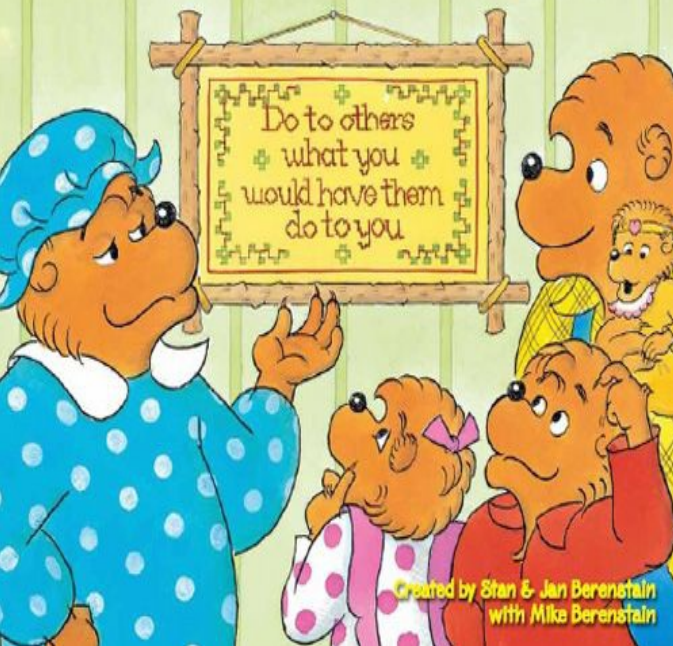


The Berenstain Bears. and the **Golden Rule**



Created by Stan & Jan Berenstain
with Mike Berenstain

The Berenstain Bears. and the **Golden Rule**



Created by Stan and Jan Berenstain
Written by Mike Berenstain

Illustrated by
JOAN MARCUS

zowee kids



Do to others what you would have them do to you.

—Matthew 7:12



ZONDERVAN

The Berenstain Bears and the Golden Rule

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When Sister Bear received a beautiful golden locket for her birthday, she was surprised and pleased. It was shaped like a heart, and it had her name on it.

“Happy birthday, dear!” said Mama and Papa Bear, giving her a big hug.





Sister tried the locket on and looked at herself in the mirror.

“I love it!” she said. “I’m going to wear it all the time.”

“It opens up,” said Papa. “Look!” He showed her the little golden clasp that you pressed to pop the locket open.

“Neat!” said Sister.





She looked inside, expecting to find a little picture or a mirror or something. But all that she could see inside the locket were a few simple words: “Do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Sister was puzzled. The words seemed familiar. But she wasn't sure why. "What's this?" she asked.

"It's the golden rule," explained Mama.
"What's that?" Sister wondered.





Mama's eyes widened. "The golden rule is one of the most important rules there is," she explained. "That's why we have always had it hanging up on the wall of our living room." She pointed to the framed sampler above their mantelpiece.

Sister gazed up at it in amazement. She had seen that sampler every day of her life. No wonder the words seemed familiar! "Oh," she said, a little embarrassed. "I never really thought about what it said before. What does it mean?"

“The golden rule,” Papa explained, “tells you to treat other people the way you want to be treated yourself.”

“Why is it inside my locket?” she wondered.

“It’s a *golden* rule inside a *golden* locket for a little *golden* princess!” said Papa, giving her a big kiss.





“It’s called the golden rule,” explained Mama, patiently, “because it’s precious, just like gold. But it’s not about the gold you wear around your neck or on your finger.” She held out her wedding ring. “It’s about the golden treasure we keep inside our own hearts. The heart shape of the locket is meant to remind you of that.”

Sister thought it over. She didn’t really get it. But that was okay. She loved the new locket anyway.

The next day before school, Sister showed off her new treasure to her friends Lizzy, Millie, Anna, and Linda.

They oohed and ahed over it in a very satisfying way.

“What’s all the fuss about?” asked a voice.





It was Queenie MBear and her gang. Queenie was older than Sister and a little snooty. When Queenie first came to the neighborhood, she and Sister did not get along at all. Queenie made fun of her and got Sister's friends to join in. That was Sister's first experience with an in-crowd—a group that makes itself feel big by making others feel small.

