



# Faith Adventures Youth Resource

*Embedded in Faith Adventures: Children Together, this youth resource is intergenerational in nature and designed to foster God-connection in church, home and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: <https://urc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Faith-Adventures-How-To-FAYR.pdf>

## Luke 6: 27-36 Love your enemies

**Theme:** Loving courageously

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### Introduction: What would be helpful to know before we begin?

The theme for this session is 'loving courageously' and explores the 'Turn the Other Cheek' passage in the Good News according to Luke.

We will be looking at how we can be brave in our relationships with others – even those whom we, or our friends, don't particularly like – but we must be clear that 'turning the other cheek' is not an instruction to be a doormat and accept constant bad behaviour directed our way. Rather it is a call not to retaliate in kind but to be courageous in our response. Maybe you could think of this passage as the 'Do to others as you would have them do to you' scripture.

If this triggers concerns about bullying for any of the group, do talk with a leader and encourage anyone who is suffering from bullying to talk to the safeguarding lead for your church (if it is happening in a church based setting) or a trusted adult such as a parent or teacher (if it is happening elsewhere).

The translation used talks of 'pawnbrokers'. You might want to find out what this word means. The definition offered by the Citizens Advice Bureau might be helpful: [Pawnbrokers - Citizens Advice](#). In essence, a pawnbroker is someone who helps someone out financially in the short term – for a price.

We will explore how, sometimes, it takes real courage to not retaliate, but to walk away – and to tell someone else what is happening so that they can provide help and support – not just to the target of the bullying, but also to the ringleader and their supporters.



And we will explore how God invites us to go the extra mile, to do more than is expected of us, in our relationships with others, just as God does with us.

## Together

Let's start our time with God and each other well

If used in a mixed-age group, then young people can support younger ones in using the gathering prayer in Faith Adventures: Children Together. If used in a youth group, you could use this opening prayer or encourage young people to open the session with a prayer of their own.

*All mighty God,*

*Be with us as we learn more about you through stories and people in the Bible.*

*Help us to walk in your way and follow your path.*

*Be with us as we make decisions that affect our lives, and the lives of those around us.*

*Amen*

### **In-person and alternative game**

See this week's Faith Adventures : Children Together for suitable games for this theme.

## Experience

Research different versions of this reading on <https://www.biblegateway.com/> Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

This song captures the Bible verse in it's lyrics, I wonder how it makes you feel and what emotions it provokes in you?

<https://youtu.be/MnVjNaBfQL0?si=7INQg4Irxo1i8LQ7> – Love your enemies by Kyle Sigmon

### **Watch:**

<https://youtu.be/L0HhHLHLHaA?si=H6xzVrP4XVtYoqUF> – Love your enemies by Kris 10 cartoons

### **Questions for discussion**

- This is a really simple video which captures the meaning of loving your enemy really clearly. What does it tell you about how God/Jesus behaves towards us? Are we ever God's enemy? How might we sometimes behave as though we were?

## Explore

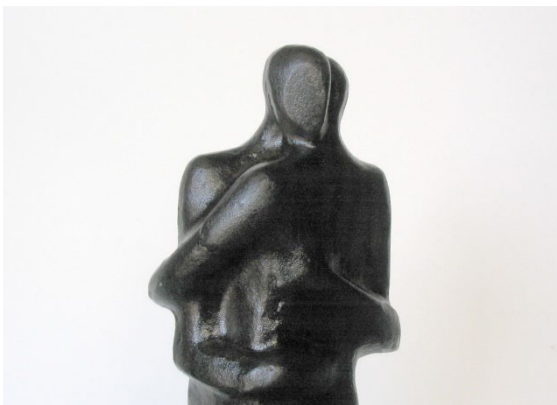
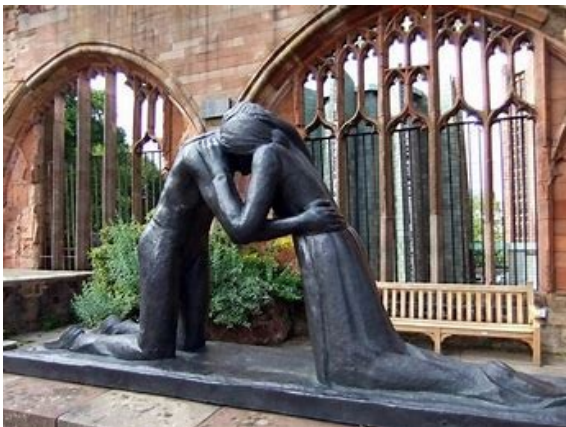
Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

### A new way to explore the theme

You may wish to use the explore section from this week's Faith Adventures: Children Together to guide your exploration of the theme this week.

Alternatively:

**Research :** In Coventry Cathedral and in Northern Ireland you can find statues on the theme of reconciliation.



Explore the theme of reconciliation – maybe do an internet search and find out more about Taizé or Corrymeela, two Christian centres which have reconciliation at their heart.

In thinking about whether the words “love your enemy” means that you should just take whatever is thrown at you, see what you can find out about “restorative justice”. How does this work?

Have a look at some of the current news reports in the papers or on the internet. Who might find this week's passage hard to put into practice? In what ways might following the ideals of “love your enemy” make the outcome of the situation different? Why would this be loving courageously?

