

Sermon on the Mount part 9

Loving Enemies (Matthew 5:-43-48)

Checklist:

- 3x5 card and pencil for each person for “List of Enemies”
- Slips of paper ready for the “Famous Enemies” game

Famous Enemies:

(Idea for this game from Talk-Sheets on CD-ROM, Youth Specialties)

Pass out one half of each enemy pair to each kid (if there are an uneven amount of kids, then you will need to participate). When you say “go” kids try to find their “nemesis.” Whoever finds them first, wins.

List of Enemies:

On a 3x5 card, have each person make a list of people they don’t like or who don’t like them. (They shouldn’t let anyone else see their list.)

Ask: Are people usually nice to people who are nice to them and mean to people who are mean to them? Why?

Jesus’ Teaching to Love Your Enemies:

Read Matthew 5:43-48 (while youth follow along in their Bibles).

Explain:

- Liking neighbors and hating enemies is the normal way.
- Non-Christians are even nice to people who are nice to them. Even criminals, mean people at school, and people who don’t like you do this.
- But, these verses say God is loving to people who act like His enemy.
 - He gives good things - sun and rain - to evil people as well as good. (v45)

Ask: What does verse 45 say we should do and why?

(Verse 45 says we should love our enemies to be like sons of God.)

As Christians, God Loved Us When We Were Enemies:

Read Romans 5:10

Explain:

- Romans 5:10 says that Jesus died for Christians when we were His enemies.
- He didn’t die for us because we were His friends and were really nice to Him.
- He was crucified for us out of love, even though we were sinful.

Important Points for Us:

Here are some important points for us...

- It’s hard to love enemies!
- But, even if people disobey God in the way they treat us...
- ...we should obey God and follow His example – we should be loving to them.
- Loving like that is not something we can do on our own. It has to be God’s love working through us.
- And, we can love enemies without loving what they do. (God didn’t love our sin)

List of Enemies, part 2:

Explain:

- In verse 44, Jesus said to love enemies and pray for people that persecute you.
- And that doesn't mean to pray for something bad to happen to them!!
- Ask God to bless them. Ask God to save them, if they are not Christians. And ask God to help you and them change as needed to not be enemies.
- Ask God (and them if you should) to forgive you for having a wrong heart toward them!
- *Encourage youth to make their list of enemies into a prayer list. Tell them to write "Prayer List" at the top of their card and use the list to pray for them each day.*
- *Encourage youth to do one loving thing for one person on their list this week – they should circle the name of the person and write the thing they will do to help them remember.*

Close along these lines:

We should ask God to help us to love like He does. We need His love – through a relationship with Jesus – to be able to love like that!

Closing Prayer

References:

"Gangs," *Youth Worker's Idea Depot CD-ROM* (Group Publishing).

John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*, The Bible Speaks Today series (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 121.

Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary: New Testament Volume 1* (Colorado Springs: Victor, imprint of Cook, 2001), 24.

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Famous Enemies:

Tom (the mouse)

Jerry (the cat)

Duck

Duck Hunter

Batman

Joker

Superman

Lex Luther

Cops

Robbers

David

Goliath