



Leader Guide

Welcome to the 2022 BeDoTell Fall Retreat

Here is our theme verse better explained by O.S.Hawkins:

Do justly... love mercy... and walk humbly with your God. — Micah 6:8

These three actions are not suggestions. Nor are they mere options. These behaviors — related to our actions, our affections, and our attitudes — are “required” of each of us.

Our Actions

Micah taught in a culture characterized by idolatry, immorality, and outright rebellion against worship of God. In fact, it was a culture much like the one we are experiencing today in America. Micah boldly proclaimed that certain things are “required” of those who follow the path of the Lord. First, we are required to “do justly.” And he was referring to much more than a ruling in a court of law — God requires that we are to live differently than those around us. Specifically, we should be both moral and ethical in our dealings with others.

Justice has become a popular byword among young evangelicals today, but Micah was emphasizing action over mere talk. It is not enough for God’s people to love justice and to be cheering from the grandstands for those people working for justice. Each of us is required to “do justly,” to put justice into practice. What a difference it would make in our society today if more of us began to “do justly,” and rushed to the defense of those who are suffering in unjust circumstances and situations. Again, doing justly is a requirement, not a suggestion.

Our Affections

God also requires us as Christ-followers to “love mercy,” and the emphasis continues to be on action, not thought. We are not simply to show mercy to others but to passionately “love mercy.”

Mercy is best defined as “not getting what we deserve,” whereas grace is “getting what we don’t deserve.” Micah’s instruction means that we are required to give people what they don’t always deserve; we are to cut them some slack and show them some mercy. When we see someone in a difficult situation, though, some of us tend to immediately think, Guilty... until proven innocent! We take the seat of the judge when our “love” for mercy should be compelling us to be Christ’s hand extended to someone in need, whether or not that person deserves it. Twenty-five-hundred years after Micah wrote that God requires mercy from His people, the apostle John wrote this:

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.” — 1 John 4:7-8

For the one who truly loves God, doing justly and loving mercy are as natural as water running downhill.

Our Attitudes

Lastly, the Lord requires us not only to do justly and to love mercy but also to “walk humbly with your God,” a requirement that clearly addresses our attitude. Pride, the “Big I,” is one of the greatest hindrances to receiving God’s blessing. This was the beginning of Satan’s downfall (literally) when he said, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most

High” (Isaiah 14:14). In sharp contrast, Paul’s admonition says to let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. — Philippians 2:3

Again, the emphasis is on the action we take in response to Micah’s instructions. We are to walk humbly before God and others, and walk refers to how you live your life. Enoch “walked with God” (Genesis 5:22), Noah “walked with God” (Genesis 6:9), and so has every man and woman who have known God’s favor.

What is required of us? Justice... you must DO it! Mercy... you must LOVE it! Humility... you must WALK it! And Jesus is our ultimate example. Knowing that divine justice demanded payment for the penalty of mankind’s sin, and even though He Himself never sinned, Jesus went to the Cross to “do justly.” And from the Cross we see how He loved mercy, saying to those who had driven the spikes into His hands, Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do. — Luke 23:34

Did He walk humbly? Even on the evening of His betrayal and arrest — the evening of His greatest need — Jesus was on His knees, washing His disciples’ feet (John 13:1-17). Micah 6:8 is not a suggestion, but a requirement. So keep your hands busy: do justly. Keep your heart broken: love mercy. And keep your head bowed: walk humbly with your God.

Q & A: “What does the Lord require of you?” There is a positive action to take: do justly. There is a powerful affection to awaken: love mercy. And there is a prideful attitude to forsake: walk humbly with your God.

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2022
FALL RETREAT



Black Mountain
OCT. 21-23

Fort Caswell
NOV. 11-13

DISCIPLE-MAKING

Show me. Walk with me.

Black Mountain Schedule

Friday

- 4 p.m. Registration Open
- 8 p.m. Welcome and Evening Worship - *Heaton Hall*
- 9:30 p.m. Brief Adult Leader Meeting*
- 10 p.m. Church Group Devotions
- 11 p.m. In rooms
- 11:45 p.m. Lights out

**Only one adult from each church is required to attend the 9:30 meeting on Friday.*

Saturday

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet times
- 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship - *Heaton Hall*
- 11 a.m. Small Groups by Individual Churches
- 12:30 Lunch (*On your own*)
- 1:30 p.m. Track Times
- 2:30 p.m. Free Time
- 6:00 Dinner
- 7 p.m. Evening Worship - *Whittington Amphitheater*
- 9 p.m. Small Groups by Individual Churches
- 10 p.m. Church Group Devotions
- 11 p.m. In Rooms
- 11:45 p.m. Lights out

Sunday

- 8:00 Breakfast
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet times
- 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship - *Heaton Hall*
- 11:00 a.m. Goodbye

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Black Mountain
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Show me. Walk with me.

Caswell Schedule

Friday

- 4 p.m. Registration Open
- 8 p.m. Welcome and Evening Worship
- 9:30 p.m. Brief Adult Leader Meeting*
- 10 p.m. Church Group Devotions
- 11 p.m. In rooms
- 11:45 p.m. Lights out

**Only one adult from each church is required to attend the 9:30 meeting on Friday.*

Saturday

- Breakfast *(Time assigned by Caswell)*
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet times
- 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship
- 11 a.m. Small Groups by Individual Churches
Lunch *(Time assigned by Caswell)*
- 1:30 p.m. Track Time
- 2:30 p.m. Free Time
Dinner *(Time assigned by Caswell)*
- 7 p.m. Evening Worship
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- 10 p.m. Church Group Devotions
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Sunday

- Breakfast *(Time assigned by Caswell)*
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet times
- 9:30 a.m. Morning Worship
- 11:00 a.m. Goodbye



Supply List

Throughout the weekend, there are a few supplies that are needed during your group times. Please bring these supplies with you. We will supply one printed copy of the leader guide so please print additional copies for other leaders.

