

Calvary Chapel  of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 4

Love Your Enemies

Love Your Enemies

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

Objective This lesson will teach the kids what biblical love is and how we can love those who are unkind to us.

Scripture Passage:

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' **But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you...** For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?"

Matthew 5:43-47 (Memory verse, Matthew 5:44, in **bold**)

In the Word

Last week, we learned how Christians are supposed to be like salt and light, meaning that the way we live should be different than how non-believers live. One thing that should make us different is our love for others. As Christians, the Bible tells us to love many people: our fellow believers, our families, the poor and needy. But in today's verses, Jesus tells us to love the people who are most difficult to love: our enemies.

Loving our friends can be hard enough, but here Jesus is saying that we need to love the people we don't get along with. That includes the kid at school who's mean to you, the brother or sister who gets on your nerves, the person in your neighborhood you always get in fights with.

But before we can love our enemies, we first need to know what the Bible means when it tells us to love people. Does love mean having warm, fuzzy feelings in our hearts toward someone? No, biblical love is more than just a feeling. It's an action. We love others by putting their needs before our own and doing what we can to help and bless them. Biblical love means doing what's right and treating others the way the Bible tells us to. The best way to understand love is to look at Jesus and the way He lived His life and treated others. He perfectly loved everyone He met. Loving others is treating them the way Jesus would treat them.

So then what does it mean to show that kind of love to our enemies? Are we supposed to let them be mean to us or take advantage of us? Are we supposed to just ignore them or learn to live with them? No, biblical

In the Word (Continued)

love means that when someone treat us unkindly, we don't respond with more sin, but instead look for ways to bless them. That could mean praying for that person, doing something nice for them, or forgiving them for what they've done to you. It also means apologizing for anything you may have done that was unkind to them.

Maybe you think, "I love my friends. Isn't that good enough? Do I really need to love my enemies?" But remember, Christians are supposed to be different from the rest of the world. Even non-believers are able to love the people who are nice to them. But when we love those who don't love us in return, it tells the world that we as Christians are different, and it shows them what Jesus is like. Jesus always loved His enemies. He died for those who've sin against Him—including us! As His followers, we should follow His example in loving our enemies.

"On the Court" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Court" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

On the Court

- Do you have a teammate who is unkind to you or gets on your nerves? Treat them with love, even if they are unkind in return.
- In sports, it can be easy to treat the other team (or sometimes even the refs) as "enemies," but that is not true, especially in a Christian league where they are your brothers and sisters in Christ, and you need to show them love and kindness.

Off the Court

- There might be someone at school you don't get along with. Think of a kind thing you can do for that person to actively show them Christian love.
- Sometimes your siblings can be the hardest people to get along with, but you especially need to love members of your family.
- Don't just ignore those who are mean to you. See if through kindness you can make things right with them.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize Matthew 5:44 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. As a team, brainstorm ways to "love your enemies." Have the kids think of someone they don't get along with, and encourage them to show love to that person this week.