

# The Good Samaritan

Grades  
**3-4**

## NEIGHBOR

LUKE 10:25-37

### What is happening in this story?

Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan is told in response to a question posed by a lawyer—not the equivalent of a modern-day attorney, but a scholar of the Jewish law: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" When Jesus directs him to the very law the lawyer knows so well, he seems disappointed that love of God and neighbor is the answer. He presses Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"—hoping, it seems, to wriggle out of having to serve people he doesn't like. With the parable, then, Jesus turns the question around, saying, essentially, "Don't worry about who is a neighbor to you. Go and *be* a neighbor to everyone else."

### Why does this story matter for kids?

With its vivid events and characters, this story told by Jesus makes a strong impression on kids. Their imaginations can easily picture the hurt man by the road, the priest and Levite walking by without stopping, and the Samaritan bandaging the man's wounds and taking him on his own beast to a place where he can rest and recover. Whether or not you opt to explain the prejudice between Jewish and Samaritan people of the day, kids can grasp the power of showing kindness to someone in need.

### Why this theme?

It's important for kids to realize that we have more neighbors beyond the people who live next door to us. The world is full of different kinds of people, all of whom are our neighbors.

### AGE LEVEL TIP

We teach kids about stranger danger starting when they are very young. Third and fourth graders are likely still hesitant to interact with people they don't know, and that's not a bad thing. Remind kids that contact with new people should be done in safe places with trusted adults.



### GENERAL SUPPLIES

- White paper
- Pens
- Scissors
- Markers

### LESSON SUPPLIES

- Speech bubble sticky notes (2 per kid)

## Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Provide paper, scissors, and pens for kids to draw and cut out paper doll chains. Be sure their outlines touch the folded edges of the paper—otherwise they'll end up with a stack of individual dolls. The joined hands and feet remind us of living in community with others.

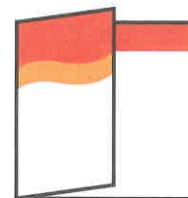
## Circle up with kids for an opening conversation.

**Who do you think of when I say the word *neighbor*? What does it mean to treat someone like a neighbor?** Allow time for responses. **Sometimes neighbors are people we know, and sometimes neighbors are people we don't know. Who are some people you think of as neighbors even if you don't know their names?** Encourage kids to describe these neighbors in terms of relationship—the person serving in the lunchroom, the landscaper they often see cutting grass, etc. **How do you decide who you'll treat like a neighbor?**

Pray together: **Dear God, thank you for all the times someone has been a good neighbor to us. Help us to notice when we have the opportunity to be a good neighbor to others. Amen.**

## Pass out leaflets and dark markers.

From your seat, turn and shake hands with your neighbors. Now move and shake the hand of someone across the circle. Give kids time to greet each other. **Are the kids across the circle also your neighbors? Why or why not? Head back to your seats and take a look at the leaflet. The pictures show different kinds of neighborhoods. On each picture, place a dot on one of the homes. Draw a circle around the homes you think are your dot's neighbors. Now draw a circle around all the images. God wants us to see all people as our neighbors. What do you think that means?**



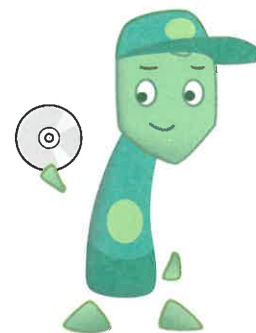
## Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

**Gabe is going to meet some new people today, whether he wants to or not! Let's see what he learns about who can be a good neighbor.**

View Episode 1, "The Line," on the Year Gold Spring Grades 3–6 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- Why was Gabe so hesitant to talk with the high school kids?
- Why do you think Jamila felt differently?
- How do you feel when you're around older kids or adults you don't know?
- What did Gabe assume about the line dividing the skate park?
- What did Gabe learn about neighbors?



## Open your Whirl Kids Study Bibles.

Today's passage is from the book of Luke. It's in the New Testament in the Gospels and Acts section of the Bible. Invite kids to check out the book introduction and comic on page 1225.



In this passage, Jesus tells a parable about a Good Samaritan. There are several characters in this parable. The Jewish man is traveling along the road to Jericho. The priest and the Levite are deeply religious and know a lot about Jewish Scripture. The Samaritan encounters the Jewish man. Jews didn't like Samaritans and expected the worst from them.

Help kids find Luke 10:25-37 and read it in this creative way together: **Sit cross-legged in a circle close together. Place your open Bible in your lap and put your hands on your neighbors' backs as we take turns reading.** Invite kids to take turns reading the passage aloud one or two verses at a time.

Invite kids to check out what Gabe says about Luke 10:30-37.

Ask these questions after you read the story:

- **What prompted Jesus to tell this story?**
- **Who would you have expected to act as a neighbor to the injured man—and why?**
- **How do you feel when you don't get the help you need?**
- **Why do you think the Samaritan helped the man?**
- **When have you treated someone you didn't know with compassion and kindness?**

## Make your mark on the Wall Chart.

Look at the chart and find the theme for today. Give kids time to find the word *Neighbor*. **Where's your family's mailbox? The mail system connects us to nearly everyone around the world. That's a good reminder that we're meant to be a neighbor to whoever needs us, not just those next door. In the box by *Neighbor*, let's mark the chart by drawing a mailbox.**



### BIBLE BIT

The term *denarii* refers to the coins the Samaritan used to pay the innkeeper. We don't know the value of the amount he paid, but we know he was willing to give!

### WATCH IT AGAIN

If you watch the video again, think about what else the white line could mean. How do assumptions affect our relationships?

### OUR CHURCH

Kids this age sometimes are intimidated by older youth. Plan an interactive event where kids and youth of different ages in your church get to know one another.

# RESPOND 10

## Open leaflets and pass out markers and speech bubble sticky notes.

Tear off leaflet square.

1. In square #1 on your leaflet, you'll see Leo in his lab. What a mess! He's looking for the power cord for his computer. Draw yourself standing next to Leo.
2. What are some ways you could help him? In square #2, continue the story. Draw yourself treating Leo like a neighbor.
3. In square #3, draw yourself and Leo having a conversation after finding the power cord. What does Leo say? What do you say? Write your conversation on the sticky notes and stick them to the square.
4. In square #4, draw a problem you have experienced. When you're done, exchange your leaflet with one or more people, and ask them how they might have been able to help you with your problem if they had been there.
5. What solutions did you find for your problem? How was the problem resolved when it happened in real life? Who helps you out when you have a problem?
6. It's great to jump in and help people we know, but how do you decide if it's safe to help someone you *don't* know?

# LAUNCH 10

## Circle up with kids for a quick review.

Jesus told a story about an unexpected person being a neighbor to a man who needed help. How could you be a neighbor to someone who isn't expecting it? Take time to hear kids' responses. In life, we face opportunities to make decisions about which people we're willing to show God's love to. Sometimes it's easy to be a neighbor. Sometimes it's hard. But Jesus shows us that the best way is to be a neighbor to everyone whenever we can.

## Return to the leaflet panels and pass out pens.

In each space that separates Gabe and Mimi, write one way to be a neighbor. Fold the flap to bring Gabe and Mimi together. Fold the panel on the lines like an accordion, with the center line being a valley fold and the other two lines mountain folds. How can your neighborly actions bring people together this week?

## Send kids out with a blessing.

Circle up with kids. **God blesses all of us. And that means me** (place a hand on your chest). **And that means you** (place your other hand on the shoulder of the kid next to you). Each kid passes the blessing by repeating those words and actions. When the blessing makes it back to you, say, **Go and bless the world.**

Thank kids for coming today. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.