



Weekly Resources for Schools

**PHASE: SECONDARY**

**THEME: Does our Behaviour  
Matter? Bullying**



## KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

### *Does our Behaviour Matter? Bullying.*

*Sadly, many pupils will have experienced bullying and be all too familiar with what it feels like to be bullied. Bullying comes in many different forms, including mental, physical and emotional. It could be as simple as ignoring someone in the class just because everybody else does, posting mean comments about someone online, or 'banter' and making jokes at someone else's expense. In this collective worship, we also highlight the responsibility we all share to take action if we witness the bullying of others. Bullies are able to continue because no one challenges what it is they are doing.*

*Christians often ask themselves 'What Would Jesus Do?' to decide how they should treat others, and this week we look at an incident from the life of Jesus that shows just that – how Jesus treated an individual whom everyone hated: Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector.*

## BIBLE STORY OF THE WEEK:

Luke 19:1-10

The way Zacchaeus had treated the people of Jericho had resulted in him becoming isolated and ostracised – and we can all imagine the reactions of the crowd to him wanting to see Jesus. It is likely that this story will be well-known to your students perhaps from primary school, but it is worth going back to the original story in the bible. It is very unusual for us to be told about the appearance of characters in the bible but here Zacchaeus' height is highlighted.

### Jesus and Zacchaeus

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. Now a man named Zacchaeus was there; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. He was trying to get a look at Jesus but **being a short man**, he could not see over the crowd. So, he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, because Jesus was going to pass that way. And when Jesus came to that place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, because I must stay at your house today." So, he came down quickly and welcomed Jesus joyfully.

And when the people saw it, they all complained, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." But Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, half of my possessions I now give to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone of anything, I am paying back four times as much!" Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this household, **because he too is a son of Abraham!** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

There are a lot of questions you could explore within the script: you may wish to focus on just a few or use some on another day.



## Gathering



### ***Talk about the image:***

What do you think is happening here?

Have you ever seen anyone who is on their own?

Sometimes people choose to be on their own: why might they make that choice?

Is there another reason that they are on their own?

How do we know the difference?

How does it feel to be left out? Why do people leave others out?

Why do people choose not to help if they see someone who is left out?

What do you think the 'crowd' is saying? Is there a group mentality? I wonder if anyone in the crowd is starting to think differently...

## Engagement

**Christians often ask themselves 'What Would Jesus Do?' to decide how they should treat others, and this week we look at a story from the life of Jesus that shows just that.**

**It is one of the most well-loved in the Gospels, about Zacchaeus the chief tax collector. This story is full of interesting detail that shows how Zacchaeus had treated people, and how people treated Zacchaeus.**



In Jesus' day, tax collectors were not popular people – they worked for the Romans who had conquered much of the world, including the nation of Israel. But Zacchaeus was even more unpopular because he cheated people out of more money than they owed in taxes – and kept it for himself – so he was very rich. He clearly looked different because of his size; he had learnt not to care what others thought of him. He had become hardened to being treated in this way. Perhaps that is why he had taken the job he had. He had probably been thrown out of his faith and his community. When the crowd would not let him see he ran ahead and climb a tree which would not have been very dignified, and no doubt brought him ridicule. When you know this, it's perhaps a bit easier to understand the

reactions of the crowd. But Jesus' response was quite different....

When Jesus stepped into this situation, his reaction to Zacchaeus was very different from the reaction of the people of Jericho, the 'crowd' in the story. He saw his need, not his physical appearance. Jesus restored Zacchaeus: he restored his dignity, he restored his worth, he restored his faith. He did this by:

- associating with Zacchaeus inviting him down and going to stay with him.
- standing up for him saying 'Because he too is a son of Abraham'.
- risking unpopularity himself as the crowd that had been cheering him turned against him and started complaining.

**Jesus changed everything – could you do the same?**

Here are some words, attributed to 18<sup>th</sup> Century politician Edmund Burke [and (mis)quoted by President John F. Kennedy!]: **"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing"**. Talk together about what you think this means.

How can we take these words to heart and act on them this week?

## Response

**Let's be still and quiet together now....**



**Look again at the image, and think...**

about how it feels to be the one who is alone...  
about how it feels to be a part of the crowd...  
about what Jesus did to change the situation for Zacchaeus...  
about how we can reach out to others...  
about how reaching out to others might change things for them...  
about what you will do if you see something like this happening...

## Sending

*I'm going to use the words of a simple prayer. You might like to make it your own or prefer to continue to be quiet with your own thoughts.*

Lord Jesus

Thank you for your example of being inclusive to all.

Help us to follow your example and include others in all we do.

Help us to stand up for those who feel excluded or mistreated, enabling them to feel they belong.

Give us the courage to speak up when we see bullying or exclusion, knowing you spoke up for others too.

