



# WEEK 3

## ELEMENTARY LESSON OUTLINE



### **BIG IDEA**

I can show God's love even when it's hard.

### **THE BIBLE**

**Loving Your Enemies:** Matthew 5:40-48;  
(Romans 12:20-21)

### THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

## LARGE GROUP TIME

- **MUSIC** | Choose Love!
- **ACTIVITY** | Big Bad Wolf
- **ACTIVITY** | Love Your Enemies Bean Bag Toss
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Scratchy Sandpaper
- **THE BIG IDEA** | I can show God's love even when it's hard.
- **VIDEO** | Real Love, Episode 3
- **BIBLE STORY** | Matthew 5:40-48
- **OBJECT LESSON** | Magnetic Enemies
- **VIDEO** | "Love Your Enemies"
- **SCRIPTURE** | Romans 12:20-21
- **REFLECTION** | Overcoming Evil with Good
- **ACTIVITY** | Stained Glass Cross
- **PRAYER**
- **MEMORY VERSE** | 1 John 4:11

## SMALL GROUP TIME

- **DISCUSSION**
  - What does the Bible say about how we should treat our enemies?
  - How does loving our enemies show we are God's children?
  - Should we love only those who are kind to us? Why or why not?
  - Read Romans 12:20-21. What are some ways you can "heap burning coals" of kindness on someone this week?
  - Why do you think God wants us to love our enemies?
  - Describe a time when it might be hard to love someone.
  - How can you still show God's love and be kind in that situation?
- **ACTIVITY** | Kindness Bumper Stickers
- **MEMORY VERSE** | 1 John 4:11



# WEEK 3

## HACKS FOR PRETEENS



**BY MIKE SHELEY**

### HOW TO HACK THIS SERIES FOR PRETEENS

In children's ministry, you've got a wide range of ages you need to engage every week, but preteens tend to get overlooked, so here are a few adjustments you can make to this week in order to keep your preteens more engaged.

#### ACTIVITY | Big Bad Wolf

For the preteens who might think the story of the Three Little Pigs is too childish, try this alternative activity. Have a few kids volunteer to make a flag made by securing one toilet paper square to a pencil. Have them write the words, "hope," "joy," and "peace"—one word per square. Once complete, have them step away, and have a leader squirt a water gun at the flags, ruining them. Tell the kids there are people in our lives who try to break up our hope, joy, and peace, and God shows us how to handle those kinds of people.


#### ACTIVITY | Stained Glass Cross

Instead of the cross craft suggested here, try making a different kind of cross with your preteens! Have kids make a cross out of [pirate skull and crossbones paper](#), and remind them how much God loved us through Jesus even when we were not always good people (like pirates!). God wants us to love others in the same way.

#### REFLECTION | Overcoming Evil with Good

The illustration provided here with a piece of newspaper and wood is to show that appearing weak does not actually mean you are weak. Dive deeper with these questions:




- Why do people think being kind is "weak"?
- You may not have "enemies," but you probably have people who drive you crazy or annoy you

- 
- or even are mean or bully you. What did Jesus say we are to do to those kinds of people?
- What is the goal in being good to people who are not good to us?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# MIKE SHELEY



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Mike Sheley is the Middle School Pastor overseeing ministries for preteen (5th-6th grade) and young adolescent (7th-8th grade) students at Mount Pleasant Christian Church in central Indiana. He has been in student ministry for over twenty years, with more than twelve of those years in his current position. In his current ministry, preteens participate alongside middle schoolers for weekly programming, but have their own lessons and special events. However, part of the health of the ministry is due to the close friendship and working relationship Mike has with the children's ministry team.

Mike is married and has three kids - one in college,

one in high school and one in middle school. Mike has had the joy and challenge of ministering to all of his kids as their youth pastor during their preteen and middle school years.

Mike's odd jobs over the years have included working at the his local Apple Store, Target, and at a couple fast-food restaurants. He has a weird fascination with presentations and fonts.

If you'd like to chat with Mike about spiritual disciplines with preteens, parent ministry or developing better presentations, reach out! He would love to connect with you!

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Lauren Wierzba.

**TEACHING VIDEOS:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Linda Moon, Jared Callahan.

**PRETEEN HACKS:** Mike Sheley.

**SPECIAL NEEDS HACKS:** Eugenia Lee.

**MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE:** Sunny Brown.

**GRAPHIC DESIGN:** Josh Gosney, Jules Gray, Elle Campbell.

**LAYOUT DESIGN:** Jules Gray, Elle Campbell.

**ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:** Kenny Campbell, Tash McGill, Stephen Switzer, Ali Anne, Eddie Irvin, Ari Raines, Kellee Gentry, Tim Syman, Josh McLemore, Amber Gaddis.



