

## LOVING MY ENEMY

February 22, 2025

### Bible Readings

Take a few minutes to read the Bible verses listed and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in how this verse applies to you this week.

Matthew 5:43-45, Ephesians 4:32, Luke 6:27

### Memory Verse

<sup>38</sup> You know you have been taught, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” <sup>39</sup> But I tell you not to try to get even with a person who has done something to you. When someone slaps your right cheek, turn and let that person slap your other cheek.

**Matthew 5:38-39**



## CASEY'S DAY

written by Ron Vandenburg  
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On the first day of grade eight, I stepped off the bus and walked over to my friends. Two days ago, we were laughing and playing together at a sleepover. But, on that morning, all of those fun friendly vibes were gone. They all picked up their backpacks and walked away. Soon, they had the entire grade making up stories about me, excluding me, calling me names, and so much worse.

In [Matthew 5:39](#), Jesus tells us “do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.” If you’re like me, when you’re being bullied, you don’t want to “turn the other cheek,” you want to fight back.

That isn’t what God wants us to do. He wants us to love them, pray for them, and do good things for them ( [Matthew 5:44](#) and [Luke 6:27](#)). But how?

It is not easy to be kind to someone who teases you or to be compassionate to a person who pushes you down. The first step is to pray. Pray for strength not to fight back. Pray for them—that God will bless them and change their hearts. And pray that God will show you what to do.

You also need to tell an adult. Your parents, your teacher, the principal, or your pastor are all good people to tell. They can stand with you as you love the kid who is being mean and help you come up with strategies to get the bullying to stop.

My story doesn't have a fairytale ending—the bullying only stopped because the other kids got bored. However, I was freed from the pain they caused when I chose to forgive them, to love them, and to pray for them.

Along my path to forgiveness, I learned that what they said about me didn't define me. And I want you to remember that too: what the bullies say about you or do to you doesn't define you. God has already said who you are: you are loved, you are wanted, and you are his child ([Jeremiah 31:3](#), [1 John 3:1](#), and [1 John 4:19](#)).

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, please give me the strength and courage I need to love people who are mean to me. Please change their hearts and help them to become more like you. And please help the adults to know how to help when I talk to them. Amen.

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*written by Christina Van Starkenburg*