

# NOT GIVE AND TAKE



## Connect

This activity will be a collaborative effort. On a paper or any drawing surface, have one member of the family draw a house. Then another family member will continue the picture and draw something that will complement the house (example: a tree, another house, street). Let each family member keep adding something to the picture that he or she thinks will be good for the entire picture.

Once the drawing looks like a village, everyone can stop and explain why they drew a certain object and how it will help the entire drawing.

Each person is adding or "giving" to the entire picture. Today, we will learn how this is an example of what loving looks like.



What does it actually mean to love your neighbor? Does it mean to love only those who love you?

Let's look at Luke 6:32-35:

32 "If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

We all probably are like this: we love those who love us, we are generous to those who are generous to us, kind to those who are kind to us. But Jesus is teaching us a totally different kind of love: to love your enemies, to love those who are not nice to us, to love those who are hard on us. But that is so difficult, right? Yes, it is! But Jesus Himself showed us this kind of love when He came to earth to save sinners from sin - people who do not want anything to do with Him, people who would rather do the things that please themselves rather than the things that please Him, people who would choose eternal death rather than eternal life with Him. He loved all those people and He chose to die for their sins. Do you know who those people are? You and me!

Even when we were not nice to God, He loved us anyway. When we chose not to obey Him, He loved us anyway. And when we deliberately chose to commit sin after sin, He died for us anyway. This is the kind of love Jesus modeled for us and wants us to emulate. Do you think you can love everyone the way Jesus loves us?



## Parent to Kid

### 3-6 years old

- Is there someone who has done something not nice to you? After hearing today's lesson, do you think you can start loving him or her? How can you start showing it?

### 7-12 years old

- Think of someone who has not treated you the way you would have liked. Do you think you can start showing love to this person? How?

### Kid to Parents

- Have you ever shown love to someone who has not shown you love? How did it feel? How did you do it?

Because God loves us, the only reason we will be able to love those who hate us, those who have not treated us nicely, those who have been mean to us is because the love of God is in our hearts. Because that is the kind of love that God showed us, we will also be able to love others the same way. So next time, do not wait for others to be nice to you. Do not wait for others to invite you to join them. Instead, be the one to make the first move and start loving them!



Dear Jesus, please empower us to decide each day to love our enemies as You have loved us. We know that we were Your enemies too when we sin. We offend You, we hurt You. Forgive us for our sins. Please help us forgive those who have sinned against us as well. Help me to make the first move and be their friend. In Jesus' name, Amen!



The command of Jesus to love our enemies is perhaps one of the most difficult to obey. But if you examine the other teachings of Jesus, you will notice that most of them do run counter to our instincts.

Some examples:

- Matthew 5:39-40 : "... If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well."
- Matthew 5:11-12 : "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."
- Matthew 23:11-12 : "The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

But Jesus does not ask us to do these things unreasonably. He Himself demonstrated them to us first. And because we have His love in us and we have His example to follow, obeying them is not impossible. Will you make a commitment to follow Him?