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## 5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

# Harry's Hardware

When I was a young boy we had a little mom and pop hardware store called “Harry's Hardware.” It was owned and run by two older ladies. Every time you walked in, the eldest of the ladies would be sitting in a rocking chair, reading her Bible along with another book that helped her understand her religion. Both ladies were Christian Scientists. I knew nothing about this religion, but the younger of the two ladies said to me, “This is a wonderful religion.”

I just wanted to buy some rope, nails or shotgun shells, etc. They had everything that farmers and ranchers in my community would need.

One day, the eldest of the two ladies passed away, leaving Helen (the younger one) the store. Helen was very accommodating. She would sell rope by the foot, nails by the pound, she even broke up boxes of shotgun shells and would sell them individually for several cents a shell. We always went to Helen's store to get the little things that we needed.

Later after I graduated from high school, I returned to the store to buy something and to my surprise the store was completely bare.

Helen had stepped on a nail and her foot became infected. (Her religion was kind of a mind over matter religion, but to be truthful, I don't know what this religion really teaches. I was told it was a cult, so stay away from it.) I understand her religion looked down on her being medically treated. As a result, her leg became red, then black and she was forced to go to a local hospital. As a result of waiting too long, her leg had to be removed.

She had no one to watch her store, so a local high school boy told Helen that he would be glad to run the store until she could return. To make a long story short, the young man running the store had a drug problem and had sold every piece of merchandise she had at discount prices. The store was bare when she returned and the money was gone. There was nothing left but bare walls and shelves.

When I walked into the store, Helen was standing on crutches, staring at her bare shelves and walls. I asked, “What has just happened?” She then told me about the merchandise being stolen from her.

At that moment I felt deeply convicted that I needed to help Helen. I reached for my billfold and then the struggle began. My mind said, “You can't help her, she is in a cult.

If you help her, you would be helping a cult.” My own religion was blocking me from showing love to my neighbor.

I went ahead and gave her what I had. Helen broke down and started crying. She reached out to me with a hug through tears.

Folks, God is love (1 John 4:8) and love is kind (1 Corinthians 13:4). Don't let your own religion block God from what He wants to do.

## Questions

**1** God wants us to be good, loving and kind to all people.

True or False

**2** As believers in Jesus Christ, we are to love even our enemies.

True or False

**3** How do we love others?

**4** God helps us to love others by depending upon His Holy Spirit.

True or False

### **We want to hear from you!**

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

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## Answer Key

**1** God wants us to be good, loving and kind to all people.

True

***“Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.”***  
(Galatians 6:10 NLT)

**2** As believers in Jesus Christ, we are to love even our enemies.

True

***“<sup>35</sup>Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. <sup>36</sup>You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate.”*** (Luke 6:35-36 NLT)

**3** How do we love others?

***“Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”***  
(Matthew 7:12 NLT)

**4** God helps us to love others by depending upon His Holy Spirit.

True

***“<sup>22</sup>But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control.”*** (Galatians 5:22-23a NLT)