

# FOL Sunday School Lesson on Putting Our Faith into Action

## Holy Moments

### Teacher Guide – Final Version

#### Objectives for this lesson

1. Encourage people to demonstrate their faith through service to others
2. What does the Bible say about serving
3. How do we glorify God with our life?
4. Encourage a movement of people from a variety of churches to do good deeds because of their faith.

**Opening Prayer:** Most gracious Heavenly Father. We thank you for the seeds of faith that were planted by others in our heart and soul. We are grateful for those people in our lives who demonstrated their faith by helping me. Now it is our turn. We pray that we can help win hearts and souls for You because of the opportunities you place in our path, so we can be a witness for You. May our life be fruitful in helping to build a bigger Kingdom. Amen.

#### The World in Which We Live: (Introduction)

- The idea for today's Sunday School lesson comes from the Matthew Kelly book, The Greatest Lie in the History of Christianity.
- The subtitle of the books says, "How Modern Culture is Robbing Billions of People of Happiness."
- As background for today, the book goes into great detail about our modern culture, which is increasingly pushing back against Christianity.
- The book says, "our culture enjoys the rights of freedom but wants little or nothing to do with any reference to God."
- The book gives several examples:
  - prayer in school declared unconstitutional in 1963
  - unsuccessful lawsuits against "In God We Trust" on our currency, & "Under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance
  - the public display of the 10 Commandments being challenged.
- Matthew Kelly (author of the book today's lesson is based on) said, "Our religious liberty as Christians is being threatened like never before." (Matthew Kelly)
- A recent Gallup poll reported that 76% of Americans feel that religion is "losing influence" in this country.
- Instead of defending the faith against attacks from non-believers it is tempting to hide in the safety and comfort of fellow Christians at our church.
- Besides the person on the street corner, holding a sign that says "Repent. The World is Coming to an End," the loudest voices are those trying to remove Christianity from our culture.
- Matthew Kelly quote: "The world needs changing, and the truth is, it will not likely change for the better unless this change is led by Christians."
- The Christian faith is seen by some as not making a difference.

## **Actions Speak Louder Than Words**

- One of the solutions Matthew Kelly suggests is putting our faith into action.
- If we don't show our faith by our actions, Christians can blend into society instead of differentiating themselves from others.

### **What does the Bible say about putting our faith into action?**

One of the ways Christian's can differentiate themselves from the culture at large is to be people of action.

(Mother Teresa said: **I used to pray that God would feed the hungry, or do this or that, but now I pray that He will guide me to do whatever I'm supposed to do, what I can do. I used to pray for answers, but now I'm praying for strength. I used to believe that prayer changes things, but now I know that prayer changes us and we change things.**")

- This brings to mind the very familiar passage, Isaiah 6:8. The context of this verse is that it is the commissioning of the prophet Isaiah.
- Although we are not going to read all the surrounding verses, Isaiah is feeling unworthy.
- But, because of the Lord's forgiveness he is ready to step up to the Lord's call.

From Isaiah 6:8 we read, **Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"**

It is about serving. Read: **In Matthew 20:28 we read: just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**"

Read: Jesus said in [Matthew 5:16](#), **"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."**

- Question to total group: What happens when you "let your light shine" to help others?
  - Helping others
  - Showing God's love through us
  - Give God the glory: Emphasize the last 8 words of that passage, "and give glory to your Father in heaven.
  - Glorify God with our life.
  - Planting the seeds so that the Holy Spirit can go to work on the person receiving your kindness.

## **The Concept of Holy Moments**

- The book today's lesson is based on a book entitled The Greatest Lie in the History of Christianity.
- It defines a Holy Moment as **"when you are being the person God created you to be, and you are doing what you believe God is calling you to do in that moment.**

- Jesus wants us to be Holy: In 1 Peter 1:15-16 we read: *But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.*
- (for table discussion) –
  - What does being holy mean to you?
  - Can you be Holy?
  - in an attempt to be holy, what difference does it make in your life?
  - How does your answer change when you add the word “Moment” (Holy Moment)?
- One of the common definitions of the word “holy” is to be “set apart” by doing God’s will.
- When we look into the mirror and think about the concept of being holy what may come to mind are our own shortcomings.
- God works through our shortcomings so that we can serve Him.
- Regarding our shortcomings -- You and I know, but sometimes forget, that because of God’s Grace, we have forgiveness so that we can look forward to being what God created us to be, and not hold ourselves back.
- Holy is not a measurement of how good we are, but how good God is.
- Oswald Chambers said, “Holiness is not simply what God gives me, but what God has given me that is being exhibited in my life.” “God has only one intended destiny for mankind – holiness. ... He came to save us because He created us to be holy.”

### **Holy Moments is Putting your Faith into Action - So, what does being holy look like?**

- We can show God’s love to others by choosing to help others without them asking, and doing something they can never re-pay us.
- Matthew Kelly quote: **“The fact that you can cooperate with God to create one Holy Moment proves that holiness is possible for you, and it provides the blueprint for thousands of Holy Moments.”**
- I love the idea of cooperating with God.
- Further, you are setting aside your own self-interest and embrace what will do the most good for others at that moment.”
- The idea of how you can help others comes to us through the work of the Holy Spirit in our life. Romans 5:5 says: *And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.*

So, what is the biggest lie in the history of Christianity slide

- The title of the book is The Biggest lie in the history of Christianity – the answer to that question is **we can be holy**. It is something God wants us to be.
- This brings up the age old question of “works,” that you can’t get to heaven just by doing good.
- Read: Ephesians 2:8-10 talks about being a co-worker with God - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

- For this discussion the emphasis is on the second half of the verse: *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*
- In a simplistic view, our culture may view it as “random acts of kindness,” except you are doing things for others to lift up God and not yourself.

