

BEING GOD'S HELPERS:
OPEN EYES, OPEN HEART, OPEN HANDS

Target Age: Elementary (Grades 1st-5th)
Key Verse: Proverbs 31:8 “Speak up for those who can’t speak for themselves.”
Big Idea: “Everyone can do something"
Supplies needed: Construction paper, markers, scissors, glue, QR code (provided), Yarn, dice, Stickers, Heart worksheet (provided)

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Understand that caring for children in need is important to God
- Learning to become the hands and feet of Jesus by seeing our friends, classmates and peers as image bearers of God
- Discover practical ways the church can support vulnerable children
- Connect the Bible's teachings to real-world action

TEACHER PREPARATIONS & MINDSETS

- We are called to keep our eyes and ears open to those who are in need and be the hands and feet of Jesus.
- Teach through the lens of “everyone can do something.”
- Focus on stirring the children’s hearts and turning them towards those that are in need.
- These lessons are meant to shift perspective and stir kids’ hearts towards empathy.

Note: Foster Care is not the focus of the class discussion for today. Due to the complex nature of foster care, most Kids Ministry volunteers will not have the experience or training to guide a discussion on this topic. Instead, we hope you find this lesson around God’s heart of compassion to be helpful in forming a deeper love for our neighbors in need.

OPENING ACTIVITY (10 MINUTES)

“Helping Hands”Activity

Supplies: Provide one piece of construction paper and a pair of scissors for each child. Make sure their table has markers to share, and the volunteers have the attached QR code labels.

- Trace kids’ hands on a folded piece of large paper and cut them out.
- On the paper hand, write ways they can help someone (e.g., "Help clean up," "Play with someone new," "Stand up for a friend"). (*For older kids, you can have them write up to 5 ideas, one on each finger*.)
- Then volunteers place a label on the back that has a QR code for parents to learn more about FTC. (See attached set of labels to print)

After the Activity: *“I love seeing all your helping hands! God created us to help each other in big and small ways. When we see someone who needs help, we can ask ourselves, “What can I do?” We want to be filled with compassion. Do you know what compassion means? Compassion is NOTICING someone else in need and caring enough to do something about it.*

On the back of your helping hands, we put a QR code that your parents can scan on their phones to see the website of an organization that our church is partnering with to help kids in our community who need some support.”

GAME (10 MINUTES)

"Who Helps Me?" Web

Supplies: Yarn

Before the Activity: *“This morning, we are going to play a game called “Who Helps Me?” Is there anyone here who has never needed support from anyone? I didn’t think so. God designed us to need and help each other.*"

- Have students sit in a circle
- Using a ball of yarn, create a web by having each student:

    1. Hold onto the yarn
    2. Share one person who helps take care of them
    3. Throw the ball to another student

After the Activity: *“I loved hearing about all the people that support you! Did you notice how strong our web is? Each time we mentioned someone who supports us, our web became stronger! We are stronger together. We aren’t meant to live life by ourselves. This is how God designed us. We all need a community of people to wrap around us, in the good times and the bad.*

God asks us to be people who show compassion to each other. Compassion is caring enough about people who are in need to help them. Today, in adult service, our grown-ups are learning about how our church can help families who need support in our community. We will talk more about this later in our lesson. While we wait, I want you to think about all the people you mentioned who support you and ask yourself, "How can I have open eyes to notice or see those who need my help?"

BIBLE STORY TIME (15 MINUTES)

Storytelling Approach: Use props or visuals (like a small road setup, and toy figures for the priest, Levite, Samaritan, and injured man), or ask for volunteers to perform as silent actors while you read the story.

Passage: Luke 10:25-37

SAY: One day, a man who knew a lot about God's rules asked Jesus, "What must I do to live forever with God?" Jesus asked him, "What do you think?" The man said, "Love God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus told him, "That's right! Do that, and you'll live."

