

## READ IT

This week's Bible story is

### Love Your Enemies

from Matthew 5:38-48.



Epiphany 7

#### Jesus tells us to love our enemies.

Ask each other what you remember about:

- Retaliate
- Beg
- Resist
- Persecute
- Strike
- Greet

In Jewish law, retaliation was permitted if it was equal or balanced to the original offense: Exodus 21:24; Leviticus 24:20.

#### Read the whole story together in the Bible!

*Spark Story Bible* pages 274-275

*Spark Bible* pages 1063-1064

#### Family Prayer

Dear God, Jesus told us we should always love others. We cannot. But we can try. You want us to act and feel loving all the time. We fail. Again and again. And we are hurt by our failures. Thank you for staying with us even when we fail. Thank you for forgiving us every time we fail. Dear Lord, thank you for your unending grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## TALK ABOUT IT



### Family Conversations

- 1 How do you think we act when we love our enemies?
- 2 Who were some of Jesus' enemies? Who are some of yours?
- 3 Jesus says we should not only follow the commandments in our actions but also in our hearts. How do we feel when we love our enemies? Do you think that it's possible? What will help us love our enemies when it seems too hard to do?
- 4 John the Baptist told people that, if they had two coats, they should give one to a person who had none. Count how many coats each of you has.



#### Eye Spark

What images of enemies do you see as you go about your week? What examples of wealth that could be shared do you see? Imagine what might be different.



#### Ear Spark

Listen for anger. Where do you hear it and what causes it? Listen for forgiveness.

## LIVE IT

### For families to do together

Go through your clothing and possessions and gather up any gently used excess you can share with others. Choose an organization such as your church, a disaster-relief organization, or a local resale shop and drop off your items.

### For younger kids

You have plenty of hugs to spare. This week, share them as often as you can with as many people as you can.

### For older kids

Children and elderly people are not enemies, but often these two age groups don't spend much time together. Find out who from your congregation would enjoy a visit and go see them for a game of cards, or dominoes, or some other thing you would both enjoy.