



Ready, Set, Go!

Jesus Teaches on Loving Our Enemies

BIG IDEA: Jesus teaches us to love everyone, including our enemies.

BIBLE BASIS: Matthew 5:38-48

KEY VERSE: “But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you.” Matthew 5:44 (NirV)

SCHEDULE

ESTIMATES

WELCOME KIDS AND FREETIME

6:15 PM

SMALL GROUP CONNECT

6:30 PM

WORSHIP

6:45 PM

JTS SHOW & DISCUSSION

7:00 PM

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

7:30 PM

GYM TIME?

7:45 PM

PICK UP TIME AND FREETIME

7:55 PM

Scripture marked “NIV” is taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 Biblica. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of Biblica. Scripture marked “NirV” is taken from the Holy Bible, New International Reader’s Version™, Copyright ©1995, 1996, 1998 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. All scripture references are taken from NirV unless otherwise stated.

User Agreement:

The GO! curriculum by Go Tell It, LLC is intended for download and print by subscribing entities only. It may not be transferred electronically to or duplicated by other non-subscribing entities. If the GO! curriculum is cost prohibitive for your organization, please contact us about assistance. We are awesomely generous! All use must be in accordance with the Terms of Use agreement as described on the website www.gocurriculum.com.





LEADER DEVOTIONAL

For many years when I read Matthew 5:44, the first word that came to mind was “frenemy.” Let me show you what I mean — take a look at the verse:

“But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you.”

You might be thinking “Frenemy? What in the world is that and how did you get that from this verse?” Great question! “Frenemy” is the popular combination of the words “friend” and “enemy.” More specifically, it’s a noun defined as “a person with whom one is friendly despite a fundamental dislike or rivalry.”

In the past, I always thought of this verse through pragmatic terms. How do you love your enemy practically speaking? How do you wish the best for someone you’re fundamentally at odds with? You treat them like a frenemy. You show kindness to them on the outside, but continue to dislike them on the inside. You smile, say “hello,” and give a kind wave of the hand, but fantasize internally about their demise. In essence, I had resigned to the belief that I could not truly and completely love my enemy.

As I researched the word “frenemy” further, I found it defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “one who pretends to be a friend but is actually an enemy.” I realized that pretending to show love to someone falls way short of what Jesus is calling for in Matthew 5:4. He calls us to not just love them outwardly, but love them inwardly by spending time praying for them. And in praying for them, I am asking God to truly and richly bless them.

Simply creating a façade and *pretending* to love our enemies actually makes us their enemy because we are not desiring God’s grace and mercy for them. God wants us to both outwardly *and* inwardly love our enemies, not just be their frenemy.

Do you have a frenemy? If so, think about what it means to love them more like a friend. Spend time in prayer asking God to truly and richly bless them. You might find that in doing so, you too are truly and richly blessed.

Mindy Rausch
GO! Team Member





SMALL GROUP SKILL BUILDING

How to Prepare Like a Champ for Small Group

Picture this scene. Moments before children’s church is scheduled to begin a leader stands in the corner of the room with his face buried in some papers labeled “Small Group Lesson.” He seems oblivious to the kids moving quickly and loudly all around him. A bead of sweat rolls down his face. The clock ticks loudly as he reads at a fevered pace. Have you seen this leader? Are *you* this leader? There’s no judgment here! We get it — life is often *really* busy and finding the time to lead a small group, much less prepare for one, can be tough. But by investing just a small amount of time into preparation, you can go from being a good small group leader to a great one. Here’s how:

Read your lesson ahead of time. You saw that one coming, didn’t you? When the kids arrive, it’s game time. When you’ve read the lesson ahead of time, the kids get your full attention from the moment they walk in. When small group begins, you’ll be able to lead much more effectively if you’re not trying to figure out the lesson for yourself at the same time you’re explaining it to your group.

Familiarize yourself with the materials. Many of the small group activities in the GO! curriculum have materials that go with it. When you read the lesson at home, you might have a picture of what the materials look like, but double check to make sure what you imagined matches reality when you arrive at church.

Prepare your own heart. The best way to lead the kids in your group is through example. Consider reading the Bible story ahead of time and asking yourself how it applies to your own life. Spend some time in prayer asking the Holy Spirit to show you how you need to change in light of this story.



7.1 WN Small Group Lesson | Elementary



SMALL GROUP CONNECT

Remind kids about being respectful.

1. **Respect God** - Worship, listen, use kind words
2. **Respect People** - Be kind, share, follow leaders
3. **Respect the Building** - Take care of the space & supplies

Question: What is your favorite food?

ADDITIONAL TIME ACTIVITY — THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

Simply ask the kids in your group to share one good thing that happened this week (thumbs up) and one not-so-good thing (thumbs down). This is a great way for your group to share celebrations and struggles with one another.





★ LARGE GROUP LESSON

Lil Climbers Will Join Us

Open with worship.

Lil Climbers Leave

Leah will introduce the series.

Watch Journey Today Show – will pause a couple times for reading and discussion.

1st Video Pause:

Read Matthew 5:38-48

THE BIG BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS

Directions: After reading, answer the following questions:

For Younger Kids:

1. What was your favorite part of this story?
2. Why do you think Jesus wants us to show love to mean people?

For Older Kids:

1. Do you know of any ways that Jesus showed love to His enemies?
2. Why do you think Jesus wants us to show love to our enemies?

2nd Video Pause:

Ask: Can you think of some ways that you could show love to someone who is mean to you?





★ SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES

THE TARGET OF CRUELTY (Application Activity)

Set up: Place a 6-foot (1.8 m) line of tape on the floor. This line will serve as the “firing” line.

Say: Have you ever been the target of a bully? (*Kids reply.*) When people make us the target of their cruelty or unkindness, it’s no fun! God doesn’t say that we have to let people be mean to us, but He does want us to respond to them with love. We’re going to play a game right now that will help us think about some ways we can show love to our enemies.

Directions: Give each kid in your group a straw. Divide your group into two teams. Give each team 10 Q-tips®. Choose one kid from each team to be the “shooter” and have them sit behind the “firing” (tape) line. Choose another kid from each team to be the “target” and have them sit a few feet from the firing line. (If this distance proves too easy, scoot the “target” further back.) Give the “target” a plastic cup to balance on their head and tell them to close their eyes. (Optional: Provide safety goggles for the “targets.”) When you say, “Ready, set, go,” have the shooters place a Q-tip® in their straw and begin firing at the cup with their “blow darts.” Allow them to continue firing until one of the shooters successfully knocks the cup down. Give their team a point. Next, have the target answer the following question: How can you show love to someone who makes you the target of their cruelty or unkindness? When the target has finished answering, choose two more shooters and a target and repeat until everyone has had a turn as the target. Count up the points and declare a winner. If time remains, discuss these additional questions:

Question: If you were to pray for your enemy, what kind of things would you pray for them?

Question: How do you think it might change your enemy if you were kind to them and prayed for them?

