



Love your enemies and pray for them.

Matthew 5:43–48



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☆Let's Talk and Wonder

SAY A large crowd of people gathered on the mountainside to see and hear Jesus. The disciples sat beside Jesus. They listened carefully as he taught them how God's people should live. He told them to love and pray for their enemies.

ASK *What did Jesus mean when he said that God's people should love and pray for their enemies?*

SAY Jesus was telling his followers to love everyone—even people who don't love God and don't love them back. He was telling his followers to pray for those who hate them.

SAY I wonder what the disciples thought when they heard what Jesus said . . .

SAY The disciples and all God's children were once God's enemies. But God loved them and sent his Son to be their Savior. Now God's people are no longer God's enemies. We are children of God and are commanded to love the way God loves. That means loving those who don't love Jesus and who don't love us. We need God's help to forgive our enemies, pray for them, and show kindness to them!

☆Let's Play

Play this active game to remind children that Jesus wants us to show that we love our enemies by what we say and do. Sit in a circle. Give a **red, green, or blue paper strip** to each child. Tell the children to listen as you call out a color, give a command, and do an action. Each child holding a paper strip of the color you named stands up, repeats the command, and imitates your action. Have everyone sit down. Then move on to the next color, command, and action. Play until all commands have been given.

Red I'll pray for those who are mean to me. *(fold hands in prayer)*

Green I'll walk away when a bully tries to pick a fight. *(turn around, walk away)*

Blue I'll say "Hi" to someone who ignores me. *(high-five someone)*

Red I'll share my toys with those who won't share with me. *(hold out hands, palms facing up)*

Green I'll smile at those who make fun of me. *(draw a smile on your face with your fingers)*

Blue I'll forgive my enemy. *(form a cross with both arms)*

☆Let's Pray

Dear God, we pray for our enemies. Help us to love and forgive them, just as you do. In Jesus' name, Amen.