

“Who Is My Neighbour?”

Lesson 14

Matthew 18; Luke 10

Purpose To help class members humble themselves, forgive others, and show charity for one another.

Preparation

1. Read, ponder, and pray about the following scriptures:
 - a. Matthew 18:1–6, 10–11, 14. Jesus teaches that we must be converted and become as little children to enter into the kingdom of heaven.
 - b. Matthew 18:15, 21–35. Through the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus teaches about forgiveness.
 - c. Luke 10:25–37. Through the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus teaches about charity.
2. Additional reading: Mark 9:33–50; Mosiah 3:17–21; 4:16–19, 26.
3. If the following materials are available, use them during the lesson:
 - a. The pictures Christ and the Children (62467; Gospel Art Picture Kit 216) and The Good Samaritan (62156; Gospel Art Picture Kit 218).
 - b. A brief portion of “The Lord’s Prayer,” part 2 of the videocassette *The Savior: His Ministry* (53164). This segment includes the parable of the good Samaritan.
4. If you use the attention activity, invite a parent to talk to the class as outlined in the activity.
5. Suggestion for teaching: Occasionally invite class members (or other ward members) to help with the lesson by giving a report, sharing a story, bearing testimony, or helping in some other way. When making assignments, be clear about what you want the person to do and how long you would like him or her to take. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 136, 139.)

Suggested Lesson Development

Attention Activity As appropriate, use the following activity or one of your own to begin the lesson.

Invite a parent with a young child (three to five years old) to bring the child to class, introduce him or her, and briefly describe some of the child’s admirable qualities. After the parent is finished, ask class members to think of childlike qualities that Jesus would want us to have. List responses on the chalkboard.

Explain that this lesson discusses the importance of developing childlike qualities and treating all people with humility and kindness.

Scripture Discussion and Application As you teach the following scripture passages, discuss how we can follow the Savior’s teachings about humility, forgiveness, and charity.

1. Jesus teaches that we must become as little children.

Read and discuss Matthew 18:1–6, 10–11, 14. Display the picture of Christ and the children.

- Why do you think the disciples were concerned about who would be the greatest in the Lord’s kingdom? (Matthew 18:1; Mark 9:33–34). How might we sometimes make similar errors? How can we set aside such concerns?
- Display the picture of Christ and the children. What is Jesus’ counsel to those who desire to achieve true greatness in his kingdom? (See Matthew 18:2–4; Mark 9:35.) Why is it sometimes difficult to follow this counsel? How does this counsel compare with what the world teaches about how to achieve greatness?
- What does it mean to become as little children? (See Mosiah 3:19. Explain that although children are not perfect, they have many qualities that we must develop to inherit the kingdom of heaven. These qualities include humility, meekness, and a willingness to believe.) What have you learned from children? How can we become more childlike and more submissive to the will of our Father in Heaven?
- What does it mean to “offend one of these little ones”? (See Matthew 18:6, footnote 6a; in this context, *offend* means to cause to stumble.) What are some of the ways people cause children to stumble? (Answers may include being a poor example to them, criticizing them unkindly, failing to teach them, and abusing them.) How does the Lord regard these offenses? (See Matthew 18:6.)

Elder M. Russell Ballard stated: “We hear disturbing reports of parents or guardians who are so far removed from the Spirit of Christ that they abuse children. Whether this abuse is physical, verbal, or the less evident but equally severe emotional abuse, it is an abomination and a serious offense to God” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1991, 107; or *Ensign*, May 1991, 80).

- How can being childlike ourselves help us care for children? What can we do to carry out God’s will that “[not] one of these little ones should perish”? (Matthew 18:14).

2. Through the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus teaches about forgiveness.

Read and discuss Matthew 18:15, 21–35.

- In Matthew 18:15, what did the Lord say we should do if we have been offended? Why is this the best way to resolve disputes?
- How did Jesus respond when Peter asked how often he should forgive? (See Matthew 18:22. Explain that Jesus used this high number to teach that we should always forgive others.) Why is it sometimes difficult to forgive? How have you been blessed as you have forgiven others or been forgiven by them?
- To further emphasize the importance of forgiving others, Jesus gave the parable of the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:23–35). Whom do the king and servants represent? (See Matthew 18:35. The king represents Heavenly Father, and the servants represent us.) How are we like the king’s servant in our debt to the Lord? (See Matthew 18:24–27.) What must we do to be forgiven of our “debt”?

- What can we learn from the king's example in forgiving others? (See Matthew 18:33.) What are some of the dangers of not forgiving others? (See Matthew 18:34–35.)

3. Through the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus teaches about charity.

Read and discuss Luke 10:25–37. Display the picture of the good Samaritan.

