

**God's Way to Live**

(based on Luke 6:27–38)

Jesus went off to a mountain to pray. He stayed there all night, praying to God. The next morning, Jesus came down from the mountain and spoke to the crowd of people.

He said, “I’m going to say some words, and I want you to say the opposite word. If I say ‘happy,’ you say ‘sad.’”

Jesus spoke several words: Big (*small*), tall (*short*), up (*down*), closed (*open*), stop (*go*), over (*under*), and love (*hate*).

Jesus said, “It is easy to love people who show love to us. But what about people who are mean to us? God wants us to love them too. God wants us to love everyone.”

Jesus continued, “What is the opposite of hating people who are different than you?” (*Love people who are different than you.*) Instead of hating, God wants you to love and pray for everyone who is different from you.”

Jesus went on, “What is the opposite of ‘if someone hurts you, hurt them back?’ (*Don’t hurt them back.*) Treat others just as you want to be treated.”

“What is the opposite of ‘love only someone who loves you?’ (*Love all people.*)”

“What is the opposite of ‘be kind only to someone who is helpful to you?’ (*Be kind to everyone.*)”

“What is the opposite of ‘hate your enemies.’ (*Love your enemies and be good to them.*) Be like God. God is good even to people who are unthankful and mean.”

Jesus said: “Don’t judge other people, and you will not be judged. Forgive other people, and you will be forgiven. Give, and you will receive. You will be given much. It will be poured into your hands—more than you can hold. The way you give to others is the way God will give to you.”



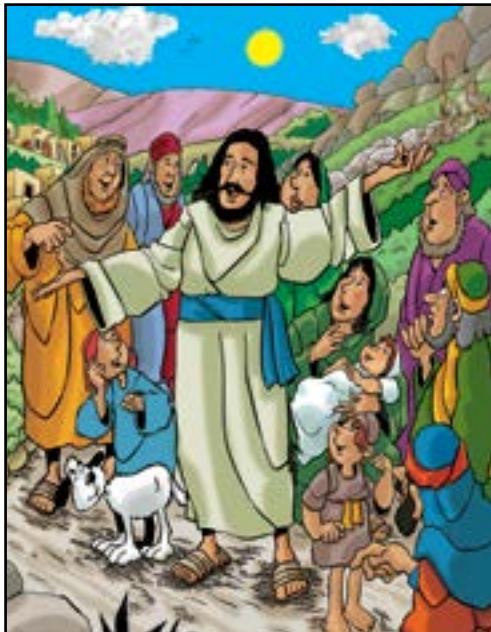
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Read a book together. Some suggestions are: *Bruno's Hat* by Canizales (Flyaway Books, 2019), *Opposites* by Sandra Boynton, *Do Unto Otters* by Laurie Keller, and *Enemy Pie* by Derek Munson and Tara Calahan King. Wonder together what was similar in the Bible story and the storybook.



Responding to God's Grace

- Let your children draw a picture of an imaginary person who is hard to love. Wonder that God loves us, even when we are hard to love, and remember that God wants us to love others also.
- Can you think of a story when someone treated you badly, and instead of treating them badly in return, you showed grace to them? How did this make you feel? How did they respond?
- Wonder together what some of your house "rules" may be that treats everyone as they would want to be treated (see Luke 6:31). Make a poster with your house rules. Place a sticker or draw a smiley face when a rule is followed.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- Purchase cookie dough, or make a batch from scratch. Let your children roll and cut out hearts. Share the cookies with someone God loves.
- Practice a forgiveness activity. Write something that hurt you or your feelings on a piece of paper. To not hold on to that hurt, either tear up the paper and throw it in the garbage, soak the paper in water and squeeze it into a tiny ball, bury the paper in dirt, or come up with another way to get rid of the paper. Ask God to help you forgive. Act with kindness toward the person who hurt you to show love in action.
- Search YouTube for "Song: Do Unto Others." Watch and listen to the song. Wonder how you can be kind to others.
- Pray the following prayer each day this week:

God, sometimes we don't understand why people act the way they do. Help us to show your love to others, even when we don't understand them. Thank you for loving us. Amen.