

Get Along for Good

For teens ages 12–14 · about 45–60 minutes · Moral Issues for Teens · Relationships & Character · game **Peace or Poison?** · built on **Matthew 7:12, Romans 12:18, and Ephesians 6:1–2**

Your students live in a web of relationships every day — parents who "don't get it," friends who flip loyalty overnight, church kids who feel cliquy, teachers and coaches with rules, classmates who push buttons, and neighbors (online or next door) who never seem fair. When friction hits, many teens reach for poison: sarcasm, gossip, rebellion, the silent treatment, revenge posts, or "doing your own thing" until someone breaks. This session isn't about becoming everyone's favorite. It's about learning God's peace habits in six zones so relationships don't blow up — and so they don't carry regret into adulthood.

Before you teach anything, pray.

Some students are in real pain at home — harsh words, divorce tension, feeling invisible. Some have been burned by "church friends." Some are the ones spreading poison and don't see it yet. Ask the Spirit for wisdom and gentleness. You are handing them a map for every relationship category God names in Scripture — not a lecture on being nice.

The heart of the lesson

Getting along is not luck or personality. It is learned obedience. God calls young people to honor parents (Ephesians 6:1–4; Colossians 3:20–21), be loyal and kind to friends (Proverbs 17:9, 17–18; 18:24), love the brotherhood at church (1 Peter 2:17), respect authority (Romans 13; 1 Peter 2:13–17), and live peaceably with neighbors — classmates, coworkers, fellow citizens (Romans 12:17–21; Titus 3:2). All of it collapses into one sentence Jesus made famous: treat others the way you want to be treated (Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:39).

Treat others the way you want to be treated — starting today.

Poison reactions feel powerful in the moment — slam a door, roast someone in the group chat, ghost a friend, mock a teacher, pay back evil with evil. But poison spreads: strife grows (Proverbs 16:28), trust dies, and depression or isolation often follow. Peace is not weakness. Peace is strength under

control — choosing words and actions that honor God even when you're hurt. "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" (Romans 12:18). When someone wrongs you, God's way is not revenge; it's overcome evil with good (Romans 12:17–21).

Peace is not pretending nothing happened — it's choosing God's way when you're tempted to poison the room.

MATTHEW 7:12

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is **the Law and the Prophets.**"

ROMANS 12:18

"If possible, so far as it depends on you, **live peaceably with all.**"

How the session flows

- 1 Poison or peace hook.** Two buckets + read Matthew 7:12. ~7 min
- 2 Six relationship zones.** Parents, friends, church, authority, neighbors, Golden Rule. ~12 min
- 3 Play the game.** "Peace or Poison?" two-team showdown. ~12–15 min
- 4 Quiet honesty.** Reference card, private reflection. ~5 min
- 5 Worksheet.** In class or take-home practice. ~15 min
- 6 Close with prayer.** Ask God for one peace step this week. ~8 min

Screen for the game, two labeled buckets or cones for "Poison" and "Peace" (optional), printed reference cards and worksheets, pens, and a leader ready to pray with students who want help repairing a relationship.

Leading it, part by part

Poison or peace hook

Label two zones in the room: **POISON** and **PEACE**. Read a few quick examples — eye-rolling a parent (poison), listening first (peace); revenge gossip (poison), covering a friend's mistake privately (peace). Ask: which bucket did you live in most this week? Read Matthew 7:12 aloud. Land the idea: you are always teaching others how to treat *you* by how you treat *them*. Then read Romans 12:18 — peace is your job "so far as it depends on you," even when the other person won't cooperate.

Six relationship zones

Walk through each zone below — one minute each, with a poison/peace contrast:

- **Parents** (Ephesians 6:1–2; Mark 7:10–12): honor, obey, listen, communicate kindly. Poison = rebellion, contempt, shutting down. Peace = respectful words even when you disagree. Fathers are warned not to provoke (Ephesians 6:4) — students may need grace for imperfect homes; still call them to their side of the street.
- **Friends** (Proverbs 17:9, 17–18; 18:24; 27:6): loyalty, honesty, kindness. "Love covers all offenses" — not hiding sin, but not broadcasting every flaw. Poison = gossip, betrayal, fair-weather friendship. Peace = showing up when it costs (Job 2:11).
- **Church** (1 Peter 2:17): honor all, love the brotherhood. Youth group is not a second popularity contest. Poison = cliques, mocking, excluding. Peace = welcoming, serving, speaking well of others.
- **Authority** (Romans 13; 1 Peter 2:13–17; Matthew 22:21): teachers, bosses, law enforcement, government, and ultimately God. Poison = defiance for sport, trash-talking online. Peace = obedience where lawful, respectful appeal where needed, prayer for leaders.
- **Neighbors** (Romans 12:17–21; Titus 3:2): classmates, coworkers, fellow citizens. Poison = revenge, public humiliation, stirring drama. Peace = gentle answers, returning good for evil, leaving room for God's justice.
- **Golden Rule summary** (Matthew 7:12; 22:39): balanced and fair with everyone — as you would treat yourself. This is the daily test before you text, post, or snap.

When relationships are already broken, hope is not "try harder." Hope is repentance (1 John 1:9), humility (James 4:6), and sometimes asking a trusted adult to help you reconcile (Matthew 5:23–24).

Play the game

Run "Peace or Poison?" on screen — twelve to fifteen minutes. Rounds sort toxic vs peaceful responses, name Scripture for each relationship zone, and work real scenarios (home, group chat, church, authority, revenge). Bridge afterward: every card asked the same question — are you spreading poison or planting peace?

Quiet honesty

Hand out the reference card. Promise plainly that nobody is collecting it. Give five quiet minutes for students to circle which relationship zone needs the most work right now and name one poison habit they want to drop. Protect the silence.

Worksheet

Structured reinforcement — Golden Rule fill-in, T/F on revenge, match relationship zone to verse, one real scenario, one "this week" peace action. Good for pairs or homework. The reference card addressed the heart; the worksheet reinforces Scripture.

Close with prayer

Invite students to pick *one* relationship and one peace step for the next seven days — apologize, stop gossip, obey the first time, welcome someone left out. Lead prayer from Matthew 7:12: "Lord, help me treat others the way I want to be treated — starting today." Offer leaders for follow-up. Don't force public confession; do make repair feel possible.

Take it further

Discussion questions for small groups or a follow-up week:

- How should young people treat their parents? (Mark 7:10–14; Ephesians 6:1–4; Colossians 3:20–21; 1 Timothy 5:4)
- How should they treat friends? (Job 2:11; Proverbs 16:28; 17:9, 17–18; 18:24; 27:6, 9–10)
- How should they treat fellow church members? (1 Peter 2:17)
- How should they treat those in authority — teachers, bosses, government, God? (Matthew 22:21; Romans 13; 1 Peter 2:13–17)
- How should they treat neighbors — classmates, coworkers, fellow citizens? (Romans 12:17–21; Titus 3:2)
- In summary, how should they treat everyone? (Matthew 7:12; 22:39)
- What does Romans 12:18 mean when the other person refuses peace?

- What is one poison habit you need to replace — and what peace habit will you practice instead?

A final word

Getting along for good is not about faking friendship with everyone. It is about honoring God in every relationship category He names — and letting the Golden Rule reset your mouth, your phone, and your attitude before damage becomes a pattern. Your students will face a specific friction point soon — a parent, a group chat, a kid at church, a teacher, a neighbor. Give them the six zones, give them the game, give them the card, and trust the Spirit to make peace feel stronger than poison.