

The Abingdon Religious Education Texts

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The Rules of the Game

By

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IMPROVING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION THROUGH
SUPERVISION
INTERMEDIATE METHOD IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

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LESSON I

THE RULES OF THE GAME

THE football game was at a critical point. The score was a tie and the home team had the ball on their opponent's five-yard line, second down, with only two minutes left to play. Two more plunges through the line and victory!

Then a heart-breaking thing happened. The referee blew his whistle, gave an order, and the home team were compelled to move back fifteen yards—penalized because Dick Raines, star player, had made a foul tackle. Dick had not obeyed the rules of the game, and his failure brought defeat to his team and shame and humiliation to himself.

Every kind of game must have its rules, and the players must obey the rules if they would win. This is true in many other things as well as in games and play.

There are rules which must be obeyed in the school and at home. Often the rules are not printed nor written down. We only know in a general way what they are, but they all center about one general rule: *Do what you know to be right*. Dick Raines knew it was not right to make a foul tackle. He not only knew that it was

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against the rules, but he knew that good sportsmen always play fair in a game.

The Boy Scouts have rules which every Scout must learn and follow. They call one part of their rules the *Scout Oath*, and the other part the *Scout Law*. The Camp Fire Girls have similar rules. These are the Scout rules:

The Scout Oath: On my honor I will do my best—

1. To do my duty to God and my country, and to obey the Scout law.
2. To help other people at all times.
3. To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.

The Scout Law:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A Scout is trustworthy. | 7. A Scout is obedient. |
| 2. A Scout is loyal. | 8. A Scout is cheerful. |
| 3. A Scout is helpful. | 9. A Scout is thrifty. |
| 4. A Scout is friendly. | 10. A Scout is brave. |
| 5. A Scout is courteous. | 11. A Scout is clean. |
| 6. A Scout is kind. | 12. A Scout is reverent. |

The Camp Fire Law:

It is my desire to become a Camp Fire Girl, and to obey the Law of the Camp Fire, which is to:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Seek beauty. | 5. Hold on to health. |
| 2. Give service. | 6. Glorify work. |
| 3. Pursue knowledge. | 7. Be happy. |
| 4. Be trustworthy. | |

This Law of the Camp Fire I will strive to follow.

Many years ago God gave a certain set of rules for men to live by. You have already read

these rules in the Bible, and perhaps learned them by heart. They were cut on tablets of stone and brought by Moses to the Israelites when they were on their way to the promised land. These "rules of the game" were called the *Ten Commandments*, and they are still in force for us to-day as they were for them of olden times. In their original form they were probably as follows:

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet.

The Bible is our best book of "rules of the game"—the game of living happy and successful lives. Sometimes these rules are definitely set down, as in the case of the Ten Commandments and parts of the Sermon on the Mount. At other times some great man or woman or some heroic boy or girl shows us the "rules of the game" by a kindly act or noble deed. More than any one else in the world has Jesus shown us how to follow these rules.

Many there are, all over the world, who by

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their deeds are able to teach us the "rules of the game" as we should know and obey them. Most of the lessons that follow in this text are stories of people who were fine players in the game of living. Each story contains hidden somewhere in it an important "rule of the game." The rule is generally not stated in so many words, but it is in the story for you to find it as you study. To hunt for these rules, and perhaps to write them down, will be itself almost as good as a game. To follow the rules yourself as you discover them in your lessons will be to win the game.

It will help us if we remember that really important rules—the "rules of the game" as we shall study them in this book—were not made just that we might be made to obey rules to satisfy some one else. We have rules because they were found necessary for the good of us all. Just as we cannot run a game without rules to make good team work possible, so we must obey the "rules of the game" in our work and play and dealings with others if we are to do right by them and by ourselves.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AND TO DO:

1. Why must every game have rules to be followed by those who play it?
2. What are the effects on a game if the rules are not obeyed? What are the effects on the player who breaks the rules?
3. Show how it is that we must have rules (or

laws) to govern our living, just as there must be rules to govern a game. For example, there is a rule (law) against stealing; against speeding an automobile; against selling whisky. There is also a rule (moral law) against telling a lie, doing harm to others, and being selfish. What other "rules of the game" (for our living) can you think of? Make a list of these in your notebook.