“Oh, hi Queenie,” said Sister. “I was just showing the kids my new locket.”

Over the years, Sister learned to get along with Queenie. But they never were the best of friends.

“Let’s see!” said Queenie.

She looked the locket over. She was not impressed. She herself wore big hoop earrings and lots of beads and chains.

“Cute,” was all she said as she walked away with her friends.





Queenie still had her own in-crowd. They were a group of the older girls who liked hanging out together and acting cool. Mostly, they spent their time painting their nails and giggling about boys.

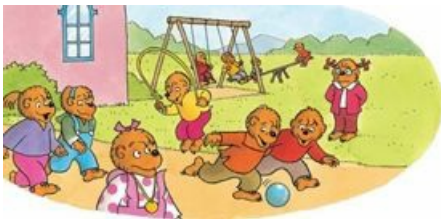
That was okay with Sister. She had her own group of friends to hang out with. But it never occurred to her that this might be any kind of problem until the new girl came to school.





Her name was Suzy MacGrizzie. It seemed like a funny sort of name. For one thing, it had a lot of Zs in it. The new girl herself seemed a little funny too. Her clothes weren't exactly cool, and she wore her hair up in pigtails, which was definitely not the standard Bear Country School style. Besides, she had thick glasses and braces—not the cool kind with lots of different colors like Millie wore—just plain old braces.

On her first day, of course, the new girl didn't know anyone at all. At recess, Sister noticed her standing off by herself in a corner of the playground. She looked sort of sad and lonely. Sister was thinking about going over and introducing herself when Lizzy and Anna came up.





“Hiya, Sister!” said Lizzy. “We’re getting together a game of hopscotch. Millie and Linda are over there. Come on!”

Sister began to follow them. But she paused and glanced back to where the new girl was standing all by herself. The new girl looked lonelier than ever.

“Wait a minute,” said Sister. “What about that new girl—that what’s-her-name—the one over there? Maybe we should invite her to join in. She looks pretty lost and lonely.”

The other girls were surprised.
“Suzy Whoozy-face?” said Lizzy, doubtfully.
“She has weird clothes,” said Anna.
“And those corny pigtails,” said Lizzy.
“Not to mention those clunky glasses and braces,” added Anna.
“Well,” said Sister, discouraged, “I just thought ...”

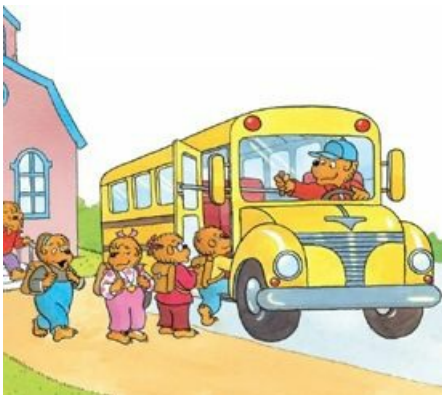




“Oh, don’t worry about old Suzy MacWhoozy!” said Lizzy, taking Sister’s arm. “She’ll be fine. She’ll find some other cubs to play with—cubs more her type. Come on!”

Sister allowed herself to be led away to the hopscotch game. She felt a little worried about Suzy MacWhoozy, though she couldn't exactly say why. But she soon forgot all about it while playing hopscotch with her friends.





Later, when school let out, Sister got in line for her school bus. She noticed that the new girl was standing right in front of her. She was going to say hi, but then Lizzy came up behind her, and they started to talk. They went on talking as they got on the bus.

Suzy MacGrizzie sat right behind them. Sister and Lizzy went right on talking together. Sister played with her new locket as she talked, twirling it around and around in the air.





When the bus came to her stop, Sister gathered up her things to get off. But she felt a soft tug at her arm. It was Suzy MacGrizzie. She was holding something out to Sister.

“Here,” she said shyly. “You dropped this.” It was Sister’s new locket!

“Gee,” said Sister. “Thanks!” It was all she could think of to say.