Friday Night Church Group Devotion

- A blank piece of paper for each student

Saturday Morning Small Group

- Timer (your cell phone will work)

Saturday Night Small Group/Church Group Devotions

- A piece of paper (*If available, use the dry-erase board in your classroom*)
- Candy

Friday Night Church Group Devotions

Scripture: Micah 6:8, Ephesians 5:1-10

Materials needed: (You will need to bring these supplies with you)

- A blank piece of paper for each student
- Pen

Reminders & Announcements:

- Group Announcements
 - Announcements – Go over the weekend schedule. Make sure they know where to be. Make sure everyone knows the rules of the retreat; which were told during the adult meeting tonight. After lunch on Saturday, there will be track times for them to choose from. You were given a list in your leader's bag to share with your students.
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Activity: Shoeprint

Leader: Hand each student a blank piece of paper.

Ask: Have students trace the outline of their shoe on the paper (leaders should do this as well.)

Ask: Have students draw at least 3 pictures or symbols inside their shoeprint that represent somewhere that the student has been that involves walking. Examples could include a hiking trip, Disneyworld, a mission trip... basically anywhere!

Leader: Give everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves by telling their name and showing their shoeprints and explaining their pictures of where they've been.

Once students are done, explain that this weekend is a journey as well. Just like taking a hike through the woods, the journey this weekend may take the students through or around obstacles and challenges in their own lives. But you will discover that you don't journey alone...there is a guide. If you'll do what the guide does and follow Him where He leads, you will find the journey to be the greatest adventure ever that is a lifelong journey!

Devotion

Leader: Have your students sit in a circle.

Say: We will be looking at our theme verse, Micah 6:8 all weekend. We are going to go around the circle and read Micah 6:8. Starting with the first word of the verse, we will go around as each person says the next word until the entire verse has been read.

Leader: Have your group do this 2-3 times.

Say: Mercy is mentioned in this verse. These verses below list eight actions that express mercy well. After I read each verse, you will spend time writing your answers to the questions in your student workbooks.

- 1) Be imitators of God.
 - a) On your paper, list 3 actions of God that you can imitate.
- 2) Live a life of love.
 - a) How can you show love to the others in this room?
- 3) Not even a hint of sexual immorality.
 - a) Write down an example of sexual immorality that you see going on in the world around you that you do not want to be tempted by.
- 4) Not even a hint of greed.
 - a) Write down an example of a time you have showed greed for something.
- 5) Nor should there be foolish talk or coarse joking.
 - a) Why do Christians put people down, make jokes at people's expense, and tell obscene jokes? Write down one of those you may be struggling with and what you can do about it.
- 6) Let no one deceive you with empty words.
 - a) Why is it easy to gossip? Write down what you can do in your life to keep from gossiping about others.
- 7) Live as children of light.
 - a) Write down the action(s) today that you would have been glad for God and everyone to see you do. Write down the action(s) today that you would rather hide in the dark.
- 8) Find out what pleases the Lord.
 - a) List some actions that please the Lord. Discuss them in the group.

Ask: Which of these actions do you find hardest to do?
What did you learn about yourself and what do you need to work on?

Say: Let's spend a few moments now with our eyes closed, quiet, asking God to reveal to us when we've treated others harshly, then say or do what we need to as a worship offering of repentance.

Close in prayer.

Saturday Morning Quiet Time

Deuteronomy 10:12-13

“And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?”

Have you ever thought, “what does God expect me to do”? At some point, we all end up in situations that make us ask this type of question. Moses gives you a summary that is simple and easy to remember:

1. Fear God
2. Walk in His ways
3. Love Him
4. Serve Him with all your heart and soul
5. Observe His commands

Prayer: Pray that God will help you to fear Him, walk with Him daily, increase your love for Him, and show you ways to serve Him with your heart, mind, soul, and body. Thank God for blessing you with the answers that His Word gives to you. Praise God for allowing you to come this weekend to a place to meet God face to face.

People have always tried all kinds of ways to please God. Perhaps you have been trying different ways to please God but just feel like it isn’t enough or is not what you need to do.

God has made His wishes clear—God wants you to walk humbly with Him. Each day you have a path to choose. Which one will it be? When you leave you have to choose a path. One path will lead you closer and closer to Jesus. The other will take you further and further away from Him. This is a choice you should begin to make today, right now. Begin today to prepare yourself to choose the path to Jesus.

In the weeks, months, and even years to come, examine your life on a regular basis. Use the list from Deuteronomy 10:12-13 that you have just read and examine to see if you are being humble.

Prayer: Ask God to help you live a life that is pleasing to Him. Ask Him to give you an abundance of love and mercy for others. Ask God to always keep you humble so that you can be a witness for Him to all people. Give God praise and thank Him for having

mercy on you and loving you so much that He allowed His only son, Jesus, to be sacrificed for your sins.

Psalms 1:1-2

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law, he meditates day and night”.

Theme Verse: Micah 6:8

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

If you’ve ever heard people say, “I wonder what God wants me to do with my life?” Micah 6:8 answers that question. Micah provides a 3 point and brief summary of how God wants us to live; throughout the week/day by day.

