

READ LUKE 6:27-36

HEAD

Have you ever thought about how backwards some of God's commands sound?

In Luke 6, we are told we should love our enemies. The only way someone can do that is by relying on God's help. It is really hard to think good thoughts about an enemy. Luke says to do good to people who hate you and bless people who curse you. He says to pray for people who've been mean to you. That is hard to do! If someone takes my coat, my first response is to get it back. However, God says I should give them my shirt too. What God is telling us to do doesn't seem fair.

Verses 32-34 explain that followers of Jesus are to be different from everyone else. Several times it says, "...even sinners do that". Even sinners love those who love them and do good to those who do good to them. There's nothing special about that. We are to be like Jesus, and He gives grace to the ungrateful and evil. He is merciful. Luke says loving our enemies, doing good, and lending without expectation will result in a great reward, and we will be children of the Most High. That sounds worth it to me.

HEART

What is your first response when you read that God wants us to love our enemies? If it seems impossible, maybe your view of God and your view of yourself need to be re-examined. I was an enemy of God before I surrendered my life to Jesus; we all are. While we were still sinners, Jesus died for us. He prayed for us, and He gave His life for us. We give and love because He did it first. Yes, it is hard to love our enemies and give to others even if we know we won't get it back. But with the Holy Spirit living in us, we can do it.

Maybe forgiveness is where you need to start - accepting forgiveness from God through Jesus and then forgiving those who have hurt you. A friend of mine said she was so hurt by someone that, at first, all she could do was write that person's first initial in her prayer journal. Over time, she was able to write the whole name and even more specific prayers for the person who'd hurt her. Start wherever you need to and understand that forgiveness is often a process.

HANDS

Take a few minutes to write down a prayer for your enemy or someone who has hurt you. It may only be their name or initial, but at least your heart is trying to align with God's. If you think of that person throughout the day, say a quick prayer for them. Example: "Lord, be with _____. Help them to know You love them. Help me to see them the way You see them." You may have to ask God to help you forgive the person. If you're praying for someone, it's easier to show kindness to them.

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, thank You for never asking me to do something You haven't already done for me. Thank You for Your grace and mercy. I want to love my enemies the way you want me to. I can't do it without Your help. Help me to forgive. Help me to do good to others. In Jesus's name, Amen.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES

BIG BAD WOLF

1. Have the children stand in a line at one end of the game area.
2. One leader or child is the “Big, Bad Wolf” and will stand at the other end of the area with her back to the children.
3. In unison, the children shout, “What time is it, Mr. Wolf?”
4. The wolf answers with an hour. For example, “four o’clock.”
5. The children take that number of steps forward. If the wolf said, “4 o’clock,” the children would take 4 steps toward the wolf.
6. When the wolf thinks the children are close enough to her, she answers their question with, “It’s eating time!”
7. Then she chases them back to their starting line. Anyone she tags joins her as a wolf.
8. The game ends when all but one participant has been tagged.

OVER / UNDER

1. Players are divided into two teams.
2. Teams line up in parallel rows with players standing behind one another.
3. The first player on each team is given an item (ex: beach ball, balloon, etc.)
4. When the leader says, “Go,” the first player on each line passes the ball backward over her head to the second player.
5. The second player passes the ball under his legs to the next person in line, and so forth.
6. The ball/item continues to be passed backward down the line, alternating over and under, until it reaches the last player.
7. The last player, receiving the ball, runs to the front of his or her line and begins to pass the ball back again.
8. Game can end when the player at the back makes it to the front with the item for the first time.
9. The team whose first player gets to the front of the line again is the winner.

CATCH THE DRAGON TAIL

1. Ask the kids to form a long human chain by holding hands.
2. The person standing first is the head of the dragon and the one at the end is the tail of the dragon.
3. The head should try and catch the tail, while the others in the middle should try and stop the head, without breaking the chain.
4. If the head succeeds in catching the tail, the tail becomes the head, and the person at the end of the chain becomes the tail. The game continues with the new head and tail.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES (CONT.)

EVERYBODY'S IT TAG

1. There are two rules: (1) Everybody is "It" and (2) When a player is tagged, he or she is frozen.
2. Have everyone stand in a circle.
3. Then the leader shouts, "Everybody's it!" and the game starts (and quickly ends).

ELBOW TAG

1. Assign all players a partner. Spread pairs out evenly across the playing area. Have the pairs link arms.
2. Choose one pair to start out as the chaser ("it"), and the chasee.
3. Just like regular tag, "it" tries to tag the chasee.
4. If the chasee is tagged, he or she in turn becomes "it" and the chase reverses.
5. The chasee's goal is to link with another player.
6. When the chasee links arms with one side of a pair, the player on the other side must unhook their arm and begin running as the new chasee.

AMOEBAS TAG

1. Tag with a twist. One player is the tagger; this person is "it."
2. When "it" tags a runner, the runner must stop and join hands with the tagger. The two must now try to tag other runners without unjoining hands. The chain of players will grow as the game goes on.

SHARKS AND MINNOWS

1. You will need a good-size running area for this game.
2. Have the children line up along one side of the area.
3. They are the "minnows". Have the leader stand in the middle of the area.
4. The leader is the shark. When the shark yells "Go!", the minnows run to the other end of the area.
5. The shark runs around and tags as many minnows as possible before they reach the other end of the field.
6. When a minnow is tagged, he or she must freeze wherever tagged.
7. When all the untagged minnows reach the end of the area, the shark yells, "Go!" again.
8. This time the shark and the frozen minnows may tag the runners.
9. The game continues until there is only one minnow left.

KIDS HOUSE CHURCH GAMES (CONT.)

GROUP JUGGLING

1. Have the children stand in a circle with their arms in the air.
2. Toss a ball to a child. The child will toss the ball to another child and put their arms down.
3. Play continues with each child putting their arms down after they have thrown the ball.
4. The last child to catch the ball should toss it to the teacher.
5. You can play again, speeding up the action slightly.
6. To “juggle,” the children may keep their hands in the air at all times as a second ball/item is put into play.
7. The object is to keep both balls in play.

GORILLA, MAN, GUN

1. This is just like “Rock, Paper, Scissors”, except the kids will act out the “gorilla” (both hands in the air and a big growl), man (arms folded with one hand on the side of the chin/jaw with a sophisticated look), gun (however you choose to model holding a gun).
2. Once each child in the group has a partner, have them get back-to-back and teach them the rules in song form.
3. “The gorilla beats the man, and the man beats the gun. The gun beats the gorilla, if you tie you die.” and then count all together “1, 2, 3!”
4. That’s when each back-to-back partners turns around as a “gorilla, man, or a gun”. Then match up the winners and repeat until you get to the final group and have a prize for the winner.

HOT POTATO

1. Players arrange themselves in a circle and toss a ball to each other while music plays.
2. The player who is holding the “hot potato” when the music stops is out.
3. The game continues until one player is left — that player is the winner.

SIMON SAYS

1. One person is designated Simon, the others are the players. Simon tells players what they must do.
2. The players must only obey commands that begin with the words “Simon Says.” If Simon says, “Simon says touch your nose,” then players must touch their nose.
3. But, if Simon simply says, “jump,” without first saying “Simon says,” players must not jump.
4. Those that do jump are out.