- How did Jesus respond to the lawyer who asked what he should do to inherit eternal life? (See Luke 10:25–28.) How do the commandments to love God and our neighbors encompass all of the gospel? How can we obey these two commandments more fully?
- How did Jesus respond when the lawyer asked, “Who is my neighbor?” (See Luke 10:29–37.) What does this parable teach about who our neighbors are? President Howard W. Hunter said: “We need to remember that though we make our friends, God has made our neighbors—everywhere. Love should have no boundary; we should have no narrow loyalties” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 44; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 35).
- What did the priest and Levite do when they saw the man who had been robbed and wounded? (See Luke 10:31–32.) What are some ways that people need help today? What are some reasons we do not help others in need? (See Mosiah 4:16–19 for one example.)
- How did the good Samaritan help the man who had been robbed and wounded? (See Luke 10:33–35.) What characteristics of a good neighbor did the Samaritan have? How have you been blessed by “good Samaritans”? How can we be “good Samaritans”? (See Mosiah 4:26.)

Conclusion

Testify of the importance of following the Savior's example by humbling ourselves, forgiving others, and showing charity for one another. Challenge class members to live these teachings.

Additional Teaching Ideas

The following material supplements the suggested lesson outline. You may want to use one or more of these ideas as part of the lesson.

1. Mary and Martha

Have a class member read Luke 10:38–42.

- How was Martha serving the Lord? What was the “good part” that Mary had chosen? How do we sometimes become so “cumbered about much serving” that we don't receive Jesus as we should? What can we learn from these verses?

2. “Suffer the little children to come unto me” (Mark 10:14)

As you discuss the Savior's teaching that we should become as little children, you may also want to discuss the account of his blessing the children in Mark 10:13–16.

- How did Jesus' disciples respond when the little children were brought to him? (See Mark 10:13.) What did Jesus tell his disciples? (See Mark 10:14–15.) What did Jesus do for the children? (See Mark 10:16.) What can we learn about Jesus from this account? How can we better follow the example he set in this account?

3. Additional discussion of Matthew 18

- Discuss Matthew 18:8–9 and Mark 9:43–48 (see also Matthew 5:29–30). What do these verses mean? (See Matthew 18:9, footnote 9a, which indicates that the Joseph Smith Translation identifies these offending elements as people who lead us astray. It is better to end our association with people than to allow them to lead us into sin. See also Joseph Smith Translation, Mark 9:40–48.)
- The Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 18:11 records Jesus as saying that little children do not need repentance (footnote 11c). Why is this so? (See Moroni 8:11–12.) How are little children “alive in Christ”? (See Moroni 8:12; D&C 29:46–47.) What must we do to become “alive in Christ”? (See Matthew 18:4; Mosiah 3:19; Moroni 8:10.)
- Read Matthew 18:11–14. How can we apply the parable of the lost sheep in our lives? How have you or someone you know been blessed by someone else who followed the principle of this parable?

4. “The Lord appointed other seventy also” (Luke 10:1)

- Discuss Luke 10:1–24. How do the Lord’s instructions to the Seventy compare with the instructions he gave the Twelve in Matthew 10? What are the responsibilities of the Seventy today? (See D&C 107:25, 34, 38, 93–97.)

5. The sanctity of the marriage relationship

Explain that Matthew 19:1–12 describes a situation in which the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus by asking him about the lawfulness of divorce (see also Mark 10:1–12). Divorce was a much-discussed issue among Jewish scholars and leaders, and the Pharisees hoped that Jesus’ answer to their question would allow them to stir up anger among the Jews. Have a class member read Matthew 19:3–9 aloud.

- What was Jesus’ response to the Pharisees’ question in verse 3? (See Matthew 19:4–6. He told them that divorce was not ordained of God.) Why did Moses allow divorce among the Israelites? (See Matthew 19:7–8.)

Explain that in ancient Israel, a man could put away, or divorce, his wife for insignificant reasons. Jesus taught that in a perfect world, such as the celestial kingdom, divorce does not exist. Because the earth is not yet perfect, divorce is allowed but should not happen except for the most serious reasons. Matthew 19:9 indicates that a man who put away his wife for a frivolous reason was still married to her in the eyes of God, and he thus committed adultery if he married another woman. (See James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 3rd ed. [1916], 473–75, 484; see also Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:138–39.)

- What roles do humility, forgiveness, and charity play in a successful marriage? How can striving to be Christlike help us in marriage and other relationships?
- How can we help persons who have suffered the trauma of divorce?

6. Youth activity

Write (or have class members write) questions about the lesson on small pieces of paper. (As a review activity, you could choose actual questions from each section of the lesson.) Put the pieces of paper in a sack or box. Have class members arrange their chairs in a circle, and place the sack or box on a chair in the center of the circle. Have class members take turns drawing questions out of the sack or box and answering them. (See *Teaching—No Greater Call*, 124–25.)