But the man had another question. He asked, "Who is my neighbor?" So Jesus told this story:

A man was walking down a road when some robbers attacked him. They hurt him badly, stole everything he had, and left him lying there, unable to move. Soon, a priest came walking down the same road. He saw the man but didn't stop to help—he crossed to the other side and kept going. Later, a Levite (someone who worked at the temple) came by. He saw the man too, but he also didn't stop. He walked past him on the other side.

Finally, a Samaritan came along. Now, Samaritans and the people who lived in this area didn't usually get along. But when the Samaritan saw the hurt man, he felt sorry for him. He stopped, cleaned up his wounds, and put him on his donkey. He took him to an inn and stayed with him to make sure he was okay. The next day, the Samaritan gave the innkeeper some money and said, "Please take care of him. If it costs more, I'll pay you back when I return."

Jesus asked, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked?" The man replied, "The one who helped him." Jesus said, "Go and do the same!" Highlight how the Samaritan stopped to help even when others didn't.

Key Question: Who acted like a true neighbor?

ASK: How did the Good Samaritan wrap his neighbor with support?

SAY: Jesus wants us to be like the Samaritan, caring for others even when it's hard or inconvenient.

SAY: The Priest and the Levite were not helpful. Maybe they thought they were too busy to help. Or maybe they thought, “Hey, this isn’t my problem.” The priest and the Levite are considered bystanders in this story. Do you know what that means? A bystander is a person who sees someone in need and doesn’t help. Sometimes, bystanders are unhelpful on purpose. Other times, bystanders don’t mean to be unhelpful, but they might be nervous or don’t know what to do.

If we don’t want to be a bystander, how do we know how to help? We can ask the question, “What is the most loving thing I can do in this situation?”

We can ask God to help us have wisdom to know how to help. Sometimes the most loving way to help is to pray! Sometimes the most loving way to help is to step in and take action. Even when a problem feels too big to solve, we can ask God, “Is there something big or small that I can do to help?” We might not be able to solve a big problem on our own, but we all can play a part in helping!

Jesus wants the church to be a place where everyone can do something, even kids in this class. He wants us to serve one another because we are God’s big family.

Memory Verse: Today our memory verse comes from **Proverbs 31:8** NIrV which says “Speak **up** for those who can’t speak for themselves.”

Can you say that with me?

Let’s add some hand motions!

“Speak **up** for those” (Hands around mouth)

“who can’t speak for themselves.” (sign for “Thank you” in ASL.)

Now let’s practice that three times!

Great job!

ASK: We have talked a little about bystanders, but what do you think an Upstander is?

SAY: An upstander is someone who speaks up and takes action to help others, especially when they see something wrong or unfair happening. Instead of just watching (like a bystander), an upstander steps in to make a difference. They might speak up for someone being treated unfairly, help a person in need, or stand by a friend who is feeling left out. When an upstander sees someone in need, they wrap them with support. Being an upstander is about being brave and serving others, just like Jesus taught us.

Big Idea: “Everyone can do something."

UPSTANDER VS. BYSTANDER ACTIVITY (5 MINUTES)

Instructions: Read scenarios aloud to see if the kids understand the concept of a bystander and upstander. Have kids stand up if they think the individual is an upstander, and have them sit down and put their hands over their mouth if it is a bystander scenario.

Scenarios:

