putting my recreation with friends ahead of God

## THINGS TO DO

Choose a song dealing with worldly care or God's providence. Make a list of discussion questions concerning that song. After students listen to and/or read the words of the song, have them write out responses to the discussion questions.

Possible songs: *A Mighty Fortress*, *God Will Take Care of You*, *How Firm a Foundation*, *I Know Who Holds Tomorrow*.

Example: If you choose *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*, you might ask your students: "According to the chorus, how has God been faithful unto the songwriter? What is the main thought of the first verse? Why is the changelessness of God a comfort? According to verse three, what are some of the blessings God gives to a Christian? Could you name some other blessings God gives to us?"

What are the major concerns in the life of a child? teenager? young adult? middle-ager? senior citizen?

Emphasize the fact that we all have concerns, but our major concern should be our spiritual condition. Divide your class into three groups. Have each group compile a list of earthly concerns that people have. Each group should deal with concerns of a different age group. After sharing these lists, discussion should follow about our attitudes toward these concerns: Are these concerns unnecessary? At what point do earthly concerns become too important? Include in the discussion the spiritual concerns that every soul should contemplate.

To show what a lack of care can do to something alive, bring a healthy plant to class. Neglect it through the following weeks and see what happens.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Do You Believe Him?

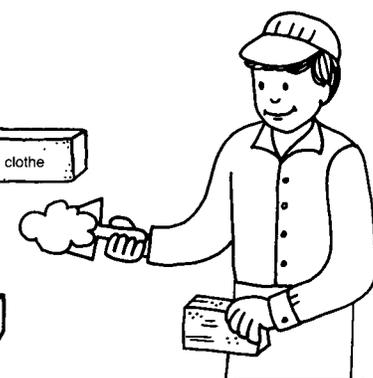
The things that God has promised to His people are missing from the wall below. Find the right brick and place the word in the correct place.

these things

kingdom

need

clothe



If God	so clothe	the grass	of the	field	shall he	not
much more	<i>clothe</i>	you?	It is	your Father's	good	
pleasure to	give	you the	<i>kingdom</i>	But seek	ye first	
the kingdom	of God	and his	righteousness,	and all	<i>these things</i>	
shall be	added unto	you.	My God	shall	supply	all your
<i>need</i>	according to	his riches	in glory	by Christ	Jesus.	

**TEXT** Matthew 7:1-5,15-23; Romans 2:1-3

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Luke 6:37,41-45; 13:6-9

**OBJECTIVE** The students should be able to explain that God forbids judging one another—we must judge ourselves. However, the fruit of a person's life, is indicative of his spiritual attainments.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. — Matthew 7:20

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. — Matthew 7:18

**ANSWER TITLE:** **An Error in Judgment**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **Judging vs. Spiritual Evaluation**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

The noun *judge* means “a person qualified to form an opinion; a person who decides, criticizes, condemns.” God’s Word tells us, “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1). It also states, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them” (Matthew 7:20). It is not our place to judge, yet each person is known by the fruit he produces.

In the New Testament the idea of judgment appears in both the human and the divine context. However, Jesus warned against uncharitable judgments, as did Paul. Too often the person judging is guilty himself, perhaps of the same offense or even worse. See Romans 2:1.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Judging vs. Spiritual Evaluation

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:1-5,15-23; Romans 2:1-3

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Luke 6:37,41-45; 13:6-9

**KEY VERSE:** A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. — Matthew 7:18

## RESPONSES

1. Allow time for your students to offer their definitions. They should conclude that *judge* means “to weigh evidence from both sides and to reach a decision based on evidence examined.” In Scripture this word is used in the sense of condemning another or assessing the measure of his guilt.

2. Jesus commands those who have been forgiven not to judge, so that they will not be judged. The forgiveness we receive at salvation frees us from God’s judgment for the sins we have committed. Students should be encouraged to realize the importance of not judging. Ask your students what happens when a person does judge another. See Romans 2:1.

3. We examine ourselves to be sure of our stand before God. Allow students’ responses. Some answers may include: self-examination, listening to God’s Spirit, comparing one’s life to God’s Word, or looking at ourselves as God would see us. You may wish to point out that simply judging ourselves alone will not secure our entrance to Heaven. We must follow up on the judgment by repenting and receiving salvation.

Have you ever had a foreign object in your eye? It may have been very small, but it still hurt a lot, didn’t it? Jesus warned us about looking for and trying to remove the mote from our brother’s eye when we may have a beam in our own eye. Usually when a person sees too many things wrong with others, he has a serious “eye” problem. Judgment belongs to God. “I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jeremiah 17:10).

