



WHEN FRIENDS ARE MEAN

If your daughter has ever been teased or tormented by a peer, it's as if an arrow has pierced straight through her heart to yours. Your daughter's hurt becomes yours. And when it does, you may be tempted to sign on as her 24/7 bodyguard.

Here's the thing: It's not possible or healthy to be with her every hour of the day to shield her from the catty and cruel. But you can protect her when you arm her with truth!

Remind her that her value and worth are not based on what her friends say, but on who God says she is! Her friends words do not define her, God does. And the One who made her and loves her says she is accepted just as she is, she's beautiful inside and out, and cherished for the girl she is today and the one she is becoming!

Remind her that she doesn't have to let mean words stick. Like a shield ricochets arrows, she can choose to deflect their lies and cling to truth. And if she really wants to shock her tormenter, brainstorm creative ways to payback evil with good. It will grow a bigger heart within your daughter, and give the mean girl something she radically needs—overflowing love.

BIBLE VERSE

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:17-18).

DID YOU KNOW?

The ministry of GEMS Girls' Clubs serves more than 24,000 girls as well as the 5,300 women who mentor them. Plus GEMS has over 900 active clubs! If you or someone you know would like to start a GEMS Club in your area, request information by contacting the GEMS Service Center: servicecenter@gemsgc.org or 616.241.5616 ext. 2.

AT THE TABLE

In an excellent book by Devi Titus, *The Table Experience*, she writes, "The dinner table is the only place where a family sits forty-two inches apart, face to face, and talks for thirty minutes to an hour. Relationships are not built at an arm's distance. Invite your family to the table!"

The next time your family gathers around the table, use these theme-related table talk questions to get your family talking about the things of God:

1. Ask everyone to share the name of his or her friend. Then ask, "When you are with this person, what do you feel most pressured to do?" It could be something good or bad!
2. When you have exciting news, whom do you tell first? When's the last time you've told this person the incredible news about God's love?
3. When friends are mean, what are some healthy and loving ways to respond?

FAMILY FUN

Names Poster: When people are mean, it's important to remind each other who God says we are! Create a Names Poster of all the names and things God says about you. Here's a list to get you started: His Handiwork, Loved, Known, Overcomer, Victorious, Precious in His sight, Forgiven, Friend of God.

Fancy Feet! The Bible says, *How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!* (Isaiah 52:7) And the best news you can share is God's great love! Go fancy with your feet by decorating old or new canvas shoes with fabric paints, ribbon, and/or beads. Or use washable markers to write messages on the soles of one another's feet!

Heart Sandwich: Have a sandwich bar with your family's favorite fixings. After it's within the two slices of bread, cut it in a heart shape. As you enjoy your lunch together, share stories of how you saw God's love today.