Sister climbed off the bus and watched as it pulled away. She could see Suzy looking back at her from the window. Sister hung her locket back around her neck. What if Suzy hadn't noticed her drop it? It might have been gone for good.

Mama was waiting for Sister as she climbed the front steps. “How was school today, dear?” asked Mama.

“Oh, okay, I guess,” sighed Sister, dumping her schoolbag on the armchair in the living room. She glanced up at the framed sampler of the golden rule over the mantel.

Somehow, the golden locket hanging around her neck felt heavier than before.





That evening at dinner, Sister was unusually thoughtful. She picked at her lima beans and stared off into space.

“A penny for your thoughts,” said Papa as he fed Honey Bear.

“Huh?” said Sister, looking up. “Oh, I was just thinking about that golden rule inside my locket,” she explained. “I don’t really get it. What’s it supposed to mean?”

“Well,” began Mama. “Let me give you an example. Do you remember that trouble you had when Queenie first moved to town?”

Sister perked up and paid attention. She remembered it all too well.

“Do you remember how Queenie started an in-crowd but kept you out and made fun of your clothes and hair bow?” Mama asked. “Do you remember how badly you felt?”

Boy, did she ever! Sister started to feel hurt just thinking about it. Her lower lip began to quiver, and a tear came to her eye.





“All the golden rule is saying,” Papa continued, “is that you shouldn’t turn around and do that same sort of thing to someone else.”

He paused to scrape some mashed potatoes off Honey’s chin. “You should always treat other people the way you would like to be treated yourself.”

“But I would never do anything like that!” said Sister. “Besides, I don’t have an in-crowd.”

“Oh no?” said Brother, who had been taking all this in. “What about Lizzy and Anna and Millie and Linda? You play with them all the time. But I never see you asking anyone else to join in!”

“That’s different!” protested Sister, angrily. “I’m just playing with my friends! We’re not trying to keep anybody out!”

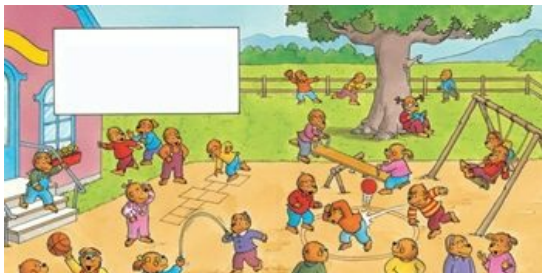




“Of course not, dear!” soothed Mama. “I’m sure you and your friends would never dream of keeping other cubs out of your group.”

Sister Bear grew very quiet. Now that she thought it over, she wasn’t quite so sure—not so sure at all!

The next day at recess, as soon as Sister came outside, she looked around the playground for Suzy MacGrizzie. She soon spotted her, sitting off by herself under the big oak tree at the edge of the schoolyard and reading a book.





Sister marched right up to her. “Hello, Suzy!” she said brightly.

Suzy looked up in surprise. “Hello,” she said shyly.

“I’m Sister Bear, and my friends and I are going to play some hopscotch,” Sister told her.

“Would you like to join us?”

Suzy's face lit up. "Oh, I'd love to!" she said with a big bracey grin. "I love hopscotch!"





“Terrific!” said Sister. “Do you want to see my locket?”

“Sure!” said Suzy.

“Okay,” said Sister. “Come on! I’ll show it to you ... over there.”

Sister took off, and Suzy chased her, laughing, across the playground to the hopscotch square where Lizzy, Millie, Anna, and Linda were waiting.

Sister's golden locket gleamed in the sun as she ran.



About the Publisher

Founded in 1931, Grand Rapids, Michigan-based Zondervan, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, is the leading international Christian communications company, producing best-selling Bibles, books, new media products, a growing line of gift products and award-winning children's products. The world's largest Bible publisher, Zondervan (www.zondervan.com) holds exclusive publishing rights to the New International Version of the Bible and has distributed more than 150 million copies worldwide. It is also one of the top Christian publishers in the world, selling its award-winning books through Christian retailers, general market bookstores, mass merchandisers, specialty retailers, and the Internet. Zondervan has received a total of 68 Gold Medallion awards for its books, more than any other publisher.



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