1. What is the meaning of the word *judge*? How is this word used in the context of Scripture?

2. Jesus strictly forbids judging others. Why do you think He did so?

3. In 1 Corinthians 11:31, we read that we can only judge ourselves. If we faithfully do this in the light of God’s Word, we will escape the condemnation which the world will receive at the Judgment Seat of God. Another reason for self-examination is found in 2 Corinthians 13:5. What is it, and how do we judge ourselves?

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. While we are warned against judging others, the Bible does tell us, "by their fruits ye shall know them." We can judge ourselves because we have all the information, but we are limited by God's Word to examining the fruit of another's life. We need to be careful in our examination of others because we cannot see their motives or the circumstances involved. When might there be a need to be able to recognize the spiritual condition of others?

5. List the points of evaluation you feel should be used in examining the spiritual condition of another's life.

6. How does the fruit of the Spirit or the lack of it displayed in one's life indicate his spiritual condition? See Galatians 5:22-26.

7. Think about it: If you subjected yourself to the same type of evaluation that you apply to others, how would you measure up?

4. Students may bring up the thought that we must be aware of a person's spiritual condition before we can help him. They should also see the importance of recognizing the spiritual condition of each person who has an influence on their lives. This knowledge will help each of us to not be pulled down by associating closely with those who are not spiritually minded.

5. The points mentioned may include whether the life being examined is doctrinally sound, conversation above reproach, unselfish in actions, reacts under stress in accordance with God's Word, holiness exemplified, respect for things godly, in conformity to God's Word. Point out that the points of evaluation for examining others do not include a right to judge their motives, purposes, reasons, or feelings, unless they have stated them to us. The criterion must be: are their outward actions sanctioned by the Word of God?

6. Our lives display either the fruit of the Spirit or the works of the flesh. Discuss with the students the fact that the fruit of the Spirit cannot be counterfeited. How a person exemplifies the fruit of the Spirit is a good indicator of his spiritual condition.

7. Student responses to this question will not be necessary. But encourage students to look into their own lives. Do they pass? Use the challenge set forth in this last question as a springboard into your wrap-up. Point out that God forbids judging one another, but we must judge ourselves. Looking at the fruit of our own lives is a good indicator of our spiritual condition.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

When the Bible says to judge not, what does it mean?

What is a mote, as referred to in our lesson? Why should we leave our brother with the Lord?

What should we do about our own faults?

How does the Bible say we will know a false prophet?

What is a definition of the word *judge*? Give some examples of how we judge other people; i.e., finding fault, condemning, or passing final judgment as if they had no hope.

What is the danger in judging someone else? What does God's Word say will happen if we start judging other people? See Matthew 7:1,2 and Romans 2:1-3.

In our ANSWER story, why did Peter apologize to Bill?

## THINGS TO DO

Write the following examples, or others which you come up with, on a large cardboard or blackboard and have the students read each pair of statements and discuss which attitude they would rather have. The first ones show a judgmental attitude and the second ones show the attitude we should have as fruit testers.

1. (a) I don't know how she can call herself a Christian! She still hangs around with the bad crowd at school and I even saw her going into a movie theater last week. I don't do those things, and she shouldn't either. Wait until I tell our Sunday school teacher.

(b) She calls herself a Christian but still does some things God's Word shows us are wrong for a Christian to do. I hope she asks the Lord to help her.

2. (a) Look at those kids, always doing those awful things. I know they'll get their punishment. There's no hope for people like that.

(b) I know those kids don't know God and don't know how to do right. I'm going to ask the Lord to help me be an example for them to follow.

Take to class an apple and a banana. Ask what kind of tree each one came from. Then ask if a banana can grow on an apple tree. Compare this to the fact that neither will bad "fruit" grow in the life of one who is a Christian. If a person does not have the fruit of the Spirit he is not saved. James 3:11,12 implies that no one can be both good and bad; they will be either one or the other.

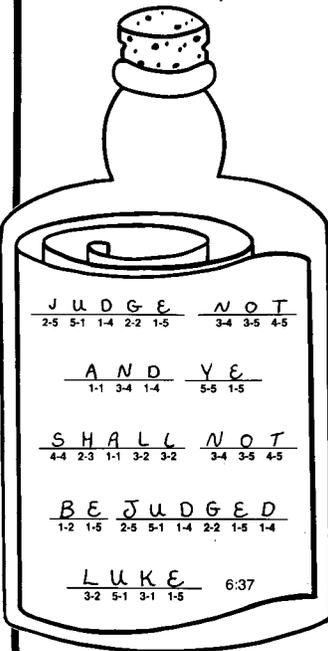
Take to class some fruit, preferably some fresh and some bad or rotten. Use these to demonstrate why we need to test fruit (Matthew 7:20). Present the fruit to the students and discuss how before the fruit is eaten we must make sure it is edible; no worms in apples, no mold on oranges, etc. We must "test" the fruit because if we did eat some fruit that was bad, we might get sick. This has a spiritual meaning too. We must look at others and test their fruit. If their fruit is bad or evil—i.e., they swear, have bad tempers, or other actions that are opposite of the fruit of the Spirit—then we should not fellowship with them. We should help them by praying for them.