1. “Do justice.”

Justice is fairness and equality for all people. In Micah’s day, it was the poor who have justice denied them. Can you think of unjust actions that have occurred in America in the last few months that have affected the poor and the marginalized?

2. “Love kindness or Love faithfulness (or mercy).”

The word kindness or mercy is about love, loyalty, and faithfulness. If these aren’t qualities in a relationship it will fail and is not authentic to the extent it should be. We’re in a relationship with God through faith in Jesus, and because God is kind (merciful), loyal, and faithful we’re expected to be that to God and to our neighbor. Love is the great motivator. If a Christ follower truly loves God, he/she will do justice. You’ve heard the expression, “Put some legs on your faith. I want to see your faith acted out.” Express your faith in action done for others in love. “Love not in word or speech but in deed and action” (1 John 3:18).

3. “To walk humbly with your God.”

The word humbly might be thought of as carefully being attentive or giving considered attention to another. The key word in this is walk. Meaning to “walk attentively with your God.” To be looking carefully and to be aware of one’s surroundings and God’s calling and alertness for justice. God “walks alongside to help.” As Christ followers: our aim is to act in the best interest of all concerned. If someone takes more than their share someone will have to do without.

Pray and ask God to help you listen closely this weekend. Pray that before each time you enter into worship and small group this weekend. Then be ready to respond – to obey what you hear from Him – to put your faith and trust in Jesus to be your guide.

Saturday Morning Small Group

Love Faithfulness

Theme Verse: Micah 6:8

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

This morning we are going to look at what “Love Faithfulness” means.

What we want students to learn: As a follower of Christ living a Gospel-centered life, they are called to live a life defined by their love for others.

What we want students to do with what they’ve learned: To evaluate their attitudes toward others as they pertain to demonstrating love to the world.

Scripture Focus: Colossians 3:8-10, 12-14

Supporting Scripture: John 13:34-35

Overview: It would be foolish to attempt to boil God’s nature or character down to only one of His attributes. He’s far too complex for that. But so much of His activity that involves us, especially His work of redemption and reconciliation through Christ, is motivated by His love. And so it should be no surprise that God views love as one of the primary attributes of His followers. You want to challenge your students to be people who exude a Christ-fueled love to others.

Bible Background

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. *The Details* give you background info for each book, *The Setting* informs you what’s happening in and around the passage, and *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** We make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What’s the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasp the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the Bible Background to help summarize the context.

The Details

- **Author:** The Apostle Paul identified himself as the author of Colossians.

- **Time frame:** Most people believe Colossians was written sometime between AD 61 and 63, during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:17-31).
- **Purpose:** Ultimately, this letter's purpose is to emphasize the supremacy of Christ over everything. Paul was writing to combat the spread of false teachings within the church at Colossae. The exact heresy being refuted is not certain and may have been a blend of multiple influences. The legalism, mysticism, and asceticism corrupting the pure faith in Colossae were moving attention away from Christ, placing it instead on self-discipline and the awe of other spiritual things.

The Setting

Paul wrote this letter to the church at Colossae during his imprisonment in Rome. He reminds them of the truth of who Jesus is and the powerful Gospel that has saved them. Paul explains how disciples of Jesus are to live because the Gospel has forever changed their lives. Beginning in chapter three, Paul explains that disciples of Jesus should be focused on the Kingdom of God, not the kingdom of this world. Christ-followers should have lives that are marked by holiness rather than the things of this world.

The Main Point

A disciple becomes like the one he follows. Those who follow Jesus should live lives that are marked by love because we have been changed by His love for us through the Gospel. Jesus perfectly loved others and calls us to do the same. If His life on earth was marked by love, ours should be too. In fact, Jesus said that one-way people will know that we are His disciples is by our love for one another. Our love for one another is proof that we have been radically changed by Christ's love for us.

Lesson Plan

The **Lesson Plan** contains three elements: An introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible study section called *The Main Event*; an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** To get students thinking about love.
- **Set-Up:** a timer (cell phones work great). Have a way to keep score (whiteboard, pencil, and paper, note section of your phone, etc).

Leader: Divide the students into two teams. Explain that you will be playing a game of Buzzword.

Say: Each team will have a buzzword. Your team will have one minute to solve the clues I give. The answer to each clue will contain the buzzword. Answers can be a single word, a phrase, or an expression. For example, if the buzzword is "apple," I will give the clue "New York's nickname." The answer is "The Big Apple." I may give the clue "A popular restaurant chain" and the answer would be "Applebees." If a clue is too difficult, your team may decide to pass, but you will not get an opportunity to come back to the clue. Also, at the end of your time, the other team will have one chance to "steal" the point of

any passed clue if they solve the clue correctly. Each team will play one round. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Leader: Make sure both teams understand the rules and enlist someone from each team to keep score. Explain to the students that the Buzz Word is “love.”

Then give Team 1 the following clues:

- **Clue: Christian radio station; Answer: K-LOVE**
- **Clue: Those three little words; Answer: I love you**
- **Clue: Extra weight on a person’s midsection; Answer: Love handles**
- **Clue: Not able to see the faults of the one you admire; Answer: Love is blind**

NEXT, give Team 2 a chance to steal any “passed” clues. Then let them know that the Buzz Word is still “love.” Give Team 2 the following clues:

- **Clue: John 3:16; Answer: “For God so loved the world.”**
- **Clue: Nickname for the city of Paris; Answer: City of Love**
- **Clue: To completely fall for someone; Answer: Head over heels in love**
- **Clue: Affection between siblings; Answer: Brotherly love**

THEN, give Team 1 a chance to steal any “passed” clues. Tally up the points and declare a winner.