4. Do you know of any instance where a player spoiled a game or brought blame upon himself by not obeying the rules?
5. Do you know of any instance in which some one (not in a game, but in home or school or business) injured others or brought blame upon himself by not obeying the "rules of the game" in the matter of honesty, truth, obedience, or some other things mentioned in the Scout Law or in the Ten Commandments?
6. Do you think it is as important that we should learn the "rules of the game" for our daily living as for the game on the playground?
7. Commit to memory within the next few weeks (1) The Scout Oath and The Scout Law, or The Law of the Camp Fire Girls, (2) The Ten Commandments.

LESSON II

THE STORY OF A "GOOD TURN"

It was early morning in the little city of Jericho. The quaint houses with their flat-topped roofs cast long shadows across the picturesque streets. Before one of the largest of the dwellings stood a small donkey ready saddled and drowsily wagging his ears under a palm tree to which he was tied. Out of the house floated glad voices and merry laughter of the children.

The door opened and the master of the house stepped forth arrayed for a journey. A hand rested fondly on each small head, and there was a special farewell word for each child and the mother, who had followed him out to the street.

"Don't forget your 'good turns' while I am away," said the father as he mounted the donkey.

"No, no! we will remember," came back in a chorus.

Then before he gathered up the reins the master of the house extended his hands in blessing over the little group and gave them his benediction: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace!"

"Amen"! was the reverent response from the group.

As the master of the house rode down the street of his native city he received cordial greetings, for he had been kind to many people and had helped them in time of need. His friends and neighbors called him "the Good Samaritan." Most of them knew the interesting little game the Good Samaritan and his family played. Each day it was their custom to do some deed of kindness to one outside of their own number. When the supper hour came and they were assembled around the table, each one recounted the deed he had done and the fun he had had in doing it. It was considered a great disgrace if any one had let a day pass without doing his "good turn." No wonder the Good Samaritan's neighbors gave him greeting, "Peace be unto thee!" and "Blessings upon thee and thy house!" as he passed by.

Soon the Good Samaritan and his donkey had passed out through the gates of Jericho. They were on their way to the great city of Jerusalem, which lay about twenty miles distant. Slowly they found their way over the ascending plain which led to the mountain pass through which they must go. As they entered the mountains the road became more rugged. At places it clung to the mountainside where cliffs rose above the travelers and where chasms yawned below. Here and there sharp turns were

required, and great bowlders jutted out, completely shutting from view the road ahead.

The trip over this part of the way was always a dangerous one, for robbers frequently lurked in the dark places behind the rocks or hid in the caves on the mountainside. Many a traveler had been suddenly fallen upon and beaten by thieves and his money taken from him. Many a victim had been stripped of his raiment as well as his purse and left to suffer or die by the wayside.

"Steady, Bumpo!" said the Good Samaritan to his faithful donkey. "I don't like the kind of company we are likely to have, but we will be ready for them if they appear." With this he swung around so it would be within easy reach a stout cudgel like a policeman's club which he had fastened to the saddle. He felt for the well-filled pocket book, and put it into a more safe place. Then he urged the donkey into a faster pace.

Suddenly at a sharp turn of the road just ahead he caught a glimpse of a man approaching. He grasped his club and made ready in case the man should prove to be a robber. But no! Greatly to his relief, the traveler proved to be only a priest on his way to Jericho. The Good Samaritan would have given him greeting, but the priest haughtily turned away his head and passed by on the other side; for the priests did not like the Samaritans.

At the next bend in the road he met another

man, but this man was not a robber either. He was a Levite coming down from Jerusalem. The Levite, like the priest, offered no greeting, but passed by with a haughty look.