Bring several books with different types of jackets or covers to class. Ask your students how they select a book at the library, bringing out that we usually look at the cover or jacket to decide whether we feel the book would be interesting or not. Just so, people look on the outward appearance or behavior of people to determine what type of persons they are.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Get the Message

To find the message below about judging use this alphabet multiplication table. It works just like the regular multiplication table. The first number will go down and the second number will go across. For example 2-3 will be the letter H, and 4-1 will be the letter P. To find the first letter for you we went DOWN 2 and then ACROSS 5 and found J.




	1	2	3	4	5
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	F	G	H	I	J
3	K	L	M	N	O
4	P	Q	R	S	T
5	U	V	W	X	Y

**TEXT** Matthew 7:7-11; 9:27-30; 1 John 5:14,15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Mark 11:24; 1 John 3:22

**OBJECTIVE** The students should be able to explain that petitioning prayer without faith is ineffective, but when used together, the believer receives an answer from God.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive. — Matthew 21:22

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. — John 15:7

**ANSWER TITLE:** **One Important Requirement**  
**SEARCH TITLE:** **Faith and Prayer**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

In the Bible, prayer is communication with God. Created in the image of God, man has a tendency toward worship. Because religion is universal, prayer is the same. People everywhere, of all times, have sought favor with a “higher order” no matter what their understanding of that may have been. Primitive people cried out to their gods and the “learned” idolaters of Paul’s time built altars to their many deities.

Prayer is talking with God. It is making your request known unto Him in faith. The promise given in Matthew 7:7 is so simple on the surface that we are in danger of failing to recognize its immensity. Our Lord instructs the believer to ask, seek, and knock, because these three words cover a wide spectrum of prayer.

Prayer is asking and believing you will receive.

When you know the will of God regarding a need, whether it be material or spiritual, you can ask and receive. This is prayer according to the revealed will of God.

Prayer is seeking and knowing you will find. When you do not know the will of God regarding a need, whether it be material or spiritual, then you are to seek His will in prayer concerning this need until you find it. This is prayer for a knowledge of the unrevealed will of God in a specific need.

Prayer is knocking and trusting that the way will be opened to you. When you know the will of God, and yet you find a closed door, you are to knock, and keep on knocking until God opens the door. This is tenacious prayer—prayer with mountain-moving faith—which perseveres until the impossible becomes the possible. This is miracle-working prayer.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Faith and Prayer

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:7-11; 9:27-30; 1 John 5:14,15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Mark 11:24; 1 John 3:22

**KEY VERSE:** If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. — John 15:7

## RESPONSES

1. The first verse of our text indicates that we are to ask, seek, and knock. When one asks he expects an answer, or at least, a reply. When one seeks, he hopes to find. And in knocking, the person anticipates the door to be opened. Each of these words expresses a measure of faith which is a part of effective prayer.

2. The results are receiving, finding, and having the way opened. Discuss with your students some of the following Scriptures which substantiate this promise. Ask — Zechariah 10:1; John 14:13,14; John 16:24. Seek — Isaiah 55:6; Jeremiah 29:13; Acts 17:27. Knock — Luke 13:25; Revelation 3:20. Reinforce the thought that many Scriptures encourage us to pray for the blessing of God upon our lives.

3. The factor is believing or having faith in God. As your students discuss the second question, refer to the list of heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. Note in verse six how, without faith, it is impossible to please God. Ask the class to read James 1:5-7. Discuss how faith brings the reward when used with prayer, but how the faithless receive nothing.

4. Faith comes through hearing the Word of God. Discuss with your students how they obtained faith. Bring out in the discussion that through hearing the Word of God, this faith has been formed. If they had never heard about God—His eternal Being, His power, His miracles—there could be no faith in Him. Bring out that the more of God's Word we know, the greater is our potential faith. But to be really effective, faith must be put into practice, it must be exercised.

Prayer brings one into the presence of the highest, holiest, and most powerful Being in the universe. Prayer not accompanied by faith is an exercise in futility (Hebrews 11:6). Faith embraces God's promise by action as well as by word. True faith and prayer cause the Spirit to make intercession for the petitioner, producing results in accord with the will of God.

1. What three words did Jesus use to encourage people to pray? How does each of these words apply to faith when we pray?

2. What results can be expected when following Jesus' directions?

3. What factor or element enters into successfully seeking for God? See Matthew 21:22. Has this factor always been an essential ingredient? Explain.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. "Have faith in God," Jesus said in Mark 11:22. Where does faith come from? See Romans 10:17.

