

ENEMY LOVE

God Story:

David and Saul | 1 Samuel 18-24

Big Idea:

God helps us love our enemies.

Key Verse:

The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outside of a person. But the Lord looks at what is in the heart. | 1 Samuel 16:7b (NIRV)

Leader Tip:

Look for ways to weave the Big Idea into conversation with the students. Highlight that God will help us persevere even when we feel like we cannot keep going.

Ms My Story

- 1. Conversation Starter** **7 minutes**
Talk with the students about enemies and how Jesus deals with them in the Bible.
- 2. Intro Activity** **5 minutes ***
Challenge a few students to build a tall structure using playing cards. Cheer them on at first, then sabotage someone to illustrate that it's easy to love people who love you back—but it's more difficult to love enemies.

Gs God Story

Ls Life Story

- 3. Weekly Video** **12 minutes**
Watch the video, which includes host, God Story, and Life Story segments. Recap and discuss the teaching.

Ms My Story

- 4. Application Activity** **12 minutes ***
Work in groups to read passages from 1 Samuel and fill in an activity page that explores David's treatment of Saul.
- 5. Wrap-Up Activity** **10 minutes**
Lead the students to compete in an old-school sword drill to find Matthew 5:44. Review the verse and wrap up in prayer.

Os Our Story

- 6. Dismissal** **2 minutes**

* Extend as needed and adjust timing for other activities.



1. CONVERSATION STARTER

Supplies:

- None

Leader Tip:

- This is meant to be a casual conversation as people arrive. Move on quickly to the Intro Activity so you have enough time for it before the teaching video.

Instructions:

- As the students arrive, welcome them and gather everyone together.
- Check in quickly to see how their week went.
- Ask:
 - Who do you think of when you hear the word "enemy"?
 - Do you have any enemies? For example, is there anyone you don't want to run into at school or in your neighbourhood? Why?
 - How do fictional people (e.g., in movies, on TV, in books) usually deal with their enemies?
 - How does Jesus deal with his enemies in the Bible?
- Depending on the size of your group, have the students share their answers with the people sitting closest to them or with everyone.

2. INTRO ACTIVITY

Supplies:

- Deck of cards
- Timer

Instructions:

- Quickly demonstrate how to build a house of cards.
- Ask who thinks they can build a tall house of cards in one minute. Choose a volunteer to try it.
- Repeat so that two or three more students try to build an even taller structure in one minute.
- Lead everyone else to cheer on and encourage the students as they build.
- Invite whoever built the tallest structure to try it a second time.
- As they work, randomly pull cards out of their house. Do not warn them or explain what you're doing!
- When the builder gives up, reflect briefly on how the two different behaviours (i.e., first cheering and then sabotaging) made them feel toward you. Ask if they liked you more when you were working with them or against them.
- Explain that Jesus tells us it's easy to love people who love you back. It's much more difficult to love your enemies!
- Introduce today's Big Idea: **God helps us love our enemies.**
- Let the students know that this week we'll see how hard it was for David to love his enemy—but he did it with God's help!



3. WEEKLY VIDEO

Supplies:

- Video file

Instructions:

- Play the video. It includes:
 - Host segment
 - God Story (David and Saul | 1 Samuel 18-24)
 - Life Story
- Invite the students to recap the stories.
- Ask:
 - How do these stories and today's Big Idea (**God helps us love our enemies**) connect?
 - Do you have a story from your own life that also connects?



4. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Supplies:

- Key Verse sign
- Saul and David activity pages
- Pens
- Bibles

Leader Tip:

- Knowing how to look up Bible passages will help the students with the next activity, too.

Instructions:

- Hang or hold up the Key Verse sign.
- Review 1 Samuel 16:7 together.
- Explain that learning Bible verses can be hard for some people. However, it's worth it because having them stored in our minds is helpful as we journey through life!

- Divide the students into groups of three or four people.
- Give each student an activity page and a pen.
- Ensure everyone has a Bible. Share them if needed.
- Show the students how to look up 1 Samuel. Use the table of contents to find which page this Old Testament book starts on. Explain that the first number in a reference is the chapter. These are the big numbers in the book. The following number is a verse. They are the smaller numbers.
- Explain that the groups will explore the ups and downs of Saul and David's relationship. Things started well, but Saul quickly became David's enemy!
- Give the groups up to 10 minutes to work on the activity page and search for answers in the Bible.
- Invite the groups to share their answers.
- Explain that even when his friends were pressuring him to hurt Saul (1 Samuel 24:7), David would not lay a hand on him. He respected that Saul was God's anointed king (1 Samuel 24:10). Instead, David trusted God to rescue him (1 Samuel 24:15).
- Discuss: **God helps us love our enemies**, but it's not always easy! Can you think of a real-life example?

5. WRAP-UP ACTIVITY

Supplies:

- Bibles

Instructions:

- Make sure everyone has a Bible.
- Explain that a sword drill is an old-school game in which students hold up their Bibles (i.e., swords) in the air. The leader gives them a reference and the students try to find the passage as quickly as they can. The first person to stand up and read it wins.
- Ask everyone to hold up their Bibles in the air.
- Instruct them to race to look up Matthew 5:44.
- Once someone reads the verse aloud, explain that Jesus teaches us to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” He knows this is difficult to do. We often love those close to us but hate our enemy (Matthew 5:43). However, Jesus tells us to love our enemies and to pray for them!
- Discuss: Do you think it’s possible to keep hating someone you’re praying for?
- Point out that if we’re praying for someone, we want God’s best for them, which affects how we feel about them.
- Note that we also need to pray that we have the strength to love our enemies. Remember, **God helps us love our enemies!**
- Ask for one or two volunteers who are willing to pray out loud for someone they find it really difficult to love. They don’t need to use the person’s name! Suggest that they pray God would help them to love this person.
- Encourage everyone to pray in the week ahead that God would help us love our enemies.



6. DISMISSAL

Supplies:

- Take-home cards
- Key Verses cards

Instructions:

- Take a few moments to pray for the students if you have not already done so.
- Remind everyone about any upcoming events or relevant announcements.
- Make sure the students have all their take-home materials.
- Ensure the adult teaching is over before dismissing the students.