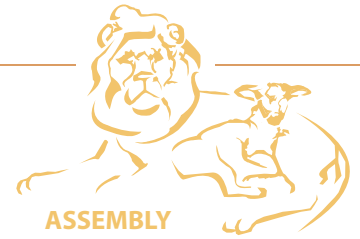


THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT – LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: MATTHEW 5:43-48



The following are some ideas for creative ways that you can present this material.

LESSON IDEAS

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Have groups of children act out the following scenarios to demonstrate loving those who are your enemies or who persecute you.

- One child is coloring while another child scribbles on his paper
- One child makes a face at another child
- One child pushes another child
- One child butts ahead in line

Help the children see how Jesus' teaching can help us love those around us every day. We do not naturally want to love our enemies. Instead, we want to get even and fight back. Only the grace of God can help us to be like Jesus.

HOW DID JESUS LOVE HIS ENEMIES?

Ask the children to remember how Jesus loved His enemies.

Here are a few of the ways:

- At His crucifixion, He asked His father in heaven to forgive them
- He did not return insults to those who insulted Him
- He spoke to the Samaritan woman who was an enemy of the Jews
- Most importantly, He loves us

The children might be surprised to think of themselves as enemies of Christ. Help them make the connection that their sin is an act of war against God and that no one can live life without sinning. Jesus did not want to punish man for his sin and so He died on the cross to take the penalty for our sin.

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WHERE IS the Gospel?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

Jesus followed his teaching to love His enemies. Paul said to the Romans:

"If while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." (Romans 5:10)

The requirement that we should love our enemies and be perfect is an impossible task. The only way we can be perfect is because of Jesus, who did not treat us as our sins deserved. He also gave us His perfect obedience in exchange for our sinfulness. Jesus did this and made a way for us to have fellowship with God in heaven. As Christians, we stand forgiven and hold the honor of perfect obedience given to us as a gift by Christ. Even though we cannot follow perfectly, we should strive to follow Jesus' example to love those who persecute us. By doing so, we give the Lord glory.