5. In our Matthew 9 text, Jesus asked the blind men, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" Why do you think Jesus asked this question?

6. Read the account of the healing recorded in John 9. Jesus told the blind man: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." What part did faith play in this healing?

7. How can Christians be sure that they will receive an answer from God?

8. How are the promises in Mark 11:24 and 1 John 5:14,15 similar?

5. Jesus asked this in order to challenge their faith. Did Jesus always require a declaration of faith from those who sought His favor? Not always a vocal declaration, but discuss with your students how faith entered into the answers of the petitions that Christ fulfilled. Talk about the number of times the Syrophenician woman in Matthew 15:21-28 could have been discouraged before her persistent faith brought forth Jesus' comment of admiration: "O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Until then nothing had been said of her faith.

6. Faith was not directly mentioned, but obeying the command of Jesus put into action the faith in the blind man's heart which, in turn, brought sight to his blinded eyes. Ask your students what part obedience has in relation to faith and prayer. (See John 15:7.) We find that believing and obedience are practically synonymous in the Bible.

7. Discuss with your class the importance of being sure that our prayers are for things that are within God's will for us. How can we always be sure? Discuss how some benefits are stated very plainly: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "For the promise [of the Holy Ghost] is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). For those things that are not so clearly spelled out, the seeker should ask that the Lord's will be done. Bring into the discussion the danger of contending with God for something that might not be good for us, especially for our spiritual good. Refer to Psalm 106:15.

8. Both verses promise answers to prayer. Discuss with your students how Scripture bears out the truth that God answers prayers of faith. Time may be required for God to work out all the circumstances to His honor and glory, and for the believer's full spiritual benefit. Recall how Daniel prayed three weeks. It was revealed to him later that his prayer had been heard from the first day, but the answer had been hindered by the enemy (Daniel 10:12,13). God's Word is true, and when we pray He does hear and answer our prayers. We must let Him work out the details and timing as He knows best.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is meant by "ask, and it shall be given you"?

What does "seek, and ye shall find" mean?

How would you explain the meaning of "knock, and it shall be opened unto you"?

Jesus gave a promise with ask, seek, and knock. What is the promise? See Matthew 7:8.

What do you think is the best way to pray?

How do we know God hears our prayers?

What effort did the blind men put forth before they received healing? How does this compare with our own praying?

In our ANSWER story, why was Keith given the bicycle when others had been refused?

## THINGS TO DO

Show your class some pictures of a mailbox, a telephone, a radio, a cassette tape, and any other things you may think of that reflect communication. See if students can make the connection to faith in our daily use of these assorted types of equipment or services.

Ask your class for special prayer requests. Band together in prayer and form a prayer chain. Make a commitment to be more helpful at the altar services in church.

Bring to class a peanut, a walnut, or a hard-boiled egg. Tell students: "I have something in my hand that is tangible and has a color. No man has ever seen it before. That's hard to believe, isn't it? How many of you believe me? Let me prove it to you." Display the item, crack it open, and show the inside. "Some of you believed what I said even though you did not know what it was and had not seen it. This is an example of faith. We pray, believe, and receive an answer."

Print each letter of the word FAITH on separate sheets of notebook paper. Distribute these five sheets of paper to your students. Have them list under each letter any items (which begin with that letter) that we have faith in or know are real. Some ideas to get them started: F - father, friend; A - advice, aunt; I - idea, illustration; T - teacher, telephone; H - home, husband.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Faith is Believing

When you pray you can believe Jesus will do what He said He would do. Below are some of Jesus' promises. Draw a line between the two parts of Scripture that go together. If you need help, look up the Bible references that follow each verse.




1. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him,
2. Continue in prayer,
3. Ask, and it shall be given you;
4. If he ask a fish,
5. Men ought always to pray,
6. What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread,
7. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
8. Then touched he their eyes, saying,
9. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire,
10. If we ask anything according to his will,

seek, and ye shall find; (Matthew 7:7)

will he give him a stone? (Matthew 7:9)

According to your faith be it unto you. (Matthew 9:29)

will he give him a serpent? (Matthew 7:10)

he heareth us: (1 John 5:14)

to all that call upon him in truth. (Psalm 145:18)

when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (Mark 11:24)

and not to faint; (Luke 18:1)

and watch in the same with thanksgiving; (Colossians 4:2)

availeth much. (James 5:16)



# 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

## 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.

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

23

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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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:

