



Bullying Lesson

Title: Hard to Love

Bible verses: Matthew 5: 43-44 (MSG)

INTRODUCTION

Anyone here ever struggle with loving someone or something? (Have audience give you some examples)

Struggle with loving school?

Struggle with loving yourself?

Struggle with loving that boy or girl who is always pointing out your flaws...

Always on your case about something...

Always being mean?

Let's run with that last one!

How do you deal with someone who is always picking on you...

Always spreading rumors...

Always threatening you?

What do you do when someone is bullying you?

Wow! This is a tough one. On one hand you don't like the emotional and sometimes physical stuff that comes from being bullied...

But you don't want to speak up because you don't want the bullying to continue or get worse! You don't want to get labeled a rat or a snitch!

Bullying makes it hard to love.

TEACH

1st point: What constitutes bullying?

It's the intentional tormenting...upsetting...in physical, verbal, or psychological ways. It can range from hitting, shoving, name-calling, threats, and mocking to extorting money and possessions.

Some kids bully by shunning others and spreading rumors about them. Others use social media or text messaging to taunt others or hurt their feelings.

Any of this sounds familiar to anyone? Is any of this happening to you? Are you doing any of this to someone else?

2nd point: How do we love like Jesus did while we are being bullied?

How did Jesus respond when he was persecuted? He showed love...and even said "Father forgive them they know not what they do" while he was hanging on the cross!

When people were intentionally trying to trick him into saying the wrong thing so they could get him thrown in jail or killed, how did Jesus respond? He remained calm, allowed the spirit of God to guide his thoughts, and responded in love.

What did Jesus do when he was betrayed by one of his closest friends? He allowed himself to be arrested and didn't fight back.

You may be saying, but yeah that is Jesus...he was perfect! But who are we trying to be like more and more each day? Jesus!

We may never respond exactly like he did in every situation, but we can strive to! We also need to remember that all the persecution Jesus went through was for a purpose.

When we are bullied, it's not the same as the persecution Jesus went through. When we are bullied...it's not God's will!

It's someone being mean and malicious...it's not right! And we need to make sure we are doing something about it.

3rd point: Bullying is wrong and needs to be stopped!

So what do we do?

1. We need to realize that first bullying is wrong!

Whether you are being bullied or you are doing the bullying.

Just because you don't do things or act a certain way doesn't mean that you need to be teased.

Just because you come from a certain family or neighborhood doesn't mean you deserve to be ridiculed.

Just because you took a stand on a certain issue isn't justification for people to hurl insults at you on Facebook or in text messages.

2. Bullying needs to be stopped!

You really need to talk to an adult about what is going on. I know you will be scared to open up and even admit that you are being bullied.

I know you will be afraid of what happens when the person who is bullying you finds out you told someone.

But too many people just hid from the fact they are being bullied and over time it takes a toll on you emotionally, mentally, and sometimes physically.

After you tell an adult that you are being bullied...and they take the necessary action against the person who is bullying you, where do you go from there?

More than likely you will have feelings about the person who was bullying you, so what's next?

4th point: Forgive and Love

Let's see what Jesus has to say about forgiving and loving in Matthew.

1. Matthew 5: 43-44 (MSG)

"You're familiar with the old written law, 'Love your friend,' and its unwritten companion, 'Hate your enemy.' I'm challenging that. I'm telling you to love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the energies of prayer, for then you are working out of your true selves, your God-created selves

Now will this happen overnight? Probably not.

There must be something inside you that wants to forgive the person who bullied you. And every time you see that person and you get angry or feel shameful again, you ask God for the power to forgive them...again and again.

If you were the person who was doing the bullying, you need to ask for forgiveness from the person you were bullying. You need to be sympathetic to that person's hurts and feelings towards you.

Bullying happens everywhere. School, work, online...

Doesn't mean it's right...or that is needs to be tolerated. We just need to be the people of God who can come to place to where we no longer treat people differently because of their culture, interest, or beliefs...

And we also need to be people of God who can love our family, friends, and the people who may have bullied us.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What is one of your pet peeves...what gets under your skin?
2. What is your definition of bullying?
3. How hard is it to love someone that is bullying you? Why?
4. What are some things that could happen as a result of being bullied?
5. Why is it important to forgive and love your enemies?

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
 - Ever struggle with loving someone or something?
- II. What Constitutes Bullying
 - It's the intentional tormenting...upsetting...in physical, verbal, or psychological ways.
- III. How do we Love Like Jesus did While we are Being Bullied?
 - How did Jesus respond when he was persecuted?
- IV. Bullying is wrong and needs to be stopped.
- V. Forgive and Love
 - Matthew 5: 43-44 (MSG)