



The Golden Rule for Student Ministry

The following outlines four weeks of study/activities that could be used in a small group setting to encourage students to embody the Golden Rule and spread kindness in their community. Each week includes an icebreaker, a scripture, teaching points, reflection questions, a group activity and a takeaway action challenge.

Additional Tips and Ideas:

- Encourage students to join other ways your church is engaging in the kindness campaign. For example, if your church is using yard signs, students could be enlisted to help put them out.
- Engage students in creating posters with kindness messages to be displayed around the church.
- Invite guest speakers to youth group who can share stories about the power of kindness.
- Incorporate music, videos, or age-appropriate games that reinforce the Golden Rule and keep the sessions engaging.

Week 1: The Power of Kindness

Icebreaker:

Create a kindness chain. Students sit in a circle and go around the circle sharing an act of kindness that they observed that week. (It could be something someone did for them, or an interaction they observed.)

Focus Scripture: Matthew 7:12 (Golden Rule)

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Teaching Points:

- The Golden Rule is a foundation of kindness in many religions. Nearly all major religions have some form of this teaching.
- To love God and to love our neighbors (show kindness) are the commandments that Jesus said were the most important.
- Kindness is more than just being nice; it's actively showing care and compassion.
- Kindness has a ripple effect - it inspires others to be kind.

Reflection Questions:

- How do you like to be treated?
- When have you experienced kindness?

- How can you tell the difference between being nice and being truly kind?

Group Activity:

Brainstorm acts of kindness students can do within the school community. Write them on a white board or chart paper.

Takeaway Action:

Choose one act of kindness from the list and complete it this week.

Week 2: Kindness in Action

Icebreaker:

Share kindness. Remind students of the scripture command: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. In a “ping-pong” manner, students say one word or phrase that represents how they want to be treated. (Guide the students to think beyond just kindness, e.g. noticed, listened to, respected, etc.)

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 11:25

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Teaching Points:

- Kindness takes many forms: words of encouragement, helpful actions, acts of service.
- Simple acts of kindness can make a big difference in someone’s day.

Reflection Questions:

- How do you like to be treated?
- What are some ways you can show kindness through your words?
- How can you show kindness through your actions?

Group Activity:

Divide students into groups and assign each group a different “kindness category” (e.g., words of affirmation, acts of service). Each group creates a skit demonstrating kindness in their category.

Takeaway Action:

Perform a random act of kindness for someone outside your usual social circle.

Week 3: Kindness & Social Media

Icebreaker:

Create “kindness bingo” cards with squares containing positive online actions (e.g., leaving a supportive comment, sharing an uplifting story). Students brainstorm what these online actions might be and place randomly in the squares on their card. Then they exchange cards and try to complete a bingo by observing online interactions during the week.

Focus Scripture: Ephesians 4:29

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up, according to their needs

Teaching Points:

- Kindness extends to the online world, too.
- Be mindful of how your words and actions affect others online.
- Encourage positivity and respect in online interactions.

Reflection Questions:

- How can you use social media to spread kindness?
- Have you ever witnessed someone being unkind online? How did it make you feel?

Group Activity:

Design positive social media posts promoting the Golden Rule campaign (e.g., posters, short videos). Consider using campaign hashtags (create one if needed).

Takeaway Action:

Post your positive social media content and use your online voice to promote kindness.

Week 4: Spreading the Kindness Wave

Icebreaker:

Repeat the kindness chain from week 1, but this time students go around the circle and share a way that they practiced the Golden Rule through an act of kindness this week.

Focus Scripture

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are already doing.

Teaching Points:

- Kindness is contagious - the more we practice it, the more it spreads.
- Reflect on the impact of the campaign so far and celebrate the good deeds accomplished.
- Continue making kindness a part of your daily life.

Reflection Questions:

- How has this campaign impacted you?
- How can you continue to live the Golden Rule beyond this campaign?

Group Activity:

Plan a culminating activity to spread kindness within the school or community (e.g., distributing kindness cards, volunteering at a local organization, creating kindness posters).

Takeaway Action:

Participate in the culminating activity and commit to ongoing acts of kindness.