### Question for group discussion:

- Here are some simple examples of Holy Moments listed in the book:
  - Go out of your way to do something for your spouse that you would rather not do, as an act of love.
  - Encourage someone, coach someone, praise someone, affirm someone.
  - Do someone else's chore
  - Give your full attention.
  - Give someone a life-changing book
  - Control your temper, even if you are fully justified in losing it.
  - Cut the grass or shovel the driveway for a person who can't.
  - Spend a vacation day visiting people in a nursing home that you don't know.
  - Donating a vacation day(s) to someone who has used all of their PTO.
  - Take a boy who has no father in the house to a baseball game or a movie.

(for table discussion)

- **What are some examples of Holy Moments have you experienced?**
- **If this was something someone did for you, how did it feel?**
- **Did it motivate you to want to do something for someone else?**
- James 2:15-16 - *Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. <sup>16</sup> If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it?*
- *But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works (James 2:18).*
- The book seems to focus on how we serve God by serving others – and in so doing, we are a witness for Christ.
- It also focuses on being out in the community and world showing our faith by helping others.
- Before we go off on that tangent I want to highlight one other important Bible verse that centers on why we do what we do.
- John 21:17 is a conversation between God and Simon Peter.
- Jesus asks him something 3 times (which means many, not necessarily just 3, but that it is important)
- Read John 21:17: *The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.*
- In other words, if you love me, take care of my people.

## Your Life as a Witness for Christ:

- Acts of service are an attempt for a one-on-one witness, trying to soften people's hearts – and may be the first step towards winning someone for Christ.
- The reason why I started this lesson with talking about the growing secular view of our culture is that people won't resist good things being done for them.
- When you do it as an act of faith it is evangelizing with acts of love rather than with a baseball bat.
- It is not about the salvation of society, but planting seeds in one person. Then the Holy Spirit takes over – God shows up.
- When people take notice of what you did for them they may ask, "Why did you do this for me," because that is when they will realize that your relationship with a loving God is genuine and you are the person you are because of your faith.
- Your act of kindness opens the door for the Holy Spirit to go to work on the person who received your act of kindness.
- Billy Graham said, "**Every soul saved is an ambassador for Christ.**"
- So, it is not a checklist of what good things you can do but showing God's love through you.

## Demonstrating Our Faith Out in the Community

- We are among others who share the faith at church.
- Holy Moments expands that out in the community.
- We are doing great at the church. What image would our church have in the community if the public could see many members doing good deeds out in the community?
- What kind of image would Kernersville have as a community if many churches were recognized for putting their faith into action?
- Serving God by serving others transcends any denomination – so what if we had a unifying effort?
- We may feel individually that we are powerless to change our world but we have a built-in alliance of fellow Christian churches.
- But, if we band together we could reverse the negative trend and create a new culture for our community.

Read Galatians 5:22-23 - ***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.***

- These are the 9 biblical attributes of a person living in accord with the Holy Spirit.
- I include this verse because people often resist being evangelized to and our culture is certainly resisting when good things are done to them.

## Being Part of a Movement – It Starts With Each Person:

In his book, The Biggest Lie in the History of Christianity, Matthew Kelly suggest that doing intentional good deeds would open people's eyes to what being a person of faith looks like.

- It is not only developing a personal relationship with a loving God but acting on that faith to help others.
- Seeing our faith in action will open other people's eyes that our faith is action and not just words.
- Since the Christian faith is under attack as being irrelevant and old fashioned in today's world we need to make a bold statement – both verbally and in action. Matthew Kelly suggests doing intentional good deeds. He calls them Holy Moments if they are based on serving God by serving others. They are not just to help us feel good about ourselves. It has been said that faith without works is dead.
- Consider the impact of being part of a movement in your community that transcends individual churches and is a widespread movement of all Christians. Here is what it could look like:

### **What the Movement Could Look Like:**

- What if we did one good deed a day as a demonstration of our faith?
  - Would the receiver be motivated to do something for someone else?
  - We could create a chain reaction of others doing Holy Moments.
- What if we did more than one each day?
- What if everyone at our church did Holy Moments every day? – we would acting in unison as a community of faith.
- What if Life groups made an effort to do this?
- What if every Christian church in town did the same? Would this change the perception of Christianity?
- If we did this on a big scale would our community look at Christians any different?
- Spiritual multiplication – Jesus did this with his disciples.
- Consider an intentional effort to do Holy Moments as your goal, and encourage others to do the same.

**Possible Discussion Question (if time allows): What could the faith community do in unison to help others in the community?**

### **Wrap-up: Call to Action:**

1. Pray that you wish to be the person God intended you to be.
2. Seek opportunities to be a witness for God by putting your faith into action – kindness, patience, courage, thoughtfulness and selfless caring.
3. Encourage other Christians to do the same - whether with friends, life group, family, etc..

They don't have to be big things:

***“Transform every moment of your day into a Holy Moment. It's the ordinary things that God loves to elevate into extraordinary experiences.” (Matthew Kelly)***

**Closing Prayer:** We thank you Lord for loving us and your command that we should love others, so that we would be your disciples and be your message in the flesh. We can be part of an effort that encourages others to show your love through living out our faith. Amen.