

Jesus and His Enemies

Matthew 23:27

QUESTIONS

AGES 3–5

1. Did everyone love Jesus? *No, some people rejected Him.*
2. Who were some of Jesus' enemies? *Some Pharisees, scribes, and religious leaders.*
3. Did Jesus stop doing what was right when people opposed Him? *No, Jesus always obeyed God and did what was right.*
4. How should we treat people who are unkind to us? *We should love them and pray for them.*

AGES 6–8

1. Why did some religious leaders oppose Jesus? *They did not believe He was the Messiah and were jealous of His influence.*
2. Did Jesus ever sin when people opposed Him? *No, Jesus always responded perfectly.*
3. What did Jesus teach about loving enemies? *He taught His followers to love and pray for their enemies.*
4. What happened when Jesus continued preaching God's truth? *His enemies became more determined to stop Him.*

AGES 9–11

1. Why did many religious leaders reject Jesus? *His teaching exposed their hypocrisy and unbelief.*
2. How did Jesus respond to false accusations? *He spoke the truth and trusted His Father.*
3. What does Jesus teach believers about persecution? *Followers of Christ should expect opposition and remain faithful.*
4. How did Jesus show love toward His enemies? *He prayed for His enemies and willingly died to save sinners.*

INTRODUCE

AGES 3–5

FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Ask the children what it means to be a friend. Then ask if they have ever had someone be unkind to them. Explain that Jesus was kind to everyone, yet some people still chose to oppose Him.

DOING WHAT IS RIGHT

Ask the children if they have ever been told not to do something wrong even when others were doing it. Explain that Jesus always did what was right, even when people became angry with Him.

AGES 6–8

STANDING ALONE

Ask students if they have ever been the only person making the right choice. Discuss how that can feel difficult. Explain that Jesus often stood alone against people who rejected God's truth.

THE TRUTH IS IMPORTANT

Hold up a Bible and ask why truth matters. Explain that Jesus always spoke God's truth, even when people did not want to hear it. Some people loved Him, while others became His enemies.

AGES 9–11

WHY DO PEOPLE REJECT THE TRUTH?

Ask students why people sometimes reject good advice or truth. Discuss several answers, such as stubbornness, pride, or ignorance. Explain that many people rejected Jesus because they loved their own ways more than God's truth.

COURAGE UNDER PRESSURE

Ask students what it means to show courage. Discuss situations where someone might face criticism for doing what is right. Explain that Jesus remained faithful to God's mission despite intense opposition.

ILLUSTRATE

AGES 3–5

KINDNESS TO OTHERS

Materials:

Two puppets or stuffed animals

Directions:

Use one puppet to say something unkind and the other puppet to respond kindly. Discuss which response pleased God. Explain that Jesus always responded with love and truth, even when people were against Him.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Choose a leader for the class and have the children follow simple directions, similar to the game Simon Says. Explain that Jesus always followed His Father's will, even when others tried to stop Him from doing what was right.

LOVE LIKE JESUS

Ask the children to think of someone they find difficult to be kind to. Pray together and ask God to help them show kindness, forgiveness, and love just as Jesus did.

AGES 6–8

RIGHT OR WRONG RESPONSE?

Ask students how Jesus would want them to respond in hard situations such as being teased, blamed unfairly, or excluded. Discuss how Jesus treated His enemies with patience, truth, and love.

RESPONDING LIKE JESUS

Discuss a situation where someone might be treated unfairly. Ask students how they can respond in a christlike way. Encourage them to practice kindness and truthfulness during the coming week.

AGES 9–11

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

Materials:

Whiteboard and marker

Directions:

Create two columns labeled "Easy Choices" and "Right Choices." Ask students to give examples for each. Discuss how Jesus consistently chose what was right, even when it brought opposition. Explain that faithful disciples sometimes face similar challenges.

FAITHFUL WHEN OTHERS DISAGREE

Read Matthew 5:44 together and explain what "enemy" means for them (does not need to be dramatic, but can be anyone they disagree with or struggle to love well). Ask students to identify one way they can show Christ's love to someone who disagrees with them or treats them poorly. Challenge them to pray for that person and seek an opportunity to demonstrate kindness this week.