

Mercy, Mercy Me

Bible: Mercy, Mercy Me (Love Your Enemies) • *Matthew 5:43-48*

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who aren't kind to you.

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Social: Setting the Tone for the Experience (9:00, 10:15, 11:30)

9:00 & 11:30

Nemesis Portraits

- White copy paper; 1 page for each kid
- Colored pencils

10:15

Early Arriver

- No supplies needed

Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (9:15, 10:30, 11:45)

- Bible Presentation in Large Group

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (9:40, 10:55, 12:10)

9:00 & 11:30

Bombarding Balloons

- Inflated balloons; 1 for each kid
- Timer

10:15

Odds and Evens

- No supplies needed

Prayer (9:50, 11:05, 12:20)

- Paper; 1 piece for each kid
- Pencils

Dismiss (10:00, 11:15, 12:30)

Mercy, Mercy Me

Bible: Mercy, Mercy Me (Love Your Enemies) • *Matthew 5:43-48*

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who aren't kind to you.

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Social: Providing Time for Fun Interaction (Small Groups, 15 minutes)

Before kids arrive, take a few moments to pray for them. Everyone has people around them who are unkind at times. And everyone has experience being that unkind person. Ask God for the strength to respond to unkindness with the opposite: kindness. Pray that He would give your kids the courage to be kind even when someone is not kind to them.

9:00 & 11:30

Nemesis Portraits

What You Need: White paper colored pencils

What You Do:

- Give each kid a piece of paper and direct them to fold it in thirds (the short way).
- Working on the top third, instruct them to draw the head and shoulders of their own super villain: a nemesis worthy of a comic book or action movie.
- When the head is finished, let kids trade with a friend, folding the paper backwards so the top isn't seen. Then kids can draw a body, arms, and hands of the nemesis on the middle part of the paper.
- Direct kids to fold the middle part back as well and trade with someone new; then they can design legs and feet of their nemesis.
- Once that's finished, make sure the papers go back to whoever drew the head.
- Let kids examine the drawings with very different heads, bodies, and feet.

What You Say:

"It's not always easy to know exactly how you should treat others with kindness, especially if you're a superhero confronting a villain. Some of these look downright scary! **[Transition] Let's go hear the best way to treat an enemy.**"

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

10:15**Early Arriver****What You Need:** No supplies needed**What You Do:**

- Welcome each kid to Small Group.
- Ask about their week. Did they find a way to be kind to someone who was overlooked? How did they do it?
- Play “Opposites Popcorn.”
 - Start by saying a word with an opposite, like “up.”
 - The first kid to stand up and shout “down” (the opposite of “up”) gets to call out the next example, like “light.”
 - Then the kid to stand first and yell “dark” gets to call out the next example. Play as long as time allows.
- Talk about opposites for a little while.
 - What do they think the opposite of “friend” is?
 - What about the opposite of “kindness”?

What You Say:

“Opposites is a theme for us in Large Group today. I know we’ve been talking about kindness all month. Today, we’re going to look at what happens when the opposite of kindness becomes part of the picture. Let’s go check it out.”

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

Mercy, Mercy Me

Bible: Mercy, Mercy Me (Love Your Enemies) • *Matthew 5:43-48*

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who aren't kind to you.

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

GETTING READY

- **Opener/Closer**

What You Need:

- Host

1. Bible Truth

What You Need:

- Historyteller
- Bible
- 3 index cards
- Glue
- A buzzer from a board game

2. Worship

What You Need:

- Power Praise Team

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- "Rock This Planet"
- "Live Loud"
- "Forever Reign"

Mercy, Mercy Me

Bible: Mercy, Mercy Me (Love Your Enemies) • *Matthew 5:43-48*

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who aren't kind to you.

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Bible: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 25 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible Truth, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

CG: 10-Second Count Down

CG: Rewind Theme Slide

Host enters with lots of energy and welcomes kids into the environment.

HOST: "Hey, everybody! It's me, [Host's name]! Welcome to [your environment's name], the place where the coolest kids come to hang out, have fun, and learn. If you want to have fun, I want you to turn up the volume (*point to your ear*) here. Give your ear a gentle twist. Like this. (*Twist ear.*) Then say, 'Turn it up!'"

HOST and KIDS: (*Twist ear.*) "Turn it up!"

