

# the rock

## DRAW THE \*LINE

**THERE'S NOTHING WRONG  
WITH TEASING AND GOOD  
JOKES AMONG FRIENDS, BUT  
WHEN DOES TEASING LOSE ITS  
FUN AND BECOME HURTFUL?**

# DRAW THE \* LINE



**T**HE COMMENT *slips out before Tyler knows it, sounding a bit more sarcastic than he had intended. The room gets quiet, and everyone turns to look first at him and then at his friend. Tyler tries to make a joke so his friend will know he was only teasing, but the joke falls flat and his friend's smile looks pasted on. After a few seconds, the room returns to normal, but Tyler wishes he could take back his last remark. Why did he say something so stupid and mean?*

Sound familiar? It happens all the time. What begins as a fun exchange of good-natured teasing escalates into something much more, and someone gets hurt. We've all been through this before—either as the teaser or the “teasee.”

Does that mean friends shouldn't

tease one another? Is all teasing off limits? Or are there some guidelines to follow that can help you draw the line on fun teasing?

*The Rock* asked a group of eighth graders their opinions about teasing. Here are some of their comments. (By the way, *The Rock* thinks these people probably are good friends to have around.)

According to Adam, teasing can be harmless or hurtful. “My friends and I make jokes about each other for fun, but we don't tease people about things they're sensitive about, and we usually know when to stop.”

Veralee thinks teasing gets out of hand when you tease someone, even a good friend, about a particularly sensitive area—like being overweight or feeling stupid in math. “Especially when you're aware of their sensitivity,” she adds.





“Teasing doesn’t require hurting someone’s feelings. When you make fun of someone personally—including their friends or family—or play with their emotions or say things that aren’t true, it’s really wrong. You may think they’re tough, that they can take it, but deep down inside, they’re hurt and sad.”

Like the rest of the group, Rick doesn’t think teasing is wrong, but he does think there’s a time and a place for it. “For example, you’re in a group of 10 or so, and you pick out ‘old George’ to tease. It will probably end up with everyone against George. He could easily get hurt and feel rejected. If you tease at all, it’s probably best to go one-on-one. If you know where to

draw the line, it can be fun for both sides.”

Lauren adds this word of caution: “I don’t think teasing is bad if two people are going back and forth. But you can tell by the way the person is looking at you if he or she isn’t having fun.”

Rick has another piece of advice: “You should see what kind of mood someone is in before you start teasing. If a person is upset, he or she might take anything you say the wrong way.”

Most teasing is spontaneous. Something happens and you immediately think of a funny comeback. The whole thing is over in minutes.

“Sometimes I think the person speaking doesn’t realize what

*Continued on page 6.*





**JESUS' MESSAGES** are like arrows; they carry their sharp point straight to our hearts. Today's study looks at two "arrow" messages on relationships that Jesus aimed at His hearers.

# RIGHT TO

**READ LUKE 6:31-38.**

- Find this passage's main point by asking yourself, "If I could remember only one verse from this passage, which would it be?" Write this verse reference inside the arrowhead.




- Which verses show that "sinners" do *not* follow this main point? Summarize these verses in the first half of the arrow's shaft.
- Which verses tell us specific

ways we *can* follow Jesus' main point? Write a summary of these verses in the second half of the shaft.

**READ MATTHEW 7:1-5.**

- Find this passage's main point by asking yourself, "If I could remember only one verse from this passage, which would it be?" Write this verse reference inside the arrowhead.


- Which verse tells us the consequences if we do *not* obey the main point? Summarize this verse in the first half of the shaft.
- Which verses use a funny comparison to support the main point? Summarize these verses in the second half of the shaft.



# Bible Study

## THE

### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

#### Luke 6:31-38

<sup>31</sup>Do to others as you would have them do to you.

<sup>32</sup>“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. <sup>33</sup>And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that.

<sup>34</sup>And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. <sup>35</sup>But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. <sup>36</sup>Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

<sup>37</sup>“Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. <sup>38</sup>Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

#### Matthew 7:1-5

<sup>1</sup>“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup>For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

<sup>3</sup>“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup>How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup>You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.”

*Continued from page 3.*

he or she has said until it comes out. And before that person can take it back or say 'I'm just kidding,' the other person is already hurt by what has been said," explains Lauren.

To prevent this, Veralee says "you should be careful how and whom you tease, because it can cause a lot of damage to a person's self-confidence. Even though you may not intend for the teasing to hurt, people can be very sensitive. I tease people about everything, but only the people I know who won't take it to heart."

