



# High School Teacher

by David Robinson

## The Bible in Today's World— Beliefs for Everyday Life

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# 1 Loving the Hated

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 19:1-10

**Aim:** By the end of the lesson the student will discuss ways to deal with difficult people and situations.

**NOTE:** This is not a traditional help for the teacher; instead, it is a day-by-day guide to aid the teacher in lesson preparation. Use of this guide will assure that the teacher is prepared and that adequate lesson material is available for the class time allotted.

The help for the teacher will be integrated with the student lesson material. The preparation time suggested is ten to fifteen minutes each day for five days. Each section of the lesson material is covered in one of the preparation days. This will allow the teacher, whether a professional or a novice, to be prepared to present each lesson with a minimum of effort.

The key to success is the regular and consistent use of the material. It is vital that the teacher devote a small amount of time each day to lesson preparation.



## Daily Plan

### Introducing the Lesson

1. Read the Scripture passage for Lesson 1. Read the **Text Commentary** section of the teacher's help. Make a note of any comments that might provoke questions from the class.

2. Read the “Start Here” section of the student quarterly. Consider the following questions to use in the introduction of your lesson.
  - A. What are some misconceptions people have about the Bible?
  - B. Why are some groups of people hated by others?
3. Look up any articles you can find on the publicans. Visit your church library or ask your pastor for help.
4. Write at least two good declarative sentences you can use to begin your lesson.
5. Pray and ask the Lord to guide you in your preparation.



### **Explaining the Scriptures**

1. Read the Bible passage used for the text of the lesson one more time. Refer to the notes you made on Day 1 concerning any part of the text that is difficult to understand.
2. Read the “Take a Closer Look” section of the student quarterly. Consider the following questions for use in presentation of the lesson material.
  - A. What principle is stated in Matthew 5:43, 44?
  - B. Who were the publicans?
  - C. Why did most Jews hate the publicans?
  - D. What was Matthew’s name before he met Jesus?
  - E. What invitation did Jesus give to Matthew?
  - F. What did Matthew do about the invitation of Jesus?
  - G. Who was Zacchaeus?
  - H. How would you describe Zacchaeus physically?
    - I. What did Zacchaeus do for the poor? What did he do for those whom he had wronged?
    - J. As recorded in Luke 19:10, what was Jesus’ purpose in coming to the earth?
3. Use any reference materials you have available to answer any questions you may have discovered from reading the text verses.
4. Pray about what you have learned and about your preparation for this lesson.



## Applying the Material to the Lives of the Students

1. Once more read the Bible passage used as the text of the lesson.
2. Read the “Perspectives” section of the student quarterly. Consider the following questions for class discussion.
  - A. Do you divide the world into the “good people” and the “bad people”?
  - B. What is the best way to deal with those whom we consider our enemies?
  - C. What is the greatest need of any individual?
  - D. What power is available to change the hearts of the lost?
3. Write down a specific lesson you have learned from your study that you want to be certain to share with your class.
4. Pray about what you have learned and about your preparation to teach.



## Making Positive Changes in the Lives of My Students

1. Read again the Bible passage used as the lesson text.
2. Read the “Building Blocks” section of the student quarterly. Choose some of the following questions to challenge your class members to make changes in their lives based on their understanding of the Bible.
  - A. Name some relationships in our lives that were not planned.
  - B. Name some relationships in which we have a choice.
  - C. Are we supposed to love only those who love us first? Explain.
  - D. How did God love us?
3. At this point be sure to have answers to all the questions suggested here and in the lesson material. If you have any other matters that you want

to discuss with your class, note them now so that you can research them before class time.

4. Pray about the lesson material asking God to lead you in your preparation.



### **Taking the Lesson Material into Our Future**

1. Read once more the Bible passage used as the lesson text. Remember the best way to learn the Bible is to study the Bible.

2. Read the “Springboard” section of the student quarterly.

3. Are there students in your class who have personal spiritual decisions to make? Don’t be confrontational, but present an opportunity for open and frank discussion of spiritual problems.

4. Present the plan of salvation. Those who are lost need to hear it, and those who are saved need to be reminded of it.

5. Plan a discussion of the choices we have and do not have in our relationships. How should a child of God be different in his relationships with others?

6. Make your own brief outline of how you intend to use your class time.

7. Gather any materials you will need for the class and organize them as you intend to use them.

8. Pray again. Ask God to guide you and prepare your heart to teach His Word.

## **Text Commentary**

The text verses illustrate the principle that Jesus taught in Matthew 5:43, 44. This principle was the exact opposite of the rule the Jews had been taught by tradition. “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and

pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matt. 5:43, 44).