Say: Love is a very important idea in our culture. We have numerous dating websites where people hope to find love. Hollywood is always rolling out a new romantic comedy. Romance novels line shelves at bookstores. And we even have a holiday devoted to love.

Ask: Why do you think love is so important to us? (*Answers will vary*)

Say: In our lesson today we are going to talk about living a life defined by love for others. As we seek to be people who live as followers of Jesus, it’s one of the most important concepts we can discuss. And that’s not just my opinion. The Bible is FULL of places that back this up. Let’s look at a few right now.

The Main Event

- **Goal:** Help students understand that as followers of Christ living Gospel-centered lives, they are called to live a life defined by their love for others.

Ask: Students to turn to Colossians 3 in their bibles or student workbook.

Leader: As students find Colossians, take a moment to provide context for this passage using information from the Bible Background.

Say: When you become a follower of Jesus, your entire life changes. Not only are you saved from an eternity in hell, but you are also given a new heart, a new mind, and a

new life through the Holy Spirit. You aren't who you used to be. Because all of these things have changed, your lifestyle should no longer look like that of someone who is separated from Christ, living in sin. You are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In this passage Paul uses the phrases "old self" and "new self" to talk about a person's life before Christ (the old self) and then the person's life after surrendering to Christ (the new self). The things that are characteristic of the "old self" should not be true of someone who is Christ's disciple. Instead, our lives should be marked by the characteristics of the "new self."

Say: As we read Colossians 3:8-10, and 12-14 it is actually really helpful to think about changing clothes. Picture yourself taking off your dirty, wrinkled outfit and throwing it into the laundry basket, never to be put on again. Just as you would not put on a dirty outfit to go to a super important event, you should not clothe yourself with the characteristics that mark a life without Christ.

Leader: Read Colossians 3:8-10 and 12-14

"But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator."

"12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Ask: Have students underline in their workbook characteristics of the old self that must be put away. Then to circle the characteristics of the new self that we put on.

Ask: Looking at this passage, what are the characteristics of the old self that we must put away? (*Anger, wrath, malice, slander, obscene talk, lying.*)

Say: Now, picture yourself putting on a fresh set of clothes. The outfit has no wrinkles or spots. You are ready to go to that super important event and engage others because you are dressed in clean clothes. This is like the new self that we are to put on, made holy and clean through Christ.

Leader: Lead your students in a brief discussion by asking these questions. These questions are also located in the student workbook.

1. Looking at this passage, what are the characteristics of the new self that we put on? (*Compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, love.*)
2. What characteristic mentioned in verse 14 is to be put on above all? (*Love*)

3. Why do you think love is above all? *(Answers will vary.)*
Ask: Turn to your neighbor and explain why you think love is so important. Ask for anyone to share.
4. According to verse 14, love binds everything together in perfect harmony. How do you think love does this? What does love have to do with the other characteristics of the new self?
 - a. *Answer: Love gives us the ability to show compassion, kindness, humility, meekness patience and forgiveness. We show love to others when we treat them in these ways. Compassion is a demonstration of love because you are sympathizing with another person in his pain with a desire to take that pain away. Kindness displays love in the gentle treatment of others. Humility says that you love another more than yourself. Meekness is gentle power that is controlled by love. Patience is loving another enough to slow down and wait for what is best. Lastly, love empowers you to forgive others as Christ has forgiven you. Extending forgiveness also displays your love for Christ and trust in Him to make all things right.*
5. How can having a heart attitude marked by these characteristics affect the way we interact with others? *(Answers may vary.)*

Leader: Direct students to look at verse 10. Explain that the new self we are to put on is being renewed in the image of its creator. The creator of the new self is Christ. He created new life for us by dying on the cross as a payment for our sins and rising from the grave, defeating death on our behalf. The characteristics of the new self are the characteristics of Jesus, our creator, and we should continually look more and more like Him. We are to put on love above all things because He showed us what perfect love looks like when He laid His life down for us and gave us new life.

Say: We are going to look at John 13. We put on love above all because it reflects the character of Christ, but also because Christ commands us to love one another.

Leader: Arrange students in smaller groups of 3 or 4. Have a student read John 13:34-35.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Ask: Have students in their small groups, answer these questions, found in their workbooks, based on the verses read.

1. According to Jesus, how are we to love one another? *(Just as He has loved us.)*
2. What do you think Jesus meant when He said that we are to love others just like He has loved us?
 - a. *Answer: Jesus was speaking about His willingness to lay down His life for His disciples. He displayed His perfect love by willingly giving up His own life and facing God’s wrath on our behalf so that we can be made right with*

God. Jesus commands us to show love for others by being willing to lay our lives down for them.

3. What does it look like to love others by laying your life down for them?
 - a. *Answer: We must be willing to sacrifice our own comfort and selfish desires for the benefit of others. This type of love puts the needs of another person before your own.*
4. According to Jesus, how will people know that we are His disciples?
 - a. *Answer: By the love we have for one another.*
5. How does loving one another in the way Christ loved us show people that we are His disciples?
 - a. *Answers may vary. It shows that we are following His model for our lives. It shows that we take His words and commands seriously.*
6. How does the way Jesus commands us to show love for others look different from the way the world shows love?
 - a. *Answers may vary. Jesus' love involves commitment, dedication, and sacrifice. It isn't built on emotion or a feeling.*

Leader: After everyone has finished, discuss each question and have groups share their answers.