1. At recess, a friend falls off the swing and is crying. You go over to see if they need help. (*Upstander*)
2. You see someone being teased on the bus, but you don't say anything because you don't want to get involved. (*Bystander*)
3. A new kid at school is sitting alone at lunch, so you invite them to join you. (*Upstander*)
4. Your sibling spills their milk all over the floor, and you walk past without offering to help. (*Bystander*)
5. You see someone getting bullied, and you tell a teacher about it. (*Upstander*)
6. A classmate drops their books in the hallway, and you keep walking. (*Bystander*)
7. Your little sibling is scared of the dark, so you stay with them until they fall asleep. (*Upstander*)
8. You hear someone say something mean about a friend, but you don't speak up. (*Bystander*)
9. A kid is sitting alone at a birthday party, and you ask them to play with you. (*Upstander*)
10. Someone from the other team is knocked over, and you offer your hand to lift them back up. (*Upstander*)
11. You see someone being excluded from a group activity, but you don't say anything. (*Bystander*)
12. You notice someone looking lost at church and help them find where they need to go. (*Upstander*)
13. A kid is being teased for something that they are wearing, and you say, "That's not kind. Stop it." (*Upstander*)
14. Someone forgets their lunch, and you share some of yours with them. (*Upstander*)
15. You see your parent struggling to carry in a lot of groceries and offer to help. (*Upstander*)
16. You see litter on the playground but walk past it without picking it up. (*Bystander*)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (15 MINUTES)

Supplies: Dice

Instructions: Pass one die around the circle of children. Let them roll it. Then ask them to answer the question with the corresponding number rolled.

1. Can you share a story of a time when you saw an upstander help someone?
2. How do you feel when you see someone in need?
3. What is something you can do today to be an upstander?
4. Do you agree with the statement "Everyone can do something?" Why or why not?
5. What would the world look like if we had more upstanders and less bystanders?
6. If you had to summarize today's lesson in one sentence, what would you say? (*Give some time for kids to think about this one.*)

TAKE-HOME POINTS

- Everyone can do something to show love
- Small acts of kindness make a big difference
- We are God's hands and feet in helping others

***Note**: On the next two pages, you'll find a **Parent Connection handout** to share with the parents of the children who participated in this lesson. Please staple a **Foster the City Vision Card** to each handout. For reference, you can see an example of these cards below.*





*To help save resources at your church, we've provided the handout in a **half-sheet format**. Please print the next two pages **double-sided** and cut along the dotted line. Thank you!*

Parent Connection



CHURCH: _____

ADVOCATE: _____

Parents,

Today, we talked to your children about the good Samaritan and taking action for those in need by seeing how to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Your church is supported and equipped to do this by their work with an organization called Foster The City. Although we did not talk about foster care with your kids, our church believes that this is an important way that we can care for our neighbors in need. If your family is interested in learning more about how to care for vulnerable families, please see the resources provided.

We used the *Helping Hands Activity* to discuss different ways we can help others. On the back of your child's traced hand, you will find a QR Code that you can use to find more ways to help vulnerable children through Foster the City. We invite you to prayerfully explore with your family how you might get involved (e.g. Become a Support Friend/Family with Foster the City to support foster families at your church; Participate in foster care gift drives; Attend an Interest Meeting with Foster the City).

Today's Bible verse comes from **Proverbs 31:8** NIrV which says "Speak up for those who can't speak for themselves." *Ask your child to teach you the hand movements that go with it.*

We discussed that *Speaking up means not being a bystander*. At the end of our time together we played the Upstander vs. Bystander game in which we gave the kids different scenarios for them to decide if the person in the scenario was an upstander or a bystander. Ask your child if they can explain what an Upstander would do.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- www.fosterthecity.org
- Your Advocate: _____
- Advocate Contact: _____
- Check out our *31-Day Prayer Guide* at www.fosterthecity.org/churchresources

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- Attend an Interest Meeting to learn more about foster care and the ways your family can get involved. *(Note: This meeting is intended for adults and will provide language for you as you choose to share age appropriate messaging with your kids.)*
- Become a Support Friend/Family with Foster the City in order to support foster families in your church community.
- Explore what it would look like to become a Foster Family in your community.
- Engage with your Advocate for ongoing and upcoming projects in your area.
- Donate new backpacks filled with school supplies for local foster care organizations.
- Participate in foster care gift drives.

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QR Codes for "Helping Hands" Activity *(Avery US Letter - Presta 94227 Blank Rectangle Labels)*

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