



Loving Others Even When They're Mean



Explore how to love others authentically, even when they treat us unfairly, through biblical truths about children's hearts and God's grace.



Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	3
<u>Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves</u>	4
<u>Day 2: 🛡️ Responding With Kindness</u>	10
<u>Day 3: 💪 Strength to Forgive</u>	16
<u>Day 4: 🌟 Seeing Others Through God's Eyes</u>	22
<u>Day 5: 🕊️ Peace in the Midst of Conflict</u>	28
<u>Day 6: ❤️ Loving Through Actions</u>	34
<u>Day 7: 🌈 Hope and Joy in Loving Others</u>	40



Introduction

Welcome to this 7-day study on loving others even when they're mean, through the lens of children's experiences and biblical wisdom. Love can be challenging, especially when we encounter people who hurt us with their words or actions. Children often face this in school, at home, or with friends, but God calls us to reflect His love no matter what.

Throughout Scripture, we see God's unwavering love and a call to love others unconditionally. In this study, we'll explore stories, teachings, and promises that encourage us to respond with kindness and grace, even when faced with hostility. Whether you're a child learning how to handle unkind peers or an adult guiding children, these daily reflections will inspire deeper understanding and compassion.

Each day, you'll read a primary Scripture passage along with supporting verses, receive a devotional to apply God's truth, reflect with thoughtful questions, and pray for strength and love to overcome difficulties. Let's embark on this journey, trusting God to soften hearts and equip us to love the unlovable, just as He does. 💖 🙏





Day 1: Loving Like Jesus Loves



Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves

Your Verse

John 13:34-35 NIV - "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Supporting Scriptures

- *1 John 4:7 - "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God."*
- *Romans 5:8 - "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*



Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves

Devotional: Jesus Teaches Us to Love Others Always

Jesus commands us to love others as He loves us. This command can feel impossible, especially when we face meanness or rejection from others. Children, in particular, may struggle when they are teased, excluded, or treated unfairly by classmates or siblings.

But God's love is different. It's patient, kind, and unconditional. Jesus shows us that love is not just a feeling but a choice—a commitment to act kindly and forgive even when it's hard. When we choose love over anger or hurt, we reflect Jesus' heart and become His disciples.

Let's start this journey remembering that loving others like Jesus means extending grace to those who don't always deserve it. When someone is mean, it's an opportunity to show the power of God's love in action.



Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves

Reflect and Apply

1. What does loving others like Jesus mean to you personally?

2. When have you found it hard to love someone who was mean to you?

3. How could your love for others show them God's character?



Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time when you struggled to love someone who was mean to you.

2. List ways you can show Jesus' love to others this week.

3. Reflect on how God's love has helped you forgive someone.



Day 1: 🌱 Loving Like Jesus Loves

Prayer for Today

Dear God, thank You for Your perfect and unfailing love. Help me to love others as Jesus loves me—even when it's hard and people treat me unfairly. Teach me to choose kindness over anger and forgiveness over hurt. Fill my heart with Your grace so I can be a light to those around me. *Use me to show Your love to everyone I meet.* In Jesus' name, Amen. 🙏❤️🌟





Day 2: Responding With Kindness



Your Verse

Romans 12:20 NIV – "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Proverbs 15:1 – "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."*
- *Matthew 5:44 – "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*



Devotional: Overcome Meanness by Choosing Kindness

When someone is mean, our first instinct might be to respond with anger or hurt feelings. However, Scripture encourages us to respond with kindness and love. The Apostle Paul tells us to bless those who hurt us and even show practical care, like feeding or giving drink to an enemy.

This can be especially challenging for children who want to stand up for themselves or feel safe. But kindness in the face of meanness can change hearts and bring peace. It disarms anger and opens doors for reconciliation.

Try to remember that those who act mean might be hurting or confused themselves. Showing them kindness reflects God's love and breaks the cycle of unkindness. This week, consider how your gentle words and actions could soften a mean heart.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does it look like to respond with kindness when someone is unkind to you?

2. How might your kindness impact someone who is mean to you?

3. Can you recall a time when responding gently helped calm a difficult situation?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a situation where you responded with kindness instead of anger.