# WEEK 3

## HACKS FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



**BY EUGENIA LEE**

### *HOW TO HACK THIS SERIES FOR KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS*

In children's ministry, you've got a wide range of ages you need to engage every week, but kids with special needs tend to get overlooked, so here are a few adjustments you can make to this week in order to keep your kids with special needs more engaged.

#### **GENERAL TIPS**

Showing love to kids with special needs can be considered "hard" for most kids. These lessons on love and kindness provide a wonderful opportunity to put what we're learning into action. A huge part of inclusion is teaching the group how to be good friends to our students with special needs. Some practical ways to do this are:

- Encourage special needs students to share in small group discussions, and have the rest of the group help you affirm them.
- Have the memory verse and bible lesson summary specially printed out for our students with special needs so they can refer back to them throughout the lesson.

#### **ACTIVITY | Stained Glass Cross**

You can simplify this activity by not having them cut out the inner triangles of the cross. They can just glue on tissue paper squares on to the cross, covering the white spaces. First, show how this activity is done while describing what you are doing. Then, break it down into smaller steps and guide the students to follow each step (e.g., Step 1: Cut out crosses, Step 2: Dab a little glue on a tissue paper square, Step 3: Put squares on cross, one at a time, Step 4: Trim the edges, Step 5: Leave it on the drying rack).




**PRAYER**

Make it a routine to pray with peers. Encourage and guide all students to be included in the large group. Many students with special needs are hurt relationally at elsewhere. Let's make the church a place where they feel belonged by encouraging and valuing their participation. If a student uses a communication device (i.e., AAC–Augmentative and Alternative Communication), find a word/phrase they can say, even if it is simple comments like “that is great!” or “I like it!” Suggest to parents to add the word “Amen” in the device so the student can say “Amen” with the rest of the class at the end of every prayer.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

# EUGENIA LEE



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Eugenia Lee currently serves as a volunteer leader at Newsong Church in Santa Ana, CA. Having children of her own with special needs, she started leading a support group of parents with special needs children and collaborating with children's ministry. In time, she learned that she loved working with children with special needs and realized it was her calling. She has worked on accommodating and modifying curriculum for students with different needs as well as training 1:1 buddies for many years. Helping children with special needs gave her so much joy that she decided to pursue a teaching career in special education. In a few short weeks, she will be ready to have her own classroom at a public school!

She is also working on a volunteer training manual specifically geared toward layperson volunteers working with children with disabilities in any setting.

Eugenia and her husband live in Orange county, CA with their four amazing children. Home is her favorite place on earth: spending time with her family, cooking up some BBQ, and sharing good conversation with close friends.

If you have any questions about curriculum accommodations and modifications, engaging with parents of special needs children, training volunteers, and so on, feel free to get in contact with her via email, Instagram, or Facebook!

**ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Amber Stephens, Linda Moon, Lauren Wierzba.

**TEACHING VIDEOS:** Elle Campbell, Brooklyn Lindsey, Linda Moon, Jared Callahan.

**PRETEEN HACKS:** Mike Sheley.

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# WEEK 3

## ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE



### BIG IDEA

I can show God's love even when it's hard.

### THE BIBLE

**Loving Your Enemies:** Matthew 5:40-48;  
(Romans 12:20-21)

## LARGE GROUP TIME

*WHAT? What are we talking about today?*

### MUSIC | Choose Love!

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Worship together (using a live band or YouTube videos) with songs about loving God and loving others! Here are a few you can choose from:*
  - ["Let us Love One Another"](#) by The Rizers
  - ["Love the Lord"](#) by Shout! Praises Kids
  - ["Beat of Your Love"](#) by Watoto Children's Choir

### ACTIVITY | Big Bad Wolf

- Nearly everyone knows the story, The Three Little Pigs. In the story, a "Big Bad Wolf" comes to "huff and puff" and blow down each of the pigs' straw, stick, and brick houses. But did you know there was a *fourth* little pig? This little pig built a house out of. . . newspaper!
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Divide kids into teams of 4-6 people. Each team works together to build paper structures out of newspaper. When time is up, the leader will come around to each team and try to blow down their structure. The team whose house stays up the longest wins!*
- Just like what the "Big Bad Wolf" did to the three little pigs, sometimes, things happen that "blow down" our joy and make it hard to share God's love with others.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Have a few kids volunteer to make a flag made by securing one toilet paper square to a pencil. Have them write the words, "hope," "joy," and "peace"—one word per square. Once complete, have them step away, and have a leader squirt a*



water gun at the flags, ruining them. Tell the kids there are people in our lives who try to break up our hope, joy, and peace, and God shows us how to handle those kinds of people.