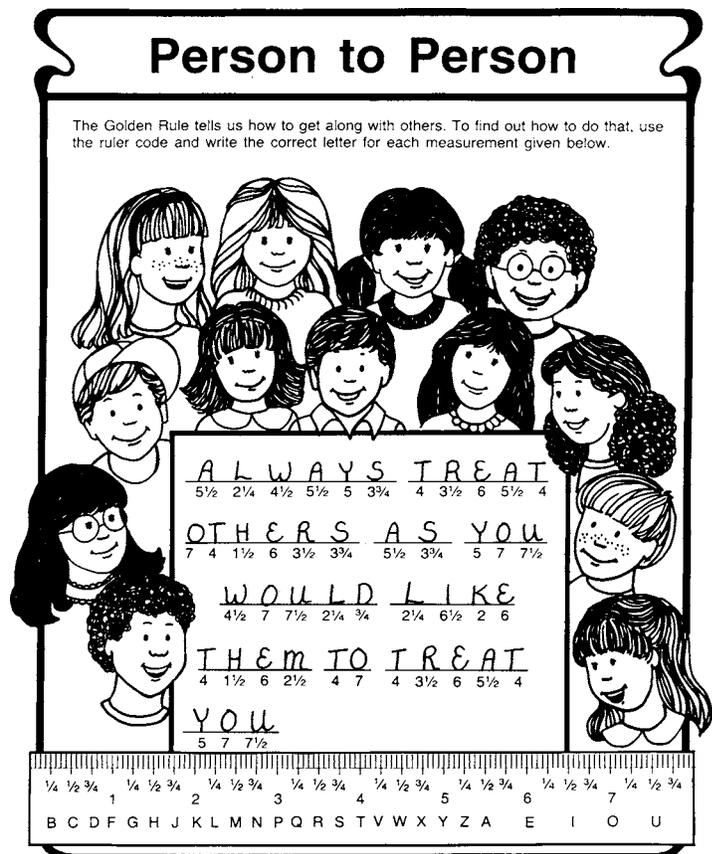
1. Remember me at Christmas.
2. Share your chocolate bar with me.
3. Be kind to me.
4. Don't forget my birthday.
5. Sit beside me and talk with me.
6. Walk me home and keep me company.
7. Help me with my homework.

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.

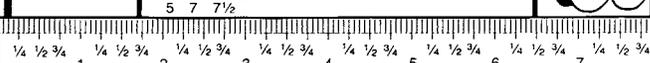
## Answers for ANSWER

### 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
<small>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</small>
OTHERS AS YOU
<small>7 4 1 1/2 6 3 1/2 3 3/4 5 1/2 3 3/4 5 7 7 1/2</small>
WOULD LIKE
<small>4 1/2 7 7 1/2 2 1/4 3/4 2 1/4 6 1/2 2 6</small>
THEM TO TREAT
<small>4 1 1/2 6 2 1/2 4 7 4 3 1/2 6 5 1/2 4</small>
YOU
<small>5 7 7 1/2</small>



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

**TEXT** Matthew 7:13,14; Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1:1-6

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Psalm 37:1-11; Proverbs 14:12

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that there are two ways—the narrow way to Heaven, and the broad way to Hell. It is vital to make sure that we are on the right way.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. — Luke 13:24

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. — Matthew 7:13

**ANSWER  
TITLE: The Wrong Way**  
**SEARCH  
TITLE: Two Ways**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

The dictionary defines *strait* as being “narrow, limited in space, closely fitting.” When Jesus admonished people to strive (make real effort) to enter in at the strait gate, He made it known that only a few would succeed. Those who find the Gospel too confining, too restrictive, obviously are not striving to enter in at the strait gate. God’s Word is full of examples of choices that people can and do make. The wise person will choose the safest course. “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 14:12). This Scripture lets us know that people can be deceived into thinking they are on the right way, but in actuality they are on the broad way that leads to destruction.

When heaven is spoken of, one of the following may be meant: 1. In the physical sense, heaven is the expanse over the earth and, above that, the firmament which contains the stars and planets. 2. Heaven, as a place where there are no imperfections or impurities, is the dwelling place of God and His angels.

Hell is the place prepared for the devil and his angels, a place of banishment, a place where many people will be who have not a love of the truth. It is a place of terrible punishment, of fire and brimstone, and eternal separation from God.

**YOUR OPENER**

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# Two Ways

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:13,14; Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 1:1-6

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Psalm 37:1-11; Proverbs 14:12

**KEY VERSE:** Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. — Matthew 7:13

## RESPONSES

1. The question was, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" The students will note that Jesus did not answer this question directly. What is a more direct answer that Jesus could have given? The students should understand that there are not many who are willing to take the strait way of holiness and be saved. What does *strive* mean as used in Luke 13:24?

2. Looking at the Scriptures given, we see that God looks on sin with no degree of allowance. If the narrow way allowed sin, what would differentiate it from the broad way? What is the alternative to a godly nature? The answers to these questions reveal why sin is unacceptable on the narrow way. The way through the strait gate is by repentance for sin and then conversion.

