

AN UNEXPECTED REACTION

LESSON 145 → Matthew 5:6-9, 38-48; 18:23-35

When Hunter broke the game, Beckham's response amazed everyone on the bus.

“**H**ey, look what Beckham has with him today!” a taunting voice rang through the school bus. “I wish I had a new Nintendo 3DS.”

Beckham barely had time to turn and see who was speaking before a hand reached over his shoulder and snatched the game from him. “Here, Micah, catch!” The game shot through the air toward the back of the bus.

“What are you doing?” The words were hardly out of Beckham's mouth when the bus gave a lurch. Micah missed the catch, and the game crashed against a seat frame and slid down the aisle.

A sick look crossed Beckham's face. His brand new 3DS! There was silence in the bus as he slowly got up from his seat and retrieved the shattered case and broken pieces. Hunter Gibson, the guy who had thrown the game, slumped into the seat across the aisle and looked warily at Beckham as he worked his way back to his seat.

“Sorry about that,” Hunter finally said offhandedly. Then added, “But you shouldn't have had something like that on the school bus anyway.” Every eye was on the two boys, waiting for the fight to start.

But it didn't. Beckham stuffed the pieces inside his backpack, then he looked across the aisle at Hunter. “It's okay. I know you didn't mean for it to get broken.”

A flicker of disbelief crossed Hunter's face. For a moment it seemed he might say something more, but then the school bus pulled up in front of Lincoln Junior High and everyone began the scramble to get out.

Several weeks went by and Beckham had almost forgotten the incident on the bus. Besides, he had



a new airsoft gun, so he was spending a lot of time target practicing.

Someone had told him about a big field on East 47th Street. It seemed like a good place to practice because there was a thick hedge at one end



WE SHOULD HAVE MERCY ON OTHER PEOPLE.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. — Luke 6:36

that should stop any stray pellets. He set up a couple of tin cans he had brought along with him and loaded his gun.

His first couple of shots missed. He thought that maybe he needed to steady his gun a little better, so he flopped down on his stomach and used a large rock for a support. Now he would have to fire upward to hit the target, but at least the gun was steady. He took aim and fired. Missed again. He tried once more. This time the can fell.

Beckham jumped to his feet and walked over to put his target back in place. Just then an angry figure stormed around the side of the hedge.

“Hey, young man! Come here!”

Beckham looked around. Was the man talking to him? “Do you mean me, Sir?”

“Yes, I mean you! Are you the one who is firing a gun out here? You just shot through my kitchen window!”

“Oh, no!” said Beckham, horrified. He set his gun down beside the target and looked helplessly at the man. “I didn’t know there was a house close by. Anyway, I thought the hedge would stop the pellets.”

“Well, it didn’t,” the man said angrily. “I suggest the next time you check a little better before you start shooting. And now, who is going to pay for my window?”

“I will,” Beckham said. “I’m really sorry it happened. How much do you think it will cost?”

“A window that size will cost over one hundred dollars.”

Beckham knew he would have to ask his parents for the money. “I’ll have to go home to get the money. May I leave my name and address with you and come back in an hour or so? I’ll leave my airsoft gun.”

“I suppose so,” the man replied with a disgruntled air. “Come on over to the house and write it down for me.”

Beckham picked up his airsoft gun and went with the man. At the house, he waited on the porch until paper and pen were brought out to him. Then he jotted down his name and address and handed it to the man. He was turning to leave when the man said, “Say, just a minute! Beckham Tinney . . . You go to Lincoln Junior High, don’t you?” At Beckham’s nod, the man went on. “So does my son, Hunter. Hunter Gibson. I think you know him.”

The scene on the bus flashed through Beckham’s mind.

“Let me guess what you’re thinking.” The man was smiling now. “You’re remembering a day on the bus before school closed when my son broke your Nintendo game.”

Beckham looked at him in amazement. “You mean Hunter told you about that?”

“Not right away, but when he did, he told me how surprised he was that you didn’t get mad at him. As a matter of fact, he still can’t quite figure it out.” He paused for a moment. “You know, Hunter was really impressed that you didn’t demand that he pay for the game he broke. That was kind of you. So why don’t we just forget about this window business. I’ll pick up a piece of glass somewhere and Hunter will help me put it in.”

Hunter’s father dropped the matter of the broken window because he appreciated the fact that Beckham hadn’t demanded payment from his son for the Nintendo 3DS. Our Bible text for this lesson gives an opposite example—a servant who had been forgiven a debt, but then demanded payment from someone who owed him money. What happened to that servant? Unless we extend mercy, should we expect to receive it?

Lesson 145 Activity
BE LIKE JESUS

As Christians we are to be like Jesus and show mercy to others. What were the results when Jesus' mercy was added to the situations listed below? Look up the texts and write your thoughts on the lines provided.



+

Jesus' Mercy
(Luke 23:39-43)

=



+

Jesus' Mercy
(Matthew 20:29-34)

=



+

Jesus' Mercy
(Luke 8:49-56)

=



+

Jesus' Mercy
(Luke 19:1-10)

=