The Last Word

- **Goal:** To have students evaluate their attitudes toward others as they pertain to how they demonstrate love to the world.
- **Set-Up:** "Attitude Meter" is located in their student workbook.

Leader: Give students a few minutes to evaluate their attitudes toward the various groups of people mentioned on the handout.

Activity: Attitude Meter

On a scale of 1-5, what is your attitude toward: (1-Terrible, 5-Amazing)

_____	Your siblings
_____	Your parents
_____	Your teachers
_____	Your friends
_____	Cashiers at the places you shop
_____	Fast food workers/servers
_____	The "popular" crowd
_____	The "unpopular" crowd
_____	The custodians and lunch ladies at school

Say: Look at the groups of people on their handout and think about the love they demonstrate to people in each group. Have them answer the questions in their student workbooks:

1. How does your attitude toward certain people affect the way you treat them?
 - a. *Answers may vary. Explain that our attitudes toward others often direct how we treat them. Sometimes the attitudes of others can also affect our attitude and our desire to show them love. Although there are some people who are more difficult to love, Christ commands us to put on love and show His love to everyone.*
2. How does your attitude demonstrate Christ's love for the world?
 - a. *Answers may vary. Certain people are easier to love than others. When we are committed to loving all sorts of people, it shows that the source of our love is greater than ourselves. It points to Christ.*
3. How can we redirect the attitudes of our hearts to show love to others?
 - a. *Answers may vary. The more we grow deeper in our love for Jesus, the more we'll love others. The key to loving other people more is loving Jesus more and more.*

Leader: Challenge your students to think of one way they can show love to someone in each of these groups on the attitude meter at the retreat but also back home. In their student workbooks have them write down at least one way they are going to adjust their attitude toward one group of people. What action are they planning to do?

Activity: *(If you have extra time)*

Leader: Have each group of 3-4 or maybe join two groups together and give each group one of the following people groups.

Ask: Have each group of students create a skit on "how not" and "how to" treat others.

Leader: Let them brainstorm the situations or settings these interactions would take place. Act out the "how not" way first followed by the "how to" way last. Family, friends, people in authority – like your teachers and other adult leaders

(Some may be funny – enjoy but offer advice if needed to point out our response, in reality, should be encouraging and not tear down others.)

Remind students that as disciples of Jesus, we are called to live lives defined by love for others. People will be drawn to Jesus when we show them genuine, Christ-centered love.

Close in prayer.

Saturday Night Small Group Study

The Gospel-Centered Life: Practicing Humility

Theme Verse: Micah 6:8

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Tonight we are going to look at what it means to walk humbly with your God.

What we want students to learn: As followers of Christ living Gospel-centered lives, we must be people of humility.

What we want students to do with what they’ve learned: To look around them and identify real ways they can put others’ needs above their own.

Scripture Focus: Matthew 18:1-4

Supporting Scripture: Philippians 2:3-9

Overview: Humility is, for the most part, counter-cultural. Sure, there are feel-good moments every now and then on the news or online. But for the most part, it’s a “me first” world where people look out for their own needs first before ever thinking about others. The only problem is that this is pretty much the opposite of what Christ has called His followers to do. This lesson will help students understand how humility and service separate them from the world and identify them as Christ-followers.

Bible Background

The *Bible Background* is designed to help you provide some context for the Scripture you’ll be studying. *The Details* gives you background info for each book. *The Setting* informs you of what’s happening in and around the passage. *The Main Point* gives you an overview of how the passage will be used in the lesson.

- **What do we mean by “context”?** We make a point to encourage you to provide the context for the passages you study. By “context” we mean at the very least helping students know *who* wrote the book, *when* it was written, and *why* it was written.
- **What’s the big deal?** When we teach the Bible without giving context, students don’t get a “big picture” understanding of the story of the Bible. But this view is vital to grasping the story of God’s plan of redemption for humankind. As you teach, use the *Bible Background* to help summarize the context.

The Details

- **Author:** Matthew, a former tax collector, was a disciple of Jesus and a firsthand witness to the stories he relates in his Gospel.

- **Time frame:** Most people hold to Matthew's Gospel being written in the late A.D. 50s or 60s, though there are some who think it was written after the destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70.
- **Purpose:** Matthew was writing to a primarily Jewish audience to convince them that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah. But he was probably aware of a Gentile audience, as his Gospel makes the case that the saving truth of Christ is for all nations.

The Setting

The main passage for this lesson is Matthew 18:1-4. This passage begins a long section where Jesus explains what it looks like to be a part of His Kingdom. These verses begin with a question from the disciples and Jesus' answer. This type of conversation happens all throughout Jesus' ministry, and here, He sets the disciples straight on how they are to view their position in His Kingdom.

The Main Point

The disciple's question is one of standing. They are wondering if they, being the closest followers of Jesus, will be privy to special treatment in God's Kingdom. You might be able to think that they're hoping all of their hard work is going to pay off in some way. They're hoping that they will get special privileges because of all they've done for Jesus. Jesus answers with a visual object lesson: a child. Jesus brought the child into the middle of the group as the goal for their attitude. Essentially, Jesus is showing them that just as a child knows that they are dependent on others, they must be dependent on God and not themselves. The disciples must flip their thinking on its head. God's Kingdom prizes humility: looking to others before yourself.

Lesson Plan

The *Lesson Plan* contains three elements: an introductory activity called *The Lead In*; the Bible Study section called *The Main Event*; and an application-focused segment called *The Last Word*.

