

“Not Because You’re Good”
Church Children’s Time Lesson
By Matthew Ruttan | January 2016

Point: I think God loves you when you’re good—but not BECAUSE you’re good.

What to do

1. Have the words “I think God loves you when you’re good” on the screen or on an easel.
2. Be holding a bowl that contains different strips of paper. On the strips of paper are descriptions of the ‘bad’ and ‘good’ behaviour listed below. (One strip of paper per behaviour.)
3. Explain that you think God loves us when we’re good.
4. Invite the kids to pull out a piece of paper and read it (if they can; if they can’t, help them). As they do so, invite them to imagine that what the paper says is what they did. (Let yourself have some fun with this!)
5. After each one, ask them whether what “they did” (what they read) was ‘bad’ or ‘good.’
6. When you get to the end, tell them that you still have to finish the sentence you started with. Expand it to this: **“I think God loves you when you’re good... but not BECAUSE you’re good.”** Explain how even though God wants us to love him and be kind to others, *there’s nothing we can do to lose his love.*
7. Then say that God loves us like a parent. And to show that love, they often give us hugs and kisses. Pull out some Hershey kisses (that have been out of sight somewhere). Ask them: Do you think JUST the people with the good behaviour should get the kisses, or everyone? Of course, everyone! Invite them to come to you after the service to get a chocolate kiss as a symbol of God’s love. (Be aware of any allergy or health concerns etc.)
8. Now with the whole sentence on the screen or easel, get everyone, including the congregation, to repeat it a few times. End.

List of bad and good behaviour to have the children pull out of the bowl on the strips of paper.

Good

- I said a nice thing to someone who was having a bad day.
- I helped my parents clear the table after dinner.
- I paid attention at school.
- I played my best and our team won.
- I did all my homework.
- I read my Bible.
- I helped my neighbour shovel the driveway.
- I talked to someone who was lonely.

Bad

- I threw a snowball at the minister.
- I spilled paint on the organ at the church.
- After dinner I threw my plate out the window.
- I tried to flush my dad’s shoes down the toilet.
- I put ketchup in my friend’s hair.
- All I had for dinner was a baseball hat full of chocolate ice cream.
- I used my mom’s smart phone as a hockey puck.
- I took a marker and drew a moustache on my mom’s face when she was sleeping.