3. The words mentioned in Galatians 5:19-21 are: adultery (sexual relationship outside of marriage), fornication (sexual relationship prior to marriage), uncleanness (morally impure), lasciviousness (lustful desires), idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance (lack of agreement), emulations (ambitious rivalry), wrath, strife, seditions (rebellion), heresies (opposition to religious beliefs), envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings (boisterous festivity). Let the students discuss the meanings of these sins and cite specific examples of their prevalence today. What do these verses say will be the end for the partakers of these sins? Would one want to spend eternity with that type of person?

There are but two ways—right and wrong, good and evil—the way to Heaven and the way to Hell. We are all walking in one way or the other; there is no middle way now and no middle place hereafter. The difference between the saint and sinner, the godly and ungodly, is revealed by the way in which they walk. The narrow way leads to life, and the broad way leads to destruction.

1. In Luke 13:24 Jesus encouraged His listeners to "strive to enter in at the strait [confined or narrow] gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Immediately preceding this statement, one had asked a question of the Lord. Write the question and explain Christ's response.

2. Why is no sin allowed on the narrow way? Use Deuteronomy 25:16, Isaiah 59:2, and 1 John 3:8 to support your answer.

3. Galatians 5:19-21 lists characteristics found in the lives of those on the broad way. Identify three of these characteristics that you are aware of in the world today and be prepared to cite specific examples.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. As we travel through life, there are many temptations that would draw us to the broad way. How can we best resist these allurements?

5. The first Psalm contrasts the two ways—godly vs. ungodly. What is the delight of the godly, according to the Psalmist?

6. Staying in the right way will take effort. What can we do to improve the quality of our devotions?

7. According to Psalm 1:1, what three things are to be avoided by the one who wants to be blessed? Put in your own words what these mean.

8. Moses set before the people a choice between life and good, and death and evil. Today, man is offered the same choice. If one decides he doesn't want either the narrow way or the broad way, what is his alternative?

4. Suggest some hypothetical situations to your students. For example: What do you do when someone asks to copy your answers during a test? What do you do when your employer instructs you to tell a caller he is out when he isn't? What do you do when your boss asks you to purchase a package of cigarettes for him? Discuss ways to resist, including how to answer one who attempts to draw you away from the right way.

5. The students should recognize the necessity of having a love for God's Word that they might stay on the right way. Discuss the importance of daily private devotions.

6. Some thoughts might be: study topically, have a planned course, involve the family in the preparation or presentation, take on a prayer project. Follow up these thoughts by concluding that effective, consistent Bible study is an important part of keeping us on the narrow way. See Psalm 119:11 and Romans 10:17.

7. Help your students see the progression—from walking in the counsel of the ungodly, to standing with sinners, to the point of sitting with the scornful, thus being a full partaker of their evil deeds. Ask for examples of walking in the counsel of the ungodly—to whom do they go for advice? Discuss how choosing a close association with sinners, or "standing in the way of sinners," can be detrimental. The students should understand the importance of rejecting the philosophies that lean toward the broad way. The lesson to be learned is that sin is progressive: one evil propensity or act leads to another.

8. The students should understand that there is no alternative. They should be aware that everyone is on either the narrow or the broad way. Did Moses offer an alternative? Did Jesus offer an alternative? Refer to Matthew 6:24.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What is the strait gate referred to in our lesson, the narrow way that few find?

What does the Bible say about the wide gate?

How does a person prepare for Heaven?

When is the best time to be ready for Heaven?

How can you know you are on the right way?

How does a person determine what is right or wrong, good or evil?

Discuss the end result of someone who chooses good.

Discuss the end result of a person who chooses evil.

You often hear people say that they cannot help themselves from doing bad things, and that they have no choice. Can this excuse be used? Why not?

What can those who are traveling on the broad way do to get on the narrow way?

How can a Christian get off the narrow way and onto the broad way? What must he do to get back on the narrow way?

In our ANSWER story, why did the two boys miss the party? Using your answer, can you make a spiritual application?

## THINGS TO DO

Draw a maze, or find one in a child's activity book. Give each student a pencil and a copy of the maze, and tell them how many seconds they have to complete the maze. The copies should be kept face down until you say, "Start." Then the students should turn them over and go as far as they can in the given number of seconds. When the time is over, count how many failed to complete their maze before the allotted time ends. Compare this to the great percentage of people who choose to travel on a wrong road in life, and will thus fail to reach Heaven.

Materials needed: chalkboard, chalk, and yardstick. Ask a student to assist you. Give him a piece of chalk and ask him to draw a straight line from left to right across the chalkboard (as straight as he can). Now have him use a yardstick as a guide and draw an exact line. Lesson: We all want to live perfect lives, but if we depend on ourselves we will fail. God has rules to keep us on the narrow way. They may sometimes seem hard, but it is the way we must go to get to Heaven.