The Lead In

- **Goal:** To help students begin to see that God's Kingdom does not work the way we think it does; there is no pecking order.
- **Supplies:** On a dry-erase board or paper, write out a list numbered one through five with blanks beside each number. Print the "Food Chain" clue cards, which are located at the end of this leader's guide. Cut them into stacks of five cards. Place the five clue cards in a paper bag.

Leader: Set up the game by explaining to students that you're going to have them draw a card out of the bag and then place it where they think it goes on the food chain (number one through five).

Say: We're going to build a food chain together. Once you draw a card out of the bag, choose where you think it ranks on the food chain and I'll write it there on the board.

Leader: Ask for five volunteers and have them choose a clue card and place it on the food chain. (The difficulty with this game will be getting the first several clues right. If they draw the "grass" card and don't place it on the bottom, the food chain will not be correct.)

Leader: Once the five clues have been chosen and placed, correct the food chain.

Ask: Why is this the correct order? (*The eagle eats the snake, the snake eats the frog, etc.*) Make a connection to our lives.

Ask:

1. How many of you feel like your school is divided up into groups? What are they?
 - a. *You will inevitably get a yes answer from this question. Allow students to list the groups, but encourage it to be done in a way that isn't judgmental or mean. The groups will vary, but may very well be something like "athletes, band kids, smart kids," etc.*
2. Does it feel like some people want there to be a pecking order for these groups?
 - a. *Answer your own question here . . . you don't want to make anyone feel uncomfortable. The answer is yes – there will always be people who want their "group" to be "first." Many people feel like one group of people or one person is on the top and that there's an order in our lives whether it's based on money, popularity, success, or so on. (You may even help them see that this doesn't change when it comes to some adults!)*

Say: It's easy for us to believe that this same type of system exists within God's family. (We're about to see that some of the disciples felt this way.) Sometimes it feels like some people are "better" Christians than others. Maybe we think that's us! We can become convinced that we're such good people that God only cares about us. What we're going to look at today shows us that that's not true.

The Main Event

- **Goal:** To help students see that as followers of Christ living Gospel-centered lives, we must be people of humility.
- **Set-Up:** You may benefit from a dry-erase board, but it's not critical. Make sure students have a Bible or that they are able to look along with a friend.

Say: We're going to look at a passage where the disciples ask Jesus a question. This question shows us who they think they are on the food chain.

Ask: For a student to read Matthew 18:1-4.

"At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. **3**

And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. **4** Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Ask: Circle the question the disciples asked from Matthew 18:1-4. (*Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*)

Leader: Lead your students in the questions below and work through the questions together. These questions are located in their student workbooks as well.

Ask:

1. What question are the disciples really asking? What do they mean when they ask, “Who is the greatest?”
 - a. *Answer: They’re not really asking who is the greatest, they’re actually asking Jesus, “Are we the greatest?”*
2. Why do you think they would ask that? What had they done to be great?
 - a. *Answer: These were Jesus’ closest friends and disciples. They had left everything to follow Jesus. They were really wondering if that was going to pay off. Would they be treated differently by God because of everything they had sacrificed for Jesus? The disciples valued their own sacrifice. They thought their following Jesus made them better than other people and worthy of special treatment. They thought they deserved to be on top.*
3. Jesus was about to turn their values upside down. He brings a child into the middle of the group. Underline what Jesus says about the child in verses 2-4? Why does he use a child as the example?
 - a. *Answer: Jesus said that they must turn around from their way of thinking. They weren’t ranking themselves on some sort of list or pecking order. Jesus wanted all of them to humble themselves like children.*
4. What does it mean to be humble?
 - a. *Answers will vary. Students usually struggle with this word. Sometimes it is helpful to ask them: “What is the opposite of being humble?” Help them see the core of humility: not seeing yourself as the center of the universe. Humility is realizing that we’re not on top. Humility is counting other people as more significant than yourself.*
5. How are children humble?
 - a. *Answer: Children are humble because they are dependent. They realize their need for others. They look to parents for direction, provision, and love. We must be the same way with Jesus. We cannot provide everything we need for ourselves. We need Jesus!*

Leader: Explain that you’re going to look at something the Apostle Paul wrote that is the exact same idea. Read or have a student read Philippians 2:3-9.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, **4** not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. **5** In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; **7** rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! **9** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.”

Ask:

1. Who is the best example of humility? (*Jesus*)
2. OK so, this was an easy answer. But why would you say that?
 - a. *Answers will vary. Lead students to see that Jesus not only told the disciples that they had to turn around their way of thinking, but He demonstrated that. We would think that when God would come to earth it would be with huge celebration and fanfare. Everyone would know God was there. But in reality, Jesus came quietly as a baby in a forgotten stable. He humbled Himself even to the point of dying for us because we needed it.*
3. Look back at the passage. Draw a box around the definition of humility. What does it mean?
 - a. *Answer: Look at verse 3. Humility is “value others above yourselves.” This is what Jesus wanted His disciples to understand. We’re not operating in a system where we’re trying to earn our way to the top. If we’re really following Jesus, we will count others more significant than ourselves. We will (verse 4) not only look to our own interests, “but also to the interests of others.”*

Leader: Make sure students know that an important thing to see is the example that Jesus set in humility. Jesus showed us firsthand what is valuable in the Kingdom of God. We are not working our way to the top, but we are responding to the amazing love of Jesus by living likewise. Paul is addressing in us the same problem that Jesus was addressing with His disciples.