Amen

Chose one of these songs as a reflection to finish:

**Song (64) [Taylor Swift - Mean - YouTube](#)**

A powerful song about overcoming the effects of bullying.



### Song [Lean on me](#)

Bill Withers' song about how we all need somebody to lean on.

### Song [\(64\) Sody - The Bully \(Official Video\) - YouTube](#)

A reflection on bullying

### Song [You Say](#)

A song by Lauren Daigle about the words we say to ourselves – and what God says about us.

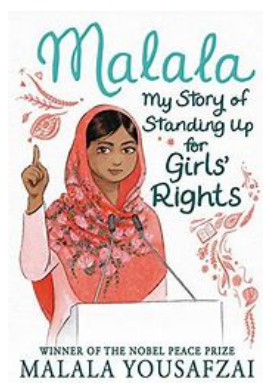
## SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

*(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)*

### EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

### Some stories from real life that explore positive ways to deal with bullying:

#### The story of Malala Yousafzai



Raised in a changing Pakistan by an enlightened father from a poor background and a beautiful, illiterate mother, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. Her story of bravery and determination in the face of extremism is inspiring. Her story teaches the value of speaking out against intolerance and hate: an inspiring message of hope in Malala's own words. Her influence and voice changing the world and she became the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner (2014). You can find out more about her life and work here: [Malala Fund | Working for a world where all girls can learn and lead](#)

[Find out about Malachi Justin and the opening of Malachi's Place](#) There is a short video linked here. When Malachi was five, he lost his first tooth and he gave his tooth fairy money to the Salvation Army to help homeless people in his area. His actions were part of building a new centre for the homeless in Ilford.



#### **We are all connected:**

Give everyone a blank paper cut into a jigsaw puzzle shape (you can find some [here](#)). On one side, write words that bullies might say to exclude others. Decorate it with 'sad' colours. On the other side write words that encourage and heal, and decorate with 'happy' colours. Join your pieces together as a class to remind each other that we are all connected and that together, we can stand up against bullying words.

## **ACTIVITIES that can develop PRACTICES-HABITS:**

Use the EXAMEN prayer to reflect on times when you have found life difficult. It has 5 steps, so you might like to count them on your fingers.

1. GIVE THANKS for the times when someone has helped you to feel included.
2. ASK FOR HELP if you know someone who is being left out.
3. REFLECT on your day and think about times when you have felt included.
4. SAY SORRY for the times that you have been unkind and made someone feel that they don't belong.
5. DECIDE how you will act up when you see that someone is being bullied. Or if you are being bullied decide who you will talk to about it.

## **CONVERSATIONS which CONNECT COMMUNITIES**

### **Faith Bullying**

There are many forms of bullying. One not often talked about is faith bullying. Why do you think this might be? This is treating people differently because of their faith or religion. It is wrong to hurt, tease, ignore, threaten, tell jokes, or call people names based on their faith or belief.

People might be bullied about their:

- Religion
- Religious practices like not eating meat or drinking alcohol.
- Clothes or symbols like headscarf's, Cross, Kara

Research suggests that 1 in 4 children of faith backgrounds experience being bullied because of their faith. Those bullied because of their religious beliefs often begin to question their faith, stopped talking about it, or even felt ashamed of it. One in five young people choose to mix mostly with friends of the same religion to avoid bullying.

Do your school's policies recognise this form of bullying?

Childline recommends that to counter faith bullying everyone needs to understand more about religion and faith. They suggest that young people should:

- let friends and teachers know when you take part in religious events, so they understand more about you and what you're doing.
- share photos or blogs about religious festivals so other people can see what these are like.
- tell friends about the foods and drinks you're not allowed in your religion, so they don't offer you these.
- ask friends why they wear religious items and how they feel about it.
- ask friends if you can join in with their religious events. This can help you understand their religion and culture a bit more.

Does your school have a culture where you would be comfortable to do this?

### Anti-Bullying Alliance

*It is always worth reminding students about what to do if they witness bullying or are being bullied. You can get involved and be 'United Against Bullying' by following this advice from the Anti-Bullying Alliance:*

*Include others:* Make sure there is no one left by themselves in the playground or ask others to play with you if they are feeling left out.

*Celebrate difference:* Choosing to celebrate difference, rather than be divided by discrimination and hate. If someone is different to you get to know them better and you will find you have more in common than you might have thought.

*Keep your hands and feet to yourself:* Never physically hurt anyone else.

*Respect everyone:* Choose to be kind, not mean.

*Don't laugh at others:* This can really hurt someone's feelings.

We all need to play our part! If everyone works together and agrees to act this way, we can make a more powerful difference.

they are.

[One for the grown-ups](#) – How modern-day stigma around illness has created problems during the Covid pandemic similar to the treatment of Biblical lepers. You could explore this with older pupils, but it would need careful handling.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – OUR APPROACH

### INVITATIONAL

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

### INCLUSIVE

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...'

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

### INSPIRING

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?