HOST: "There we go! That's better, right? Now that you've got your volume all the way up, let's take a couple of minutes to remind ourselves what we're talking about this month. Let's start with our memory verse. Raise your hand if you know it by memory. (*Pause for response.*) Let's see if you were right."

CG: Memory Verse Slide

"'Do to others as you would have them do to you.' Luke 6:31, NIV"

"And now, our Life App: KINDNESS! Raise your hand if you think you remember the definition. (*Pause for response.*) Let's see if you were right."

CG: Kindness Slide

"Yeah! Let's read this together."

HOST and KIDS: "Kindness is showing others they are valuable by how you treat them."

HOST: "One more time!"

HOST and KIDS: "Kindness is showing others they are valuable by how you treat them."

HOST: “You nailed it! We have talked about so many ways to be kind this month. We’ve talked about being kind at home, being kind at school, being kind to people in your family, being kind to people you know a little bit, and even being kind to people you might not know at all. I can’t wait to find out who we’re talking about today!

SFX: *Upbeat game music*

(Hold your hand to your ear.) “Looks like we’ll find out after our game today! OOOH, and this one’s a good one! Here’s how you play.

“I’ll describe a popular character who is known as a ‘bad guy’ or an ‘enemy’ in a movie you’ve probably seen. When you think you can name the movie, raise your hand. I’ll call on you, and you can answer. Everyone understand? Great! Let’s play!

Host leads the game and comments as kids respond. If it seems like the kids are having a hard time answering, you can ask Small Group Leaders to help them or give them hints or you can continue to give hints.

“Here’s our first FAMOUS enemy.

“Any guesses? I’ll give you a hint. These bad guys were in bad moods until they devoured a certain happy, hugging, and always-singing creature. *(Pause for response.)* Yes! These are the Bergens from the *Trolls* movie!

“And here’s our next enemy.

“Here’s your hint. This bad guy is the captain of a ship. But he’s only got one good hand. *(Pause for response.)* Great job! That’s Captain Hook—Peter Pan’s arch nemesis.

“Let’s see our next enemy!

“Your hint for this one is . . . he caused quite a *storm*. He is the key rival to a leading racer, Lightning McQueen *(Pause for response.)* I loved that movie! Yes, this is Jackson Storm from *Cars 3*. Let’s keep going!

“This is an older movie. You may not have seen it, but I bet you’ve heard of it. There’s a princess involved. Her name may ring a BELLE. *(Pause for response.)* You sure know your movies! This wasn’t tricky for you. This is Gaston from *Beauty and the Beast*.

“This one is a little trickier. He started off as a bad guy, but in the end, he really GREW on people and minions alike! *(Pause for response.)* Yep! You guessed it! It’s Gru from *Despicable Me*.

“This one is from another classic princess movie. It’s about a princess who lived in a tower where things got a little HAIRY. *(Pause for response.)* You’ve got it! It’s Mother Gothel from *Tangled*, the story of Rapunzel.

“You guys did a great a job knowing your enemies. Maybe—just maybe—our game is a hint for what we’ll talk about later. I say we find out. Please welcome [Historyteller’s Name].”

Host exits. Historyteller enters.

SETTING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “Jesus had a way of raising the bar for how people treated other people. One particular time He did that was during a talk He gave that we call the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus sat down on a mountainside to share some truths with His followers about what it means to follow God. He had some pretty challenging ideas about kindness to share. Let’s check them out together. This sermon is recorded for us in the book of Matthew.

(Open your Bible and read Matthew 5:43-48) “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor. Hate your enemy.’ But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. Then you will be children of your Father who is in heaven. He causes his sun to shine on evil people and good people. He sends rain on those who do right and those who don’t. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Even the tax collectors do that. If you greet only your own people, what more are you doing than others? Even people who are ungodly do that. So be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (NIRV).

SCENARIOS

HISTORYTELLER: “Jesus’ words are powerful, but how do we DO that? Let’s think through some situations we might face and see how we should respond with kindness.

(Read first cue card.) “Maya was swinging on the playground and laughing with her friend when Peyton walked up and demanded she get off the swing. Maya had just gotten on the swing a minute earlier, so she didn’t really want to get off. She told Peyton to go away. Peyton stood in front of the swing so Maya would be forced to stop, but Maya decided to keep swinging anyway. Both girls ended up in a heap on the ground in a pile of tears and skinned knees.

