

# January 11, 2026

## 1<sup>ST</sup>–3<sup>RD</sup> Grade Sunday School

### Candy Factory Week 2: Gold Pass

#### **Video Game:**

Snowflake Fake Out

*It is in the "Sunday School Videos" album and the date is in the comments.*

#### **Game:** Love Your Enemies – Alligator and Bird

ITEMS NEEDED: small square-sized scraps of paper (5 for each alligator), pencils (for each bird)

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

What greater enemies are there than a big hungry alligator and a small bird of prey? In this game, the bird and alligator will put their differences aside, and learn to work together. Assign half the kids as alligators on one side of the room and half the kids as birds on the other. Tell them that these enemies will have to work together in order to both get what they need. Learning to love your enemies!

Begin by having kids run to the center of the room and choose an "enemy" to give a high five to. Whoever the "bird" high fives from the alligators, will have to follow the bird to a spot in the room that the bird chooses. Then the alligators will give the bird his "teeth" (the 5 scraps of paper). Just like a bird cleans an alligator's teeth for him in nature, even though the alligator could easily eat the bird, he allows the bird to help him clean his teeth and does not eat the bird. The bird is a help to the alligator and the alligator is a help to the bird.

The bird will take their “beak” (the pencil) and write (or draw) 5 nice things about the alligator. Things like “I like your shirt”, “You are really good at singing” etc. Once the bird has “cleaned the alligator's teeth” by writing 5 nice things, the alligator will read each one. Then they will turn the papers over and write 5 nice things about the bird, allowing the bird to read them as well.

Finally, all of the alligators will return to their side of the room and all of the birds will return to their side. Each team will go around and share one nice thing their “enemy” said about them.

#### WHAT'S THE POINT?

Jesus tells us to love our enemies. He was the perfect example of this. Sometimes we have people who feel like a natural enemy, the way an alligator is a predator and a small bird is the prey. But Jesus will show us how to love our enemies well. The bird helped the alligator by cleaning his teeth and the alligator helped the bird by allowing him to eat the bits of food between his teeth. If the alligator had eaten the bird, who would help clean his teeth? If the bird had not been brave enough to help the alligator, where would he have gotten his food?

**Lesson:** Live the way Jesus lived!

Does anyone know what the golden rule is? Silly Swonka gave Kara and Sean a golden rule, but that rule was specific to his factory. You can not brag about this to your friends or enemies. This is almost like the golden rule Jesus gives us. Raise your hand if you know it.

We should treat others the way we want to be treated! That is the golden rule. Matthew 7:12 says, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...” If we treat others the way we want to be treated, then we are treating others well. No one wants to be treated badly.

Today we will be diving into this golden rule that Jesus gave us. Sometimes it's easy to treat our friends well, but our enemies? That's even more challenging! Jesus calls us to treat everyone well. What a challenge! Let's read what Jesus says about loving our enemies.

READ LUKE 6:27-36

What did you think of that passage? Does it sound hard to love your enemies? But what good is it to love your friends? We are already doing that. Even sinners love their own friends. That's what Jesus said. Sometimes we have a fight with our friends, and we aren't loving them well. In these cases, it does take effort to love our friends. But most of the time, it's easy to be kind to people who are kind to us.

Jesus is challenging us to be different from the rest of the world and to be kind to those who are unkind to us. The reason we can do this is because of the power and strength of the Holy Spirit in us. Without Jesus in our hearts, we could not have the strength to do this. So, Jesus is not asking us to do this in our own strength. He is asking us to lean on Him, pray to God, and ask for help, and to then love others the way we would want to be loved.

Jesus taught his followers the golden rule, which gives us access to joy and peace that many people never find. When we are loving to our enemies, we are no longer carrying the burden of hate, jealousy, frustration, anger, or other bad feelings. We are choosing to say, yes they were unkind to me, but I will not let this harden my heart. I will love my enemies even though they are mean to me. Then I will have joy and peace. I will be free from evil. I will have the goodness in my heart that Jesus has in His! These are the SWEET REWARDS that come from following Jesus. And there are more SWEET REWARDS AHEAD!

Next time you feel tempted to be mean to someone who was mean to you. Think again. Stop the hate and replace it with good. You might be surprised how your enemy reacts. They might even feel bad for how they treated you when they see how kind you are to them. I want to make sure we understand

the difference between turning the other cheek and loving others even when they are unkind to us...and worshiping other people. There is a very big difference and we have to be careful not to confuse them.

Being kind to others even when they are unkind to us, is how we love our enemies. However, doing whatever other people tell us to do in order to get them to like us is not the same thing. If you find yourself people-pleasing to get other people's approval, you aren't loving your enemy, you are actually allowing them to be your god. God said that we should have no other gods before Him. This means God is the only one we worship. He is the only one that we seek the approval of and care about what He thinks of us. Be careful not to confuse the two. When we have Jesus in our hearts, He will help us to love other people well, but He will never ask us to do whatever other people tell us to do even if it's bad. We must be kind to others, but never allow them to become our master. Worship God, obey Him, and ask God what He wants you to do. Love others, be kind to them, and keep God in the center of everything you do!

Let's say this together so that we don't forget, "WE SHOULD TREAT OTHERS THE WAY WE WANT TO BE TREATED!" WE SHOULD TREAT OTHERS THE WAY WE WOULD WANT TO BE TREATED! We can do this by living the way Jesus lived!

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. What is the golden rule?
2. How does the golden rule lead to our own joy and peace?
3. Why do you think many people don't find joy and peace? Who do they need to help them?

Close in prayer.

## **Memory Verse:**

LAST WEEK: "Give praise to the Lord, the God of Israel! He has come to his people and purchased their freedom." Luke 1:68 (NirV)

NEW THIS WEEK: "I heard a loud voice from the throne. It said, "Look! God now makes his home with the people. He will live with them. They will be his people. And God himself will be with them and be their God." Revelation 21:3 (NIRV)

If they memorize the verse, they can get a ping pong ball to put in the BLUE BOX in the hallway.