

LESSON 14

The Sermon on the Mount—Love Your Enemies

5:43–48



BIBLE TRUTH

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: building blocks

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 92)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 14—one for each child; markers or crayons

How Did Jesus Love His Enemies?

Up on the Mountain

SUPPLIES: four- or six-foot stepladder

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn that Jesus taught that we should love our enemies. They will learn that sometimes friends can act like enemies, but God calls us to love them.

Prior to class, lay out blocks (or some other building toy) for the children to play with as they come in.

After the children are playing for a few minutes, get their attention and ask them if anyone can tell you what sharing is. (Use a classroom helper to feed the answers to the children if they get stuck.) Ask them if sharing is good or bad. (Sharing is good, because by sharing you are showing kindness to someone.)

Turn the discussion to taking or stealing. Demonstrate taking by grabbing a block and saying in an angry voice, "This block is mine." Then ask if stealing is good or bad. (Stealing is not good because by stealing you are being mean to someone.) Use the following questions to guide the discussion:

- How do you feel when someone is mean to you?
- How should we treat people who act like our enemy by taking things from us?
Should we be mean back to them or love them?
(Love them)
- Why should we love our enemies?
(Again have your helper feed the children the correct answers if they get stuck.)

Tell the children that in our Bible story today we are going to learn how Jesus tells us to love our enemies. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 92, "The Sermon on the Mount—Love Your Enemies," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **What is Jesus trying to teach the crowd?**
(Jesus is trying to teach the crowd that they are to love people perfectly like God loves people.)
- **Who did Jesus say we should love?**
(We should love everyone, not just our friends, but our enemies too.)
- **Who did Jesus say we should pray for?**
(Jesus said we should pray for those who persecute us.)

Ask the children if they know what the word “persecution” means. They may not know. Give them a simple definition: Persecution means to be mean to someone.

SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Why is it hard for us to love our enemies?**
(An example of an enemy might be someone who makes fun of you. It’s hard to love this kind of person because they make you feel so bad. It’s easy to love someone who loves you because they do things that make you feel good.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today’s Bible story fit into God’s greater plan of redemption?

The call to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48) is an impossible standard to measure up to. If our salvation depends on our being perfect, then no human in the history of the world could enter heaven. That is where the gospel becomes our only hope. Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly by meeting all of its requirements perfectly. Jesus also fulfilled the strict standard he presented in the Sermon on the Mount to love your enemies. Jesus perfectly followed his teaching to love his enemies. Jesus died on the cross to take our sins away—but that leaves us without righteousness. Jesus also lived a sinless life so that he could then give that righteousness to us as our representative.

- How can you show love to someone who makes fun of you?
(We can be kind to them and pray for them. Jesus taught us to “turn the other cheek” that is, not say wrong things in return.)

- Why do we need to be perfect, like God?
(God is holy and in him there is no sin at all. The only way we can live with him in heaven is to be perfectly holy like he is. Of course, this is impossible because we are already sinners. Therefore, we need the perfect life of Christ bestowed upon us through the cross. It is Jesus’ perfect obedience that is given to us at our conversion.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5-10 MIN

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS. 20-30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 14—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- What is interesting about this picture?
(Rain falls on the just and the unjust—on good people and sinful people. If no one remembers, remind them of what they heard in today’s story [Matthew 5:43-48].)

- Why do you think God gives all men the blessings of rain?
(God loves all people because all men are made in the image of God.)

- What other blessings does God give all men?
(The passage lists sunshine, but in fact just about every blessing he gives believers he also gives unbelievers, with the exception of eternal life.)

How Did Jesus Love His Enemies?

Ask the children to recall 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 loved us by dying for us.

Give the children clues for the ones they can't remember.

Finally tell the children that in our sin we are all God's enemies. Then ask, "How are we enemies of God?" (The children might be surprised to think of themselves as God's enemies. 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 sin.)

Up on the Mountain

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ four- or six-foot stepladder

Explain that Jesus gave this sermon on the mountain so that everyone could see and hear him.

Have the children gather around you. Crouch down. Tell the children if there are a lot of people it is hard to see who is talking if you are on the ground. Then, pull out the ladder (your mountain) and climb up a few steps. Read the story from the top the ladder. Ask the children why they think Jesus went up to the top of the mountain? They should answer, "So everyone could see and hear him well."

Explain to the children that if Jesus wanted to be sure that everyone could see and hear him well, what he was teaching must have been very, very, important.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