2. List three kind actions you can take toward someone who has been mean.

3. Reflect on how kindness changes your own feelings in difficult moments.



Day 2: 🛡️ Responding With Kindness

Prayer for Today

Heavenly Father, teach me to respond with kindness, even toward those who are mean or unkind. Help me to be gentle and patient, trusting You to work in their hearts. Give me the courage to break the cycle of hurt with Your love. May my actions reflect Jesus' grace every day. Amen. ❤️🙌🙏





Day 3: 💪 Strength to Forgive



Day 3: 🍌 Strength to Forgive


Your Verse

Ephesians 4:32 NIV - "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Colossians 3:13 - "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone."*
- *Matthew 6:14 - "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."*



Day 3:  Strength to Forgive

Devotional: Finding Freedom in Forgiveness

Forgiveness is powerful but often hard, especially when we've been hurt by someone we care about or who is mean to us. God's Word reminds us that we are to forgive as He forgave us through Christ. Forgiving does not mean forgetting or ignoring pain; it means releasing bitterness and choosing peace over resentment.

Children learn early about fairness, and being treated meanly feels unfair. But holding onto anger only weighs us down. Forgiveness sets us free to love without bitterness and reflect God's heart to others.

Ask God to help you forgive even when it feels impossible. His strength will fill you, and His forgiveness will renew your spirit. Remember, forgiveness is a gift you give yourself and others.



Day 3: 🦶 Strength to Forgive

Reflect and Apply

1. Is there someone you need to forgive who has hurt you?

2. How does holding onto anger affect your heart and relationships?

3. What can forgiving others teach you about God's grace?



Day 3: 🦁 Strength to Forgive

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about what forgiveness means to you and a time you experienced it.

2. List any feelings you have about forgiving someone who has been mean.

3. Pray and ask God to give you the strength to forgive.



Day 3: 💪 Strength to Forgive

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, help me to forgive those who have hurt me, just as You have forgiven me. Give me strength when forgiving feels impossible. Heal my heart and remove any bitterness or anger. Teach me to love freely and walk in Your peace. Thank You for Your mercy. Amen. ❤️ 🙏 🌿





Day 4: ✨ Seeing Others Through God's Eyes



Day 4: ✨ Seeing Others Through God's Eyes

Your Verse

1 Samuel 16:7 NIV - "The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 7:12 - "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."*
- *Galatians 6:2 - "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."*



Day 4: ✨ Seeing Others Through God's Eyes

Devotional: Seeing Hearts, Not Hurtful Actions

When someone is mean, it's easy to focus on their unpleasant actions or words and judge them harshly. But God invites us to look deeper—to see the heart behind the behavior. Often, meanness is a sign of hurt, fear, or loneliness.

Children can especially struggle with this because they see only what is on the surface. By learning to see others through God's eyes, with compassion and understanding, we can respond with love instead of anger.

This perspective shift helps us carry one another's burdens and show mercy. When we remember that every person is loved and valued by God, we treat them differently—even those who are mean to us.



Reflect and Apply

1. How does seeing others like God changes your view of them?

2. What might cause someone to act mean rather than kind?

3. How can compassion help you respond lovingly to difficult people?



Day 4: ✨ Seeing Others Through God's Eyes

Journaling Prompts

1. Describe someone who is hard for you to love and what you might not know about their heart.

2. Write about how seeing with God's eyes changes your feelings toward them.

3. Think about how you can carry others' burdens and show mercy.



Day 4: ✨ Seeing Others Through God's Eyes

Prayer for Today

Dear God, open my eyes to see others the way You see them. Help me to look beyond their actions to their hearts, filled with Your love and value. Teach me compassion and mercy, especially to those who treat me poorly. Make me a reflection of Your grace. Amen. ❤️ 👁️ 🙏





Day 5: Peace in the Midst of Conflict



Day 5: 🕊️ Peace in the Midst of Conflict

Your Verse

Matthew 5:9 NIV – "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Supporting Scriptures

- *James 1:19 – "Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."*
- *Proverbs 12:20 – "Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy."*



Day 5: 🕊️ Peace in the Midst of Conflict

Devotional: Embracing the Role of Peacemaker

Conflict and meanness disrupt peace and joy, especially among children who want to get along with friends and family. Yet, God calls us to be peacemakers—those who actively seek to bring harmony where there is division.