One more turn of the rugged road and the Good Samaritan would come to the most dangerous spot of all. Here the road was full of stones and the way was narrow and winding. If he could pass this point safely, he would feel that the danger was past. It would then be but a few miles to an inn where he could find rest and food.

So he went very carefully as he approached the dangerous place. His ears were alert for the slightest sound and his eye keen for signs of robbers. He thought he heard a cry ahead, and paused to listen. But no further sound came and he proceeded. Almost immediately he came to a place where marks on the ground showed that there had been a struggle. Then suddenly, a few steps farther along he was startled and shocked by a gruesome sight. On the ground lay a man, quite senseless and seemingly dead. His face and body were bruised and cut, and blood was running from a great wound on his head.

The Good Samaritan thought quickly. What should he do? The robbers might be near at hand waiting for another victim. If he went on as fast as he could without stopping, he could escape; if he delayed to help the injured man, the

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thieves might rob him of his money, or even take his life.

But he did not hesitate. He slipped off his donkey and came to the man, who was now moaning with pain. He knelt beside him and examined his wounds. Then he tenderly bound them up, pouring in oil and wine to cleanse them and stop the pain. After a little he lifted the sufferer onto the back of his donkey, and walked beside him, supporting him till they came to the inn. There they took him in and cared for him. When the Good Samaritan was leaving the next day to continue his journey he paid the wounded man's bill, telling the inn keeper to let him stay until he was well, and that the Good Samaritan would pay whatever extra expense there was when he returned.

Having thus done his "good turn," even at the risk of his own safety, the Good Samaritan went on his way to Jerusalem, where he arrived late in the evening at the home of a friend. Three days he spent in the beautiful city. Soon after midday on the fourth day he mounted his patient donkey for the homeward journey. As he passed along the great street of the city where it approached the outer gate he paused at a market place to buy a small present for each of his children.

Suddenly he was startled by a harsh cry: "The Samaritan! The Samaritan dog! Down with the Samaritan!" He was quickly sur-

rounded by a threatening mob who shouted, "Out with him! Out with the pig of a Samaritan!" At first the Good Samaritan tried to reason with the rabble, and to ask why they attacked him. He did not know that the false report had been circulated in Jerusalem that the Samaritans were guilty of many robberies and crimes which had recently been committed there. The mob did not wait to explain. They jeered at him and spat upon him and struck him, driving him toward the city gate, and even threatening his life.

But when the tumult was at its height a strange thing happened. A stately figure in the rich apparel of a nobleman, and mounted on a spirited horse, forced its way into the crowd. The voice of an attendant rang out, "Make way for the son of Maccabees! Make way for the worthy prince!"

The uproar ceased in a moment. The mob became silent, and every eye was turned to the stately prince. Then the prince, after letting his gaze rest for a moment on the Good Samaritan, turned and spoke to the crowd:

"Friends, what would you? Why do you attack this innocent man? Five days ago I was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. I fell among robbers, who stripped me and beat me, and departed, leaving me half dead. By chance, a certain priest was going down that way; and when he saw me he passed by on the other side. In like manner a Levite also, when he came to

the place and saw me, passed by on the other side; but this good Samaritan, as he journeyed came to where I was lying. When he saw me he was moved with compassion, and came to me and bound up my wounds, pouring on oil and wine. And he set me on his own beast and brought me to an inn and took care of me. And on the morrow he took out two pence and gave them to the host and said 'Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.'"

Then turning to the Good Samaritan the nobleman said, "Friend, come; thou didst me a good turn, I would that I could repay thee." He led the Good Samaritan to the gate of the city, bestowed upon him presents for each of his family, and then said to him: "Go in peace. The Lord bless thee and keep thee! The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious to thee! The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace!"

STUDY TOPICS:

1. Read the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10. 30-37).
2. In your notebook, draw a map showing the location of Jerusalem and Jericho, and mark the probable road between the two.
3. Commit to memory the blessing used in the story by the Good Samaritan and the man he rescued. The Bible does not tell us