**ACTIVITY | Love Your Enemies Bean Bag Toss**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have three buckets and bean bags available. Mark one bucket as “family,” another one as “friends,” and the last one as “enemies.” Make sure the buckets marked “family” and “friends” are closer to the kids, and make the most challenging toss the “enemies” bucket. Have the kids take turns tossing the bean bags into each of the buckets.
- Most of the time, it’s easier to love our friends and family than it is to love the people that we see as our enemies. But God actually loves your enemies just as much as God loves you, which means we should love them, too. Even though it’s hard, you can show God’s love!

**OBJECT LESSON | Scratchy Sandpaper**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Pass around a piece of rough sandpaper so the kids can see and feel how scratchy it is.
- Some of the people we know are kind of like sandpaper. They can be a little rough and hard to get along with. Their words, actions, and personalities might seem “scratchy” to us, and may hurt our feelings or make us mad.
- But we learned God loves everyone, and that we can also show God’s love to everyone by being kind. “Everyone” includes our sandpaper friends. While it’s definitely challenging to do so, we can show God’s love to them, especially through kindness.

**THE BIG IDEA | I can show God’s love even when it’s hard.**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Have a kid or adult volunteer enter as the same character from the previous two weeks (it can be the same or a different volunteer).
- **Volunteer:** (Enters, chewing gum loudly.) Oh, hello everyone! You all look absolutely LOVELY today! How’s the “loving everyone” thing going? (Sits down amongst the kids.)
- **Leader:** Wow. Just in time, as usual! I was just about to reveal the Big Idea for today which is–
- **Volunteer:** Ooh! I know, I know! (Looks at neighboring kid.) Do YOU know? You do, huh? (Looks at another kid.) What about you? Tell me, tell me, tell me–
- **Leader:** (Interrupts Volunteer.) Actually, they don’t know yet, I was just about to tell--
- **Volunteer:** (Claps hands together.) Oh, goody! We get to guess! Hmm, let’s see. . . (Smacks gum loudly, blows a bubble, is obnoxious.)
- **Leader:** STOP! This week’s Big Idea is–**I can show God’s love even when it’s hard!** You know, like, really hard. Like, really, really hard! Like, when people interrupt you when you’re trying to tell everyone the Big Idea!
- **Volunteer:** Hey! You’re supposed to be showing me God’s love! (Runs out, crying.)
- **Leader:** Oh, no. . . not again! (Insert name), I’m sorry! Come back!

**SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

**VIDEO | Real Love, Episode 1**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play this week's [teaching video](#).

**BIBLE STORY | Matthew 5:40-48**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Matthew 5:40-48 together, if your kids have Bibles or if you can display the passage on a projector screen. Otherwise, read aloud for them. After reading the passage, show the kids one bunch of bananas.
- **What are some things you like about bananas? What are some things you don't like about bananas?**
- Regardless of how you feel about bananas, they are actually very good for you because they contain many things we need to make our bodies healthy. But you know what might not be so good for you? People who are mean to you, treat you poorly, or hurt your feelings—people who drive you bananas!
- But wait! **Look at verse 44 again.** Jesus tells us to “love our enemies”—that is, the people who drive us bananas—and He even says to pray for them!
- It is so much easier to show love to people who we enjoy being around and who are also kind to us, but today's Bible verse tells us that *anyone* can do that. The real challenge is to show love to those who, in your opinion, don't deserve your kindness. Because that is exactly what God did for us – God showed us love by sending Jesus to save us when we didn't deserve saving at all! That's why we should also love everyone – even our enemies – even when it's hard.

**OBJECT LESSON | Magnetic Enemies**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Prepare two magnets, preferably ones with distinct north and south poles (e.g., don't use refrigerator magnets).
- (*Position the magnets so they are repelling each other*) Two people who are enemies, like these magnets, can never make peace because both sides are always opposing each other. They never agree, they fight, and neither side will ever admit they are wrong.
- But when one person decides to show love (*flip one of the magnets around so the two magnets now attract*), we can work things out by getting closer to them. And this brings them and us closer to God!
- Like we saw with these magnets, we can either stay away from our enemies or we can attract them by showing God's love and being kind to them.
- **Which kind of magnet do you want to be?**

**VIDEO | “Love Your Enemies”**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Play [this video](#) (or another video like it), but don't tell them what it is about beforehand.
- Think about some of the disagreements you have had in the past. They may have been with a

relative, friend, teacher, or even a complete stranger. **When we are upset with someone, what are some things we say or do that are like “throwing stones” at the other person?**

- **What are some things we can say or do that are like “building a bridge” toward the other person?**
- Loving your enemies is not just saying it with words. It’s about working toward forgiving them and building a bridge, even if they aren’t willing to do the same.