“Hmm, that doesn’t seem like a picture of what Jesus was talking about, does it? Let’s see if the next one gets any better.

(Read second cue card.) “William and his friend Matthew were playing video games when William’s older brother Charlie came in. Charlie started making fun of William and Matthew, calling the game they were playing a ‘baby game’ and making ‘goo-goo ga-ga’ noises. They tried to ignore him, but finally William had had enough, and he turned and yelled a mean word at his brother. Then their mom walked in, and all the games were over.

“Yikes! It sounds like William’s about to get in trouble. He should probably have listened to what Jesus had to say, huh? I’ve got one more scenario for you.

(Read third cue card.) “Sam was so excited about the start of baseball season. His first game was today, and they were already facing off one of the best teams in the league. Right after he took his place in right field, he was surprised when the first ball came straight toward him. He ran, glove open, but just then the sun peeked out from behind some clouds, and Sam closed his eyes. He missed the ball. When his team finally got three outs and ran in, a kid on the opposing team called Sam a bad word, making fun of Sam for missing the ball. Sam was so mad that when the kid got up to bat the next

time, Sam started yelling a mean chant. Before he knew it, Sam was thrown out of the game and had to sit with his parents while he watched his team play.”

“Ouch. I’m positive that’s NOT what Jesus had in mind when He talked about loving our enemies.”

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

HISTORYTELLER: “Let’s look again at what He had to say about situations like this.

(Open your Bible and read Matthew 5:43-48) “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor. Hate your enemy.’ But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. Then you will be children of your Father who is in heaven. He causes his sun to shine on evil people and good people. He sends rain on those who do right and those who don’t. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Even the tax collectors do that. If you greet only your own people, what more are you doing than others? Even people who are ungodly do that. So be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect” (NIV).

“Jesus was basically saying, ‘Hey, it’s easy to love people who are kind and loving to you. But what about those people who are mean to you? What about people who hurt you? Well, you need to be kind to them too. And when you do, you will be proving you are a child of God. And you’ll be shining God’s love to the world—including the person who hurt you—and to everyone around you who sees you being kind!”

REWIND

Hold up the Rewind Button.

HISTORYTELLER: “I think it’s time for a little rewind on our scenarios. I’ve got this Rewind Button here, and I’m going to re-read the situations I shared earlier. When you hear me get to the part where you think we should rewind and do it over again with kindness, come hit the button. Then you’ll share with everyone what you think the kind response would be.

Hold the Rewind Button in front of you. Then read each scenario again, BUT stop when a kid pushes the button. Listen to their response, and then encourage others to share ideas of how to be kind as well. After discussing the kind response for a minute or two, move on to the next one.

(Read first cue card.) “Maya was swinging on the playground and laughing with her friend when Peyton walked up and demanded she get off the swing. Maya had just gotten on the swing a minute earlier, so she didn’t really want to get off. She told Peyton to go away. Peyton stood in front of the swing so Maya would be forced to stop, but Maya decided to keep swinging anyway. Both girls ended up in a heap on the ground in a pile of tears and skinned knees.

Some suggestions for responses that show kindness: Maya can ask Peyton to give her another minute on the swing. Maya can stop swinging so she doesn’t hit Peyton but then ask Peyton to move and let her have a little more time. If Peyton still doesn’t move, Maya should move on

and find somewhere else to play. She can even shower Peyton with kindness by telling Peyton she hopes she has fun on the swing. If Peyton ever makes her feel unsafe, though, she should tell an adult.

“Those were great ideas for kind responses. Let’s see about our second situation.

(Read second cue card.) “William and his friend Matthew were playing video games when William’s older brother Charlie came in. Charlie started making fun of William and Matthew, calling the game they were playing a ‘baby game’ and making ‘goo-goo ga-ga’ noises. They tried to ignore him, but finally William had had enough, and he turned and yelled a mean word at his brother. Then their mom walked in, and all the games were over.

Some suggestions for responses that show kindness: William should ask Charlie to please stop. If Charlie won’t stop, William and his friend might try turning up the sound on the TV or putting on headphones. If they continue to ignore Charlie, he’ll probably go away. They can also invite him to play with them. Maybe he’s just jealous of their fun!