Ask:

1. Look at verse 3. What are the two things that Paul says we shouldn’t be doing?
 - a. *Answer: Paul encourages us to do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit. He sets these two motivations in contrast to humility. They are the opposite of humility.*
2. Do you feel like the disciples were asking their question from selfish ambition or conceit? If so, how?
 - a. *Answer: The disciples were jockeying for position. They wanted to be valued in God’s Kingdom. They were looking at each other as rivals to outwork for Jesus. Their conceit is on display in their question when they ask, “Who is the greatest?” They want to be on top, the greatest.*
3. How did Jesus show humility?
 - a. *Answer: Our definition of humility from this passage is counting others as more significant than ourselves and looking to their interests. On the cross,*

Jesus was paying our penalty – He was dying our death. Jesus was looking to our interests above His own. He suffered, not because He had to, but because He loved us enough to give Himself up for our forgiveness. Jesus chose to give His life so that we could be forgiven.

Leader: Help students begin to think about how we live humbly in our own lives. We're not following God to work our way up in the pecking order, but because of what Jesus has done for us.

Say: We know that there are things that we are called to do for Jesus. If we're not working our way to be better than other people, why do we do things for Jesus?

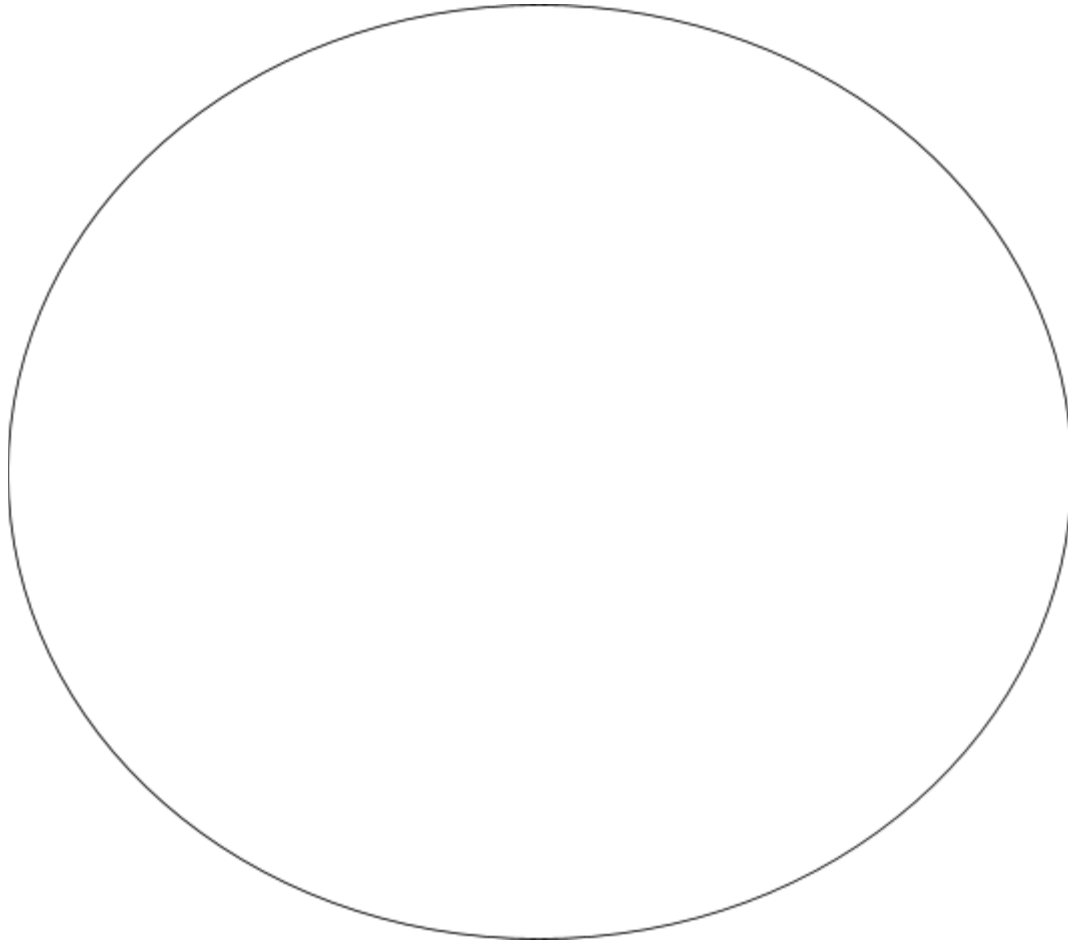
- *Answers will vary. This is the most important question in this lesson. It's easy for us to mistake our lives as Christians as being about working for God's love or a better status in God's Kingdom. A lot of religions work this way, but Christianity turns this concept on its head. We are accepted by God, not because of our deeds, but because of the work that Jesus has done on the cross. We are valued, not because of our worth as a worker, but because of God's love for us. We live in response to what Jesus has done. We are humble because of the humility that Jesus showed us.*

Say: When we talk about humility, it's easy for us to talk about what not to do, but hard for us to realize what we should be doing in our lives. As we close the lesson, we're going to look at how we can really live out humility in different areas of our lives. How can we count others as more significant than ourselves and not just look to our own interests? How can we respond to the humility that Jesus showed us on the cross?

The Last Word

- **Goal:** To help students look around them and identify real ways they can put the needs of others above their own.
- **Set-Up:** You'll want to use a dry-erase board or some other means to help students visualize the three areas of their life that you will consider. You'll also need a piece of paper and something with which to write for each student.