### SCRIPTURE | Romans 12:20-21

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read Romans 12:20-21. If you have kids in your group who can read, let one or two of them read it out loud for the group.
- **Can you think of a time when someone was unkind or unfair to you? How did that make you feel? How did you handle it?**
- I don’t know about you, but my knee-jerk reaction to someone who treats me badly is to treat them the same way. But once again, the Bible tells us the best thing to do is show kindness instead. Fighting meanness with more meanness will only make things worse.

**NOW WHAT?** What does God want us to do about it?

### REFLECTION | Overcoming Evil with Good

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Show the kids a piece of newspaper and a thin piece of wood. Ask the kids, “Which is stronger, newspaper or wood?” Then, wrap the wood tightly with the newspaper and place it on a desk or table so that about half of the newspaper-wrapped wood hangs off the edge. Swiftly hit the wood just past the overhang—the wood inside of the newspaper should snap while the newspaper stays intact (Make sure you try this out before you demonstrate).
- Even though the newspaper seems like it’s weaker than the wood, it ended up being stronger when it was struck. In the same way, even though it seems “weaker” to be kind, in the end, good wins! That’s why it’s important we keep showing God’s love even when it’s hard to do.
  - ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** Dive deeper with these questions: 1) Why do people think being kind is “weak”? 2) You may not have “enemies,” but you probably have people who drive you crazy or annoy you or even are mean or bully you. What did Jesus say we are to do to those kinds of people? 3) What is the goal in being good to people who are not good to us?

### ACTIVITY | Stained Glass Cross

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Print the printable provided in this week’s ‘Printables’ folder. Pre-cut square (~1”) pieces of different colored tissue paper. Have the kids cut out the cross (you might want to assist the younger children with cutting out the inner shapes) and then glue the tissue paper squares onto them. Complete the project by covering the cross with adhesive clear film (i.e., Con-Tact paper) and cutting the excess off (if available, you could also use a laminator). [Optional: Punch a hole at the top of the cross and tie some yarn or string so kids can hang up their cross]
- Jesus is the greatest example of showing God’s love even when it was hard – He gave up so

much to save us all! But because of this, we are able to experience God’s love today and share that love with others, no matter how hard it gets.

- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *You can simplify this activity by not having them cut out the inner triangles. They can just glue on tissue paper squares on to the cross, covering the white spaces. First, show how this activity is done while describing what you are doing. Then, break it down into smaller steps and guide the students to follow each step (e.g., Step 1: Cut out crosses, Step 2: Dab a little glue on a tissue paper square, Step 3: Put squares on cross, one at a time, Step 4: Trim the edges, Step 5: Leave it on the drying rack).*
- ✂ **PRETEEN HACK:** *Try making a different kind of cross with your preteens! Have kids make a cross out of [pirate skull and crossbones paper](#), and remind them how much God loved us through Jesus even when we were not always good people (like pirates!). God wants us to love others in the same way.*

## PRAYER

- Dear God, thank You for giving us Jesus and showing us how much You love us, no matter what. Help us to show Your love to everyone – including our enemies – even when it’s hard.
- ✂ **SPECIAL NEEDS HACK:** *If a student uses a communication device (i.e., AAC–Augmentative and Alternative Communication), find a word/phrase they can say, even if it is simple comments like “that is great!” or “I like it!” Suggest to parents to add the word “Amen” in the device so the student can say “Amen” with the rest of the class at the end of every prayer.*

## MEMORY VERSE | 1 John 4:11

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Have the kids form a circle. One kid starts with a ball and says one word of the memory verse, then passes the ball to someone else in the circle. Repeat as many times as you’d like, and encourage the kids to give everyone a chance to get the ball.*

# SMALL GROUP TIME

## DISCUSSION

- **What does the Bible say about how we should treat our enemies?**
- **How does loving our enemies show we are God’s children?**
- **Should we love only those who are kind to us? Why or why not?**
- **Read Romans 12:20-21. What are some ways you can “heap burning coals” of kindness on someone this week?**
- **Why do you think God wants us to love our enemies?**
- **Describe a time when it might be hard to love someone.**
- **How can you still show God’s love and be kind in that situation?**

**ACTIVITY | Kindness Bumper Stickers**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Cut a regular 8.5"x11" piece of paper in half vertically so you have 4.25"x11" pieces of paper. Distribute one half-piece of paper to each kid and have them come up with their own kindness slogan or quote (or you can look some up, if possible). You can have them do this independently or you can come up with a slogan for the whole group. Have each of them design a "bumper sticker" with their new slogan and decorate it with various art supplies (e.g., markers, colored pencils, glitter, stickers, etc.). [Optional: Use blank adhesive paper instead of plain paper!]*
- Putting a bumper sticker on your car or any other thing you own lets people know what you're all about. Let everyone know that you're all about kindness!

**MEMORY VERSE | 1 John 4:11**

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Introduce kids to this month's memory verse, teaching them the signs (a combination of SEE and ASL) we've provided.*