“I like how you guys think! You’re really getting the hang of this kindness thing. Let’s take another look at our last situation.

(Read third cue card.) “Sam was so excited about the start of baseball season. His first game was today, and they were already facing off one of the best teams in the league. Right after he took his place in right field, he was surprised when the first ball came straight toward him. He ran, glove open, but just then the sun peeked out from behind some clouds, and Sam closed his eyes. He missed the ball. When his team finally got three outs and ran in, a kid on the opposing team called Sam a bad word, making fun of Sam for missing the ball. Sam was so mad that when the kid got up to bat the next time, Sam started yelling a mean chant. Before he knew it, Sam was thrown out of the game and had to sit with his parents while he watched his team play.”

Some suggestions for responses that show kindness: Sam should try to ignore the kid. He can show the kid God’s love by cheering him on when it’s his turn at bat. After the game, he can even give the kid a high five and say, “Good game.”

WRAPPING UP THE BIBLE TRUTH

HISTORYTELLER: “In all of the situations that we talked about, it was usually best to just ignore the person who was being mean, right? But then there were also ways we could take it to the next level and actually BE KIND to the person. I can’t promise you that being kind to someone who is mean will make them change, but it MIGHT. Because when you show kindness to people who aren’t always kind to others, people can see that God has changed you and made you more like Him. And it might make others want to get to know that God for themselves! Here’s the thing to remember.

CG: Bottom Line Slide

[Bottom Line] “Be kind to people who aren’t kind to you. Of all the groups of people we’ve talked about being kind to this month, this is probably the hardest. Let’s ask God to help us.”

Pray

HISTORYTELLER: “Dear God, thank You for giving us all we need to follow You, and we especially thank You for giving us Jesus. Not only is He our Savior, but He is also our example for how to live our lives. We want to show love to everyone like He did and to be kind to people who aren’t kind to us. Please help us do that. Help us to know when to walk away, when to stand up, and how to always respond with kindness in a way that keeps us safe. We know all this is possible with Your help. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”

“If you have an offering with you today, you can bring that on up now.”

“Now, up on your feet and be extra generous with your praise and worship to Go!”

Power Praise team enters as Historyteller exits.

Worship

SFX: “Rock This Planet”

SFX: “Live Loud”

SFX: “Forever Reign”

Power Praise exits as Host enters.

Closer

HOST: “There are going to be times in your life when people are not going to be kind to you. They might break in front of you in line. Others might talk about you behind your back. Some will call you names or just be mean.

“Now, you might never be their best friend, but people who do those things need people to show them kindness, too. Sometimes that’s when they need kindness the most. Jesus died on a cross to show us He loves us no matter what—no matter what bad things we’ve done. We don’t have to do anything to earn that love. And if you’re a follower of Jesus, you have the opportunity to show others that same kind of love.

“When someone is mean to you, chances are you’ll be tempted to do something mean in return. When that happens, think about Jesus and what He did for you. Ask God to help you show kindness to the people who may not have earned it, just like we did a few minutes ago. The one thing to remember today is this.

CG: *Bottom Line Slide*

[Bottom Line] “Be kind to people who aren’t kind to you. Say that with me.”

HOST and KIDS: **[Bottom Line]** “Be kind to people who aren’t kind to you.”

HOST: “You guys did a GREAT job rewinding to be kind today. You’ll talk more about how you can show kindness to all sorts of people in Small Group and get some ‘Be Kind: Rewind’ practice. Have fun together, and we’ll see you next time!”

Dismiss children to their Small Groups.

CG: Small Group Slide

Mercy, Mercy Me

Bible: Mercy, Mercy Me (Love Your Enemies) • *Matthew 5:43-48*

Bottom Line: Be kind to people who aren't kind to you.