Using Psalm 1 as a springboard, have your students sug-

gest a list (write on chalkboard) of actions or attributes that will be evident in the life of one who is on the narrow way. Let students look up the following verses (assign each student a verse): Psalms 2:12; 32:1; 33:12; 34:8; 41:1; 84:4; 84:5; 112:1. You may add others of your own choosing.

Materials needed: two large sheets of paper so all can see, and a pencil. Make a parallel between traveling to a vacation spot, and traveling to Heaven. Pretend you are going on a trip to Hawaii and are packing and getting ready for your trip. Have the students help you decide what you must do to prepare yourself. Now make a parallel between this situation and the preparation we have to make for our trip to Heaven.

Bring two suitcases to class to represent two travelers on the way through life. In one suitcase put comic books, a cheap novel, advertisement for movies, picture of a package of cigarettes, etc. In the other suitcase put a Bible, Sunday school quarterly, a picture of Jesus, and a flashlight (depicting Light that might help others find the way). Present these two suitcases to the class to illustrate the two very different roads we can choose to take and the two very different "suitcases" we could take with us through life.

## Answers for ANSWER

### Take the Right Steps

Cross out the footprints you will NOT find on the pathway that leads to Heaven. Choose one of the things that you WILL find on the pathway to Heaven and write, on the lines below, an example of what it is.

Salvation

~~Lying~~

Humility

Honesty

Obedience

~~He~~

~~Stealing~~

Giving

Faith

Prayer

~~Cheating~~

Helping

Love

~~Judging~~

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**TEXT** Matthew 7:24-29; 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES** Romans 2:13; James 1:22-25

**OBJECTIVE** The students should be able to explain why it is important not only to hear what Jesus says, but to do what He says.

**KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER** Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. — Matthew 7:24

**KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. — James 1:22

**ANSWER TITLE:** **Build on the Rock**

**SEARCH TITLE:** **House on the Rock**

**REFERENCE INFORMATION**

Two different Hebrew words for *rock* appear early in the Scriptures, providing the basis for much later revelation about Christ in the way they are used. They are *tsur*, “a confined outcropping such as men may stumble over,” and *sela*, “a lofty, elevated rock or stronghold.” It is the second type—the lofty stronghold—upon which we should build.

Throughout the Bible we find the use of the word *rock* or *stone*, portraying the solidity of the Gospel. On two occasions God had Moses bring water out of a rock to give water to the thirsty Israelites. This could easily typify the Living Water that we receive from the Rock of our salvation, Jesus Christ. Most of us know how David, more than once, used a cave in a rock for his defense and hideout from King Saul. This was undoubtedly a source of inspira-

tion to him when he wrote the Psalms that set forth God as his Rock and defense. The Psalms many times picture God as the “Rock” of the writer, for instance, in Psalms 31:2,3; 62:2,6,7. In Psalm 118:22 it tells about the stone which the builders refused being the headstone of the corner. In Matthew 21:42, Jesus confirms that this Scripture was telling of Himself. Isaiah also speaks of a sure foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone. The Apostle Peter refers to this in 1 Peter 2:6 and says that he that believeth will not be confounded. Since many writers had referred to the Lord as a Rock, it is only reasonable that the Lord should describe compliance with His sayings as building on a Rock. In fact, He told Peter in Matthew 16:18, “upon this rock I will build my church,” referring to Peter’s statement, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

**YOUR OPENER**

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# House on the Rock

**TEXT:** Matthew 7:24-29; 1 Corinthians 3:9-15

**SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES:** Romans 2:13; James 1:22-25

**KEY VERSE:** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.  
— James 1:22

## RESPONSES

1. Both hear, both build, and both have storms. The students should realize that almost everyone hears God's Word to some extent. Also, both classes of hearers are building a spiritual house whether it be good or bad. Finally, both classes have spiritual storms. The difference in this story is that one was a doer, the other was not. One was called wise, the other a fool. The house of one stood while the house of the other fell.

2. Allow time for your students to offer their ideas. Refer to James 1:22-25 to bring out that to attend church and hear God's Word without doing it is like beholding their face in a glass (or mirror), then leaving and putting out of their thoughts what they saw. Discuss the dangers of doing this, bringing out that neglect in attending to spiritual matters can bring hardness of heart, and eventually eternal death.

3. This is intended to generate much discussion covering many subjects. Subjects could range from being friendlier, showing mercy, fasting, and the ordinance of foot washing, to being sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost. Everyone in the class should be challenged to be a doer of every part of the Bible, and not just a hearer.

Christ's teaching regarding the importance of building on the Rock is a very plain statement. This comparison reveals that it is useless to call ourselves Christians unless we practice the things that Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount. The hearers of God's Word are divided into two classes: those who hear and respond to what they hear; and those who hear but ignore what they hear. In which class are you?