This can mean listening carefully before responding, controlling anger, and choosing words wisely. It also means forgiving and seeking understanding, even when someone is mean or hurtful.

Choosing peace doesn't mean ignoring wrongs. Instead, it's trusting God to work through you to soften hearts and reconcile relationships. When you pursue peace, you honor God and reflect His kingdom on earth.



Reflect and Apply

1. What does being a peacemaker look like in your daily life?

2. How can listening well help you handle conflict better?

3. In what ways can you promote peace even when others aren't peaceful?



Journaling Prompts

1. Recall a time you helped make peace in a difficult situation.

2. Write about how you can listen more carefully and control anger.

3. Plan one way you can be a peacemaker this week.



Day 5: 🕊️ Peace in the Midst of Conflict

Prayer for Today

Lord Jesus, make me a peacemaker in my relationships. Help me to listen well, speak gently, and control my anger. Teach me to pursue peace, even when others are difficult. Fill me with Your joy as I work to bring harmony. Amen. 🕊️ 💬 🙏





Day 6: Loving Through Actions



Day 6: ❤️ Loving Through Actions

Your Verse

1 John 3:18 NIV – "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

Supporting Scriptures

- *James 2:17 – "Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."*
- *Galatians 5:13 – "Serve one another humbly in love."*



Day 6: ❤️ Loving Through Actions

Devotional: Show Love Through Kind Actions

Love is more than words. It's shown through kind deeds and genuine care. When someone is mean, a loving action might surprise them and soften their heart.

Children can demonstrate love by including someone sitting alone, sharing their toys, or speaking kindly despite harsh words. These actions show God's truth and reflect Jesus' servant heart.

By choosing to act lovingly, we witness God's love in practical ways and build stronger, healthier relationships. Today, let your love be visible in what you do, not just what you say.



Day 6: ❤️ Loving Through Actions

Reflect and Apply

1. What are some loving actions you can do right now for someone who is mean?

2. How does showing love by actions impact your own heart?

3. Why is it important that love is shown in both words and deeds?



Journaling Prompts

1. List three loving actions you can take this week toward someone difficult.

2. Write about a time your actions showed love more than words.

3. Reflect on what serving others teaches you about God.



Day 6: ❤️ Loving Through Actions

Prayer for Today

Dear God, help me to love others in action and truth. Teach me to serve with a humble heart and show kindness even when it's hard. Use my hands, words, and heart to reflect Your great love to the world. Amen. 🙌❤️🙏





Day 7: 🌈 Hope and Joy in Loving Others



Your Verse

Galatians 5:22-23 NIV - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Romans 15:13 - "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him."*
- *Psalms 100:1 - "Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth."*



Day 7: 🌈 Hope and Joy in Loving Others

Devotional: Fruit of the Spirit Empowers Loving

Loving others, especially when they are mean, is not always easy—but God promises to fill us with His Spirit's fruit. Love grows into joy, peace, patience, kindness, and more as we trust Him daily.

Children and adults alike can find hope and joy amid difficulties by relying on the Holy Spirit's power. When we keep our eyes on Jesus, our hearts change, and loving becomes a natural response.

Remember, every act of love—even small ones—sows seeds of hope and peace in the world. Let this truth encourage you to keep loving, trusting that God works through you to bring joy and healing.



Reflect and Apply

1. How can the fruit of the Spirit help you love even when it's hard?

2. What does joy and peace look like when you choose to love mean people?

3. How can trusting God give you hope to keep loving each day?



Journaling Prompts

1. Write about how you have experienced God's fruit in loving others.

2. List ways you can invite the Holy Spirit to help you love better.

3. Reflect on what hope and joy mean in your relationships.



Day 7: 🌈 Hope and Joy in Loving Others

Prayer for Today

Holy Spirit, fill me with Your fruit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Help me to love even when it's difficult, trusting that You strengthen me. May my life reflect Your hope and grace to everyone I meet. Amen. 🍇 ✨ 🙏





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