Adam and his friends tease each other because they like to joke around, but he knows that not everyone has this attitude about teasing. "However, I think some people use teasing to feel better about themselves or superior to the other person. That kind of teasing is pretty harmful because it can make the other person feel like a loser."

"What you should do is put yourself in his place," Kris suggests. "How would you feel if someone said that same thing about

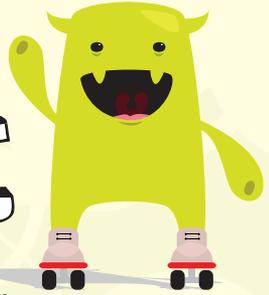
you? Another thing to think about is what would God think of what you said? If you hurt someone's feelings, God probably isn't going to think it's funny, even if you do."

Kris, Rick, Lauren, Adam, and Veralee have given some good advice for drawing the line between fun teasing and cruel put-downs.

- Try to be aware of the other person's mood and feelings.
- Don't tease people in an area they're sensitive about, such as looks, height, weight, or disabilities.
- Try not to gang up on one person in a group.
- Never tease someone to deliberately hurt him or her or make yourself look better.
- Put yourself in the other person's place, and try to imagine how he or she will react to what's said.
- And probably most important: try to imagine how God will react. Does He see one person wounding another? Or does He see two friends sharing a laugh?



# 3-D COMPLIMENT



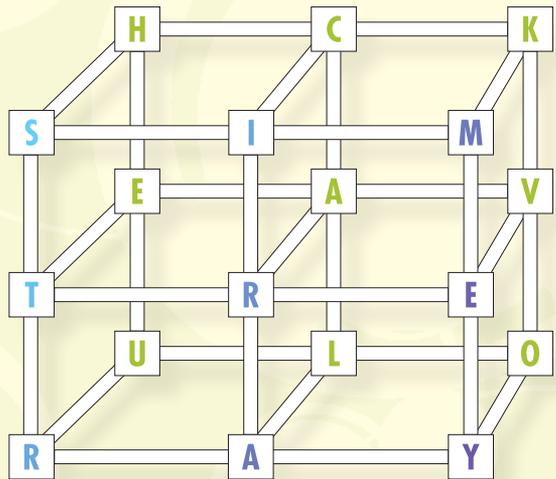
**G**od expects His people to follow His example when it comes to loving others. Sometimes, all that's needed is a genuine compliment or a timely word of encouragement.

Speaking of words, try to find as many four- or five-letter words as you can in this 3-D puzzle. It's possible to find at least 40 words.

The letters of each word have to be consecutively connected by straight lines. You can go forward, backward, up, or down. (For example, the word "mist.") A word like "team" wouldn't count. Although the letters TEA are connected, the letter M is not.

Some letters may be used twice. For example, you can form the word "loyal" by starting at the L and going across to the O, across to the Y, left to the A, and back to the L. However, you can't stand on a letter and use it twice in a row (for example, the L in "ALLOY" wouldn't count).

When you've finished, circle the words you found that have to do with friendship and helping others. Check your answers with those at the bottom of the page.



## FRIENDSHIP WORDS:

care, loyal, value, hear, sick (as in visit), love, tear (as in cheer up a sad friend), heal (as in a broken friendship)



every  
day  
devos

**"Do to others as you would  
have them do to you."  
—Luke 6:31**

# THE Golden RULE

Calligraphy: Melanie Lawson

**W**hat's so golden about the Golden Rule? For starters, it gives away one of the secrets to great relationships.

**MONDAY** Read Luke 6:31. How do you like to be treated when you're embarrassed? Sad? Happy? Ask God to make you sensitive to how others feel when they're embarrassed, sad, happy. . . .

**TUESDAY** Read Luke 6:27-31. In one sentence, sum up the main message of Jesus' teaching. Rewrite these verses, using situations from your life.

**WEDNESDAY** Write down the names of three or four of your friends. Next to each name, list something positive you can say about them. Ask the Lord to help you build up your friends.

**THURSDAY** Sometime today, count the number of put-downs you made and how many compliments you gave. Ask God to help you treat others with consideration all the time.

**FRIDAY** Think of situations in which people treated you with consideration. Thank God for those people who followed Luke 6:31.

**SATURDAY** Write your own golden rules for treating others with consideration. Ask for God's help in practicing these rules for relationships.

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