### Modern parables

This section includes references to TV programmes, films, books, TED talks, TikTok etc aimed at this age group that will have been widely seen, or where a clip is available to use as a stimulus for discussion. You may also enjoy the picture book recommended for Faith Adventures: Children Together and explore the relevance of the story to the theme of the session in more depth – young people and adults are often well tuned in to the deeper meanings in materials aimed at younger people and the authors are often very aware of the adults reading the books to or with younger ones.

Watch: <https://youtu.be/6KHoVBK2EVE?si=3FEVnaKosJ8C54di>



This video is obviously an advert, but it tells the story of a true event, the Christmas Truce of 1914 during World War 1.

What do you think the message is of this clip? (Other than to shop at Sainsburys, obviously!)

How easy do you think it was for the soldiers to return to fighting after this event? How might they have viewed the enemy before and after?

How do you think the soldier who took the first step out of the trenches felt?

### Talking together: Going deeper

- In the Bible verse do you think God is saying that we have to be a doormat and never stand up against ill treatment?
- Is it godly to be a victim?
- What examples do we have from Jesus to help us understand what it means to put 'love your enemies' into action?

### Conversation starters

- Is it ever possible to do good things without looking for what we get back in return?
- I wonder why doing the right thing can sometimes be more difficult than ignoring the situation?
- Do we forgive and forget or do we forgive and remember, yet still forgive?

## Express

How do we respond to what we've discussed and express our faith personally?

### Praying together

**Prayer** Respond to the theme by writing or saying a short prayer. Alternatively use the creative prayer from Faith Adventures: Children Together for this session, or use the prayer activity below.

Alternatively light a candle and play some music while you listen and talk to God together.

### Spoken Prayer

Forgiving God,

It is hard to turn the other cheek and not respond. We want to retaliate in case we are seen as being weak.

But we remember that Jesus did not retaliate when he was bullied, abused and killed.

Jesus showed courage and compassion when he forgave those who treated him so badly because he knew that that was what you wanted and expected of him.

So help us to show that same courage and compassion in our own responses to those who treat us badly.

And remind us that, whatever we do, God forgives us and always loves us courageously.

Amen



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## Responding together

This is an opportunity for a social justice challenge, some research, craftivism, or a craft or STEM activity. You may have a specific activity chosen but free choice is also an option. Here are some suggestions for this week's theme. See Faith Adventures: Children Together for a craft and a STEM activity which may also be appropriate. Choose whatever will work best for your group.

### Like oil and water

Some people are a bit like oil and water. Oil and water do not usually mix. Water molecules are polar molecules which means they have a positive charge at one end and a negative charge on the other, which causes water molecules to attract each other and bond together. It's just like a friendship group can sometimes become a clique – a group of people who bond together and don't want to include anyone who is a bit different to them. Oil molecules are non-polar and cannot bond with polar molecules very easily.

Try putting some oil and water together in the same container and watch what happens, even if you pour them both in at the same time. If you put a bit of food colouring into the water, the effect will be even clearer.

What happens if you put them both in a bottle, put the lid on, and shake them up? Sometimes God shakes us up – we listen to words like the ones in today's reading and for a day or two we make an effort, but our natural inclination is to stick with those we know and like.

What we need is an emulsifier, a molecule with one end that is polar and one end that's non-polar, so it attracts both types of molecule. Experiment with some of the substances below and see which help the oil and water to mix. The emulsifier for our lives is the Holy Spirit. With the Holy Spirit, we can become courageous enough to see those who we don't like as fellow human beings and God's children, so worthy of our love.

Which of these is an emulsifier?

- Egg yolk
- Egg white
- Lemon juice
- Washing up liquid
- Food colouring
- Vinegar

In posh restaurants you may find you can order a platter with olive oil and balsamic vinegars in separate bowls together with various types of bread. The idea is that you dip the bread in each. Oil and vinegar do not mix unless they are shaken together but when you dip your bread into each in turn, you get a delicious taste. With God, you can find all sorts of amazing things happen when you show love to your enemies... even if it does take courage to do it. Why not celebrate this by making your own oil and vinegar platter and doing some taste tests?

### Reconciliation statues

Look at the images above of the reconciliation statues. Use clay or plasticine or any other modelling materials to create your own statuette or use art materials to create a picture that could encourage others to love their enemies and build bridges where there is hatred or distrust between people.



## Challenge

Discipleship doesn't stop when you walk out of the church door – it is a part of everyday life. Take a challenge with you and try to make it part of your week.

You may think of your own suggestion of what you as an individual or a group might do in the coming week in response to what you have explored today? If not here are some suggestions:

- Use one of the “conversation starter” questions or the question below to talk with someone of a different generation or from a different setting and share your questions, thoughts, insights together. **How can you love your enemies without being a doormat or not standing up for what you believe in?**
- Research something suggested by JPIT [Resources \(jpit.uk\)](http://jpit.uk) or Commitment For Life [cforl.co.uk](http://cforl.co.uk)
- Try this week to treat everybody the same way, whether or not they are your friends and whether or not you actually like them.

Thank you for exploring the **Luke 6** passage with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing [children.youth@urc.org.uk](mailto:children.youth@urc.org.uk) or by sharing it on [https://bit.ly/FACT\\_FB](https://bit.ly/FACT_FB)