Memory Verse: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." *Luke 6:31, NIV*

Life App: Kindness—Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

Basic Truth: I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

Groups: Creating a Safe Place to Connect (10 minutes)

9:00 & 11:30

Bombarding Balloons

What You Need: Balloons; 1 for each kid, timer

What You Do:

- Give each kid a balloon, and tell kids to stand in a wide circle.
- Then take the balloon from 2 or 3 kids and tell them to stand in the middle of the circle.
- Explain that the other kids will throw their balloons at the kids in the middle.
- The kids in the middle have to stand still, not hit the balloons back, and say kind things for 20 seconds.
- Kids can pick up balloons and throw them again, but they have to stay at least five feet away from the kid in the middle when they throw them. (Show them how far five feet is.)
- Give each kid a turn in the middle. If any kid doesn't want to stand in the middle, don't force it. Just move on to the next kid.
 - After each kid has had a turn
 - Ask your few to share (without using names) about something unkind that someone has done to them.
 - As they respond, ask them what the opposite would be in that situation. How could that person have been kind instead of unkind? For example: Someone cut in front of me in line. They could have waited their turn instead.
 - After you have had some discussion, remind your few of this month's memory verse.
 - Encourage them to go out and be the kindness that they wish to see.
 - Repeat the verse together as a group.

What You Say:

"When someone hits you or throws unkind words at you, you want to do it back to them. But Jesus tells you to **[Bottom Line] be kind to people who aren't kind to you**. But I want to explain something about that. It doesn't mean you should just let someone be mean to you over and over again. If someone keeps being mean, tell an adult, and then don't play with them again. God just wants you to avoid being mean back to them, not to keep getting hurt by them."

- "Our memory verse this month tells us that we should show the kindness to others that we would want to receive ourselves. I want to encourage you to go out and be the kindness that you wish to see. If you want people to wait their turn in line, you should let someone go in front of you! Whatever sounds like a really cool thing to be given, give that very thing to someone else. And don't forget to **[Bottom Line] be kind to people who aren't kind to you**, not just those who are kind."

10:15**Odds and Evens****What You Need:** No supplies needed**What You Do:**

- Divide your group into pairs and designate one kid in each pair as “Odds” and the other “Evens.”
- To play the game, kids will face their partners and hold their hands behind their backs.
 - On the count of three, both kids will bring both hands to the front.
 - They can have any number of fingers showing on either hand.
 - The pairs count up the total number of fingers showing on all four hands.
 - If that total number is odd, the kid who is Odds wins a point
 - If it’s even, the kid who is Evens wins a point.
- After a few rounds, summon the Odds for a conference. Tell them, quietly, that if they throw an odd number of fingers, they stand a better chance of winning.
- Allow a few more rounds, probably with the Odds winning more often than Evens.
- Then gather the Evens for a little tip: If they throw an odd number of fingers from this point on, they will probably win more often.
- For the youngest group, coach the kids out loud to each throw an odd amount of fingers.
- Play a few more rounds and then gather in a circle.

What You Say:

“Good game! From the beginning of this game, you’d think that odds and evens would win equally, but that’s not what happened near the end. Odds, what tip did I give you near the end? *(Allow for responses.)* Yep, I told you to throw odds to win. And then Evens, what did I tell you? *(Allow for responses.)* That’s right, I then told YOU to throw odds. Because two evens equal an even; an odd and an even equal an odd; and two odds equal an even.

“That’s a lot like kindness. It might seem like you should only show kindness to those who are kind to you—like having two Odds make up their own team. But, if you show kindness to someone who is unkind, you still win, because an even and an odd still make an odd. And hopefully, like we saw in the last couple rounds of our game, they’ll start being kind too. Just like throwing odds helped you no matter what side you were on, if you decide to **[Bottom Line] be kind to people who aren’t kind to you**, you’ll see that kindness almost always wins.”

All Service Times**Pray and Dismiss (10 minutes)****[Pray to God | Prayer Activity]***Made to Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application***What You Need:** Paper, pencils**What You Do:**

- Explain to your few that they will be writing out prayers to God that they will take home.
- Encourage them to ask God to help them be kind to the people who are unkind to them.
- After kids are finished writing out their prayers, pray over your few that they would continue to find ways to be kind every day.

What You Say:

“God, I thank you for this month’s great reminder of the amazing love and kindness You have gifted us with. As we talked about today, we know that it isn’t always easy to be kind, especially to those who aren’t kind to us. But God, I pray that each and every day from here on out, we would continue to find ways to show Your love and kindness to the world. Help us to be kind to people who aren’t kind to us. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

As adults arrive to pick up, have each kid show their parents their written prayer to God. Prompt each kid to share what they learned today—that even when you are in a tough situation, you can **[Bottom Line] be kind to people who aren’t kind to you.**