It is quite natural to love those who are close to you and to hate those who hate you. But Jesus prescribed a different rule for His kingdom. We are to take four positive steps toward those whom we consider our enemies. First, we are to love them. We are to extend the same love toward our enemies that God extended toward us. Remember that God loved us while we were lost sinners (Rom. 5:8). Then we are to bless those who curse us. We are not to return curse for curse, but we are to return blessings. We are to do good to those who hate us. This may require exceptional spiritual strength, but God expects us to do it. Then we are to pray for those who persecute us and despitefully use us.

This is only possible when our hearts are changed by the power of God. A lost person will never be able to accomplish these things, but a saved person has the spiritual resource to do as Jesus taught. The Holy Spirit lives within those who are saved and the power of God, not our own resolve, makes such conduct possible.

This is illustrated in the two passages in the lesson material that deal with the salvation of publicans. Publicans were almost universally hated people. As we see in the account of Zacchaeus, they were not necessarily evil people but were regarded as such by society. Jesus was criticized for even going into the houses of publicans to eat. However, every publican had a spirit that was precious to the Lord.

Not only that but every one of them also had a great deal to contribute to the service of the Lord. Matthew, whose name was Levi (Luke 5:27), made a wonderful contribution to all mankind. God chose him to write the book of the New Testament that bears his name. Many would have passed him by and looked elsewhere for someone to be a great servant of God. Only our own stubborn refusal to follow the Lord can disqualify us from service. God has already determined that we are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (Eph. 2:10). God can and will use anyone who submits to Him. Everyone will not be used in the same way, but every believer can be of service to the Master.

Note that, when Matthew left his post to follow Jesus, there were some who were critical. These critics were Pharisees, and they had never received the love of God into their own hearts. Jesus answered them with the simple metaphor that whole people do not need physicians, but sick people do. Jesus had not come so that the good people could be a little better; He had come so that sinners could be called to repentance.

It is easy to forget that our work in this world is the same as that of Jesus. We are not here so that the good people can be made a little better

through our service and example. We are here to go into the world and call sinners to repentance. Jesus did that when He went into the houses of the publicans.

To show that this was not an isolated incident, we also have an account in Luke 19 of the salvation of another publican named Zacchaeus. This account is often mentioned as a theme for children's Bible stories, but it is a wonderful and compelling story for people of any age.

Jesus was passing through the city of Jericho. Jericho was an oasis city, one of the oldest continuously inhabited places on earth. People in Jericho had heard of Jesus, and they wanted to get a glimpse of Him as He walked by. Zacchaeus was a short man and could not see over the crowd, so, to see Jesus, he ran on ahead and climbed into a sycamore tree so that he could get a better view.

When Jesus saw him, He told Zacchaeus to come down and hurry because Jesus was going to Zacchaeus' house. Zacchaeus joyfully received Jesus as his guest; however, the critics complained that Jesus was going to the house of a sinner. Nevertheless, Jesus went, and we have a wonderful account of what some of the publicans were really like.

Although they were hated as a group, they were not all bad people. Zacchaeus gave half of everything to the poor and repaid anyone he had cheated fourfold. How many of us do that? We think we have really done something when we give anything to the poor or when we repay those we have wronged one for one. This publican was a moral man, but he was also a lost man.

Good works will never save us; likewise, bad works do not make us lost. We are lost because of our Adamic nature, not because of all the sins we have committed. We are saved because of the intercessory sacrifice of Jesus, not because of any amount of good works that we might do. This was and is the message of the gospel. All men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, but all men can also be made whole in Jesus.

Zacchaeus was saved that day and Jesus gave the great proclamation that He had come to seek and to save the lost. This is still the mission of Jesus, and it should be ours as well.

## **Answer Key**

Answers given in this section apply to questions in the *High School Journal*.

### **Start Here**

1. Various answers. We should view the Bible as the Word of God. Yes, it has practical answers to the real questions of our lives.

2. No, not significantly. Some situations may change, but the basic problems have not because human nature remains the same.
3. Various answers. There is no logical explanation for hatred and prejudice.

### **Take a Closer Look**

**Luke 19:7-10**, “And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

### **Perspectives**

1. Nothing
2. By loving those who hate us
3. No
4. We can do as Jesus taught and return good for evil.

### **Building Blocks**

Various answers. We have little or no choice in relationships with our parents, our classmates at school or the people where we work. We do have a choice in those we want to be our friends. These can be discussed in class.

### **Springboard**

1. We have a choice in our attitudes and our behavior.
2. We should love those who hate us, not only those who love us.
3. By hating back
4. He loved those who hated Him and died so that they could be saved.