1. After reading Matthew 7:24-27, what similarities can you find in the two classes of hearers? What differences?

2. After comparing and contrasting the two types of hearers, what conclusion can you draw about people who attend church and hear the Word of God, but fail to respond?

3. To be a doer of Jesus' teachings includes abiding by the teachings of the whole Bible. Unfortunately, some teachings of the Bible are not as prevalent among Christians as they should be. They may be heard, but not acted upon. Name one or more teachings of the Bible that you think are neglected by some Christians.

## ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

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4. The rains, floods, and winds come, and they prove what sort of foundation a life is built upon. Name some spiritual “storms” that may come into a life.

5. Christ Jesus is the Rock that has been provided for us to build upon. What is the starting point in building a solid Christian life?

6. What was the reaction of the people when Jesus finished the Sermon on the Mount? Why do you think this was so?

7. This past quarter we have studied some of the teachings of Jesus. Are we doing what He taught or have we only heard His words? Of the previous twelve lessons, which one has motivated you to be more of a doer in your spiritual life? Give a specific example.

4. Point out that storms hit every life, saved and unsaved. For example, marriages are tested. What is the result when the marriage of one who has built upon the Rock is tested, compared with the result when the marriage of one who has no spiritual foundation is tested? Other storms may include poor health or financial losses. Stress the importance and blessings of a good foundation in troubled times.

5. Let the students respond with their answers. A common answer will be that they start at justification. However, show the need to start at genuine repentance followed by justification and restitution. What do these terms mean? Is it possible to build a solid foundation without one of them? Has one finished the foundation if he hasn't been sanctified and baptized with the Holy Ghost? Point out that the three experiences are only the starting point in building a solid Christian life.

6. The people were astonished at His doctrine, because He spoke with authority. Point out that when people are accustomed to listening to corrupt and false teachings, they marvel at the truth when they hear it. However, is it enough just to marvel upon hearing the truth?

7. Let the students share their answers. A specific example might be that the study of humility has motivated one to be less assertive of his own ideas. Perhaps the hearing of fasting has motivated one to begin fasting, or hearing of the heavenly investment has caused one to quit a job that kept him out of church. This provides an opportunity for review of the twelve lessons.

## YOUR WRAP-UP

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## SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How can one know he is building upon the Rock?

Upon what Rock do we as Christians build?

How do we begin to build upon that Rock?

Discuss some of the false foundations people build upon.

How early can one begin to build upon the Rock?

Discuss what things in a person's life might be "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble."

Some people say about religion, that it doesn't matter what you do or believe as long as you are sincere. What, in our text for this lesson, disproves that?

In our ANSWER story, what good advice did the father give his sons before they left home? How can we apply that advice to our spiritual lives?

Why is it important to build on the right foundation? How can we know if we are building right?

What are the dangers of building on a wrong foundation?

## THINGS TO DO

The following verses contain promises of the rewards for those who do God's will: Matthew 7:21; 12:50; John 13:17; Romans 2:13; James 1:25; 1 John 2:17; Revelation 22:14.

1. Ask each of your students to paraphrase one of the verses. Let them share with one another the promised rewards for doing God's work.

2. Assign the verses to seven members of your class. After they have looked up the verses, use a large sheet of paper or chalkboard and have the students help you compile a list of the rewards given to those who do the work of God.

Have a sword drill. Call out Bible verses that require action. Let your students look up the verses and read them aloud. Challenge the students to ask themselves if they are doers or just hearers. Chosen Scriptures could include Matthew 3:2; Luke 24:49; John 13:14; 17:17; Ephesians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17,18; Hebrews 13:17.

Bring to class a brick and some damp sand which has been fashioned into a "brick" by packing into a small box or form. Use a spray bottle (like Windex comes in) and a hair drier to simulate wind and rain to demonstrate just how unstable a foundation built on sand would be. The same elements on the brick have little effect because it is solid. (You will need a plastic tub or a tray to confine the mess!)

Show your class a foundation plan for a home or building. If possible, show some photos of the foundation before the building has been erected. Explain to your class that before construction can proceed, the foundation must be inspected and passed. Parallel this to the thought that the quality of our spiritual foundation is very important. God is the Inspector, and we do not want to build our Christian lives on something that is not secure.

## Answers for ANSWER

### What Am I Doing?

We have all heard what God wants us to do but it is important that we do what He said. The words listed below are from the key verse and will fit into the puzzle. Where is your house built?



OF  
HIM  
HIS  
MAN  
MINE  
ROCK  
THEM  
UNTO  
UPON  
WILL  
WISE  
BUILT  
HOUSE  
LIKEN  
THESE  
WHICH  
SAYINGS  
THEREFORE  
WHOSOEVER