Say: We are going to look at three areas of our lives. In your student workbook, divide the circle into these three areas (*proportional to how much time you spend there*): *Home, School/Work, and Play.*



Leader: Allow students time to divide the circle according to how much time they spend in each place.

Say: These three areas will always be there for anyone, no matter what stage of life you're in. These three areas represent your family, the places you have to go, and the places you want to go. The amount of time that you spend in these different areas may change at different points in your life, but they will always be there.

- *For these students, most of their job is just to be a student right now! "Play" represents the places you want to go/things you want to do. This may be friends' houses, sports teams, hobbies, etc.*

Ask: Have a few students share what their circles look like.

Say: Now, write the names of two people that you know well in each of these areas. It may be Mom and Dad, a friend from school, a teacher, or a neighbor, but come up with six people that you interact with regularly in these different areas of your life.

Say: Now comes the hard part. Think of specific ways that you can put these people before yourself.

- Really challenge students to think this through. It should be more specific than just “do the dishes for Mom” or something like that. How can they really count these people as more significant than themselves? Maybe it’s studying with a friend who needs help, working hard to respect your parents, or taking a shift for someone at work so they can go to a concert.

Ask: Have some students share their ideas.

Leader: Guide the student's responses toward real expressions of humility that count others as more significant. Close by helping students see why this is important.

Say: The reason that we help in this way and practice humility in our relationships is because we are not living for ourselves. We are living for Jesus. Because of what He has done for us, we’re looking for any opportunity to show others what Jesus is really like!

Close in prayer, asking God to lead all of you to follow Jesus by counting others as more significant than yourselves.

Saturday Night Church Group Devotions

“Act Justly”

Scripture: Micah 6:8

Supplies: Candy (*You will need to bring*)

Reminders & Announcements:

- Group Announcements
 - Announcements – Go over packing and schedule for Sunday. You will need to be packed up and out of your rooms before coming to Sunday Morning worship.
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Devotion

Ask: Can you give me some examples of cases you know of when people have been treated unfairly at school? In your home? In your city or town? In our country? In a foreign country? (*Allow time for discussion.*)

Leader: Ask for three volunteers to follow you outside the room. Once outside, be sure that the other youth can't hear what you say. Tell the three that you're going to give them bags of candy to share with the other youth. There's only one catch. They can give candy only to certain people.

Choose a criterion that will eliminate at least half of the youth. For example, only the boys, only the girls, or only wear tennis shoes. Remind them not to tell others why some people are getting candy and others aren't. Warn them only to give candy to those in their designated group even if the other students beg.

After giving your volunteers their instructions, come back in the room and tell the rest of the group: In a moment, I'm going to let the three volunteers back into the room. When they come in, they'll have some candy to share. You can ask, bribe, and beg them for it. You may or may not get some candy. If you figure out what the criteria is for getting candy, you'll be entitled to a double portion.

Call the three volunteers back into the room. Allow them to circulate through the group, handing out candy to the chosen few.

Ask:

1. What was it like to be one who received candy?
2. What was it like to be left out or passed over?
3. Did anyone figure out why he or she did not get candy?
4. What makes you treat some people differently than others?

Say: The Bible instructs us to treat each other justly. This means treating people the same way, without special treatment for some.

Read: James 2:1-10 and distribute candy to everyone.

Say: Think about people that you treat differently from others. Maybe it is certain people in this youth group. Maybe it is a group of people at school. Maybe it is just one person that you treat differently than others.

Ask: What can you do to change how you treat that person or that group of people?

Close in Prayer: Pray about what you should do to change how you treat people.

Sunday Morning Quiet Time

“...to love mercy...”

Luke 6:35

“But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked”.

God wants you to be kind and merciful to everyone; even your enemies.

In other words, God wants you to forgive those that dislike you or treat you badly. God wants you to show His love to them not by getting revenge but by kindness.

Prayer: Ask God to help you control your tongue and your attitude towards others. Ask God to help you be able to show His love to your enemies. Thank God for showing you His love and kindness even when you do things that He doesn't agree with.

Read: Luke 6:31

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Do those around you see you living a life the way Christ would want? Do they see you treating others the way that is right?

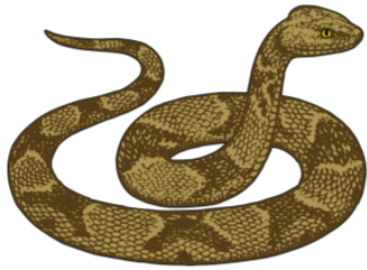
If you will treat others in a respectful and loving way, that treatment most of the time will be returned to you. Today you have the opportunity to choose yet another path. Is there someone that you have not been showing the love of Christ to? Is there someone that you have not been getting along with that well? If the answer is yes, today is the day to clear the air. Make it your priority today to get conflicts settled and get those friendships back on track. Which path will you choose today? The one that shows the love of Christ or the one that takes you further away from Him?

Prayer: Ask God to help you treat others with respect, the way Jesus Himself treated others, with compassion. Thank God today for His fairness and justice in your life and for the opportunity to live in a country where you are free to worship Him.

Psalms 106:1-3

“Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever.

Food Chain Clue Cards



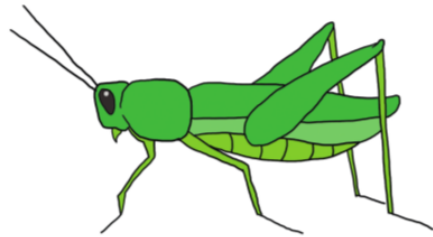
SNAKE



EAGLE



FROG



GRASSHOPPER



GRASS