

# Bullies of the Bible

1 Samuel 18:6-12 When the men were returning home after David had killed the Philistine, the women came out from all the towns of Israel to meet King Saul with singing and dancing, with joyful songs and with tambourines and lutes. As they danced, they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Saul was very angry; this refrain galled him. "They have credited David with tens of thousands," he thought, "but me with only thousands. What more can he get but the kingdom?" And from that time on Saul kept a jealous eye on David. The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully upon Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the harp, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice. Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with David but had left Saul.

1 Peter 4:3-4 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.

Romans 8:31 What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Luke 19:1-7 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.'"

Ephesians 4:32-5:2 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

King Saul was a bully. He harassed and chased David relentlessly.

From 1 Samuel 18:6-12, what was Saul's motive for bullying David?

What are some reasons kids will bully other kids?

In the new testament, Peter explains why people were bullying the new Christians. Does this same motivation exist in schools today?

What kind of school activities would resemble the things Peter mentions in verse one?

As a Christian we believe in a spirit realm: angels, demons, Satan, and The Holy Spirit. Samuel attributed Saul's bad behavior to an evil spirit. How do you think nonbelievers would react if they knew we believed such things?

Have you ever laughed at another person because they were wearing weird clothes?

What would you think if a girl wore a Burke to school? Would she be mocked?

How would you react if a boy wore a Kippah (Jewish skull cap)?

Have you ever not "friended" someone on Facebook because of what other friends might think of you?

King Saul was jealous of David but also afraid of him. Why?

Do you think non-Christians might be a little intimidated of Christians because we know God is "for us" (Romans 8:31) and not against us?

Read Luke 19:1-7. Why was Zacchaeus looked down on?

Did Jesus avoid Zacchaeus so as not to be associated with him?

In Ephesians 4:32-5:2, Paul says we are to be \_\_\_\_\_ of God. This means we are to be: \_\_\_\_\_

It's easy to be a Christian and talk about the Bible at church where we pretty much believe the same things. What would happen if we acted like Christians at school?

Have you ever seen someone being bullied?

Have you ever tried to defend a person being bullied?

If you do not take a stand against bullies are you actually in some way giving approval to their actions?

# Lesson Plan: Bullies Of The Bible

1 Page lesson. Allow 45 minutes.

## **The Goal:**

The goal of this lesson is to raise awareness among the kids about bullying. Many kids are not aware that their actions could be considered bullying. A siblings constant picking on their younger sib, for instance, can actually inflict serious emotional damage. Christian kids will quickly correct their behavior if they are aware of the damage they can do to others.

In addition, we will discuss the reasons kids pick on others. Differences in sexual orientation or religious affiliation is all the excuse a bully needs. This age group can draw strength from knowing they're not the only ones being picked on, that there is help and sympathy available, and that God is with them.

**Preparation:** Review the website links suggest on the Sunday School Lesson Connection web page. A good site is: [www.girlshealth.gov/bullying](http://www.girlshealth.gov/bullying). Familiarize yourself with the subject. You might even give the **Bullying Quiz** on this site.

**Pre-Lesson Activity:** I played Red-Rover because the kids choose who will come over to their team. Later we will suggest that they consider how their decisions, choosing or excluding, makes others feel. When I taught the lesson in the fall I had the teams pitch candy corn into a plastic pumpkin across the room. If they made it in they got to choose a member from the other team to join their team. If they missed they went over to the other team.

## **Leading the lesson:**

We begin by studying King Saul's bullying of David. He was jealous of David. Kids are often bullied for simply obeying the rules. They are also frequently tormented and excluded if they do not participate in the drinking, drugs, and lewd dances. This was directly addressed in 1 Peter 4:3-4. Kids might be surprised at this. The text in Samuel mentions that an evil spirit was sent by God into Saul. Get their reaction to this.

Ask the kids for examples of bullying. Help them with hints from what you learned by visiting the recommended websites above. While they may have been the victim of bullying they might also be participating in bullying without realizing it. Ask them how they felt when they weren't picked in the game. How do they feel when someone unfriends them on Facebook or excludes them from a group or activity. Have they ever done that?

Finish by discussing how Jesus treated people who were looked down upon like Zacchaeus. Discuss how we are to imitators of Jesus Ask them what the repercussions would be if they acted like Christians at school. Encourage them to live out their faith everyday, not just on Sundays's.

**Close with Prayer:** Take prayer requests. Watch for signs of those being bullied. Pray for your kids. Let them know you care about them.

**Follow-up:** Follow up this lesson with the lesson "Dealing With Bullies. Also, think about having private conversations with those who are bullied or those you know are bullies. If you have time you might even volunteer at their school, like in the lunch line, to become part of their