

10 Biblical Tips for DEALING WITH BULLIES

The Audacious Truth: You Don't Deserve Bullying

1

You are God's masterpiece, unique, one-of-a-kind, and created in His image! You are beloved by God and He has a *special purpose* for your life that only you can fulfill.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago (Ephesians 2:10).



Prayer: The Believer's Secret Weapon

2

As you pray for others, pray for yourself. Don't accept lies that bullies heap upon you. Rather renounce them to yourself and to bullies.

But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! (Matthew 5:44)

I come to you for protection, O Lord my God. Save me from my persecutors—rescue me! (Psalm 7:1)

Identify and Avoid: Be alert to bullying activities and avoid them.

3

A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions. The simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequence (Proverbs 22:23).

What is Bullying?

Bullying is intentionally and repeatedly inflicting unwanted insults, threats, physical force or social isolation crusades on others. Despite the efforts of parents and school officials, the age old problem of bullying persists. Whether it's shoves, curses and threats in the hallway, or lies, rumors and spoofing through text and social networks, kids still say and do incredibly mean things to other kids—maybe even more so when they can pretend to be someone else in cyberspace.

So how do you respond when you are bullied?

All of the following tips need to be applied with wisdom; different situations may call for different responses. Where can you get that wisdom?

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking (James 1:5).

Ignore and Don't Retaliate

4

Often the strongest and wisest thing you can do is to ignore an insult, taunt or challenge. The Bible says there is, *A time to be quiet and a time to speak* (Ecclesiastes 3:7b).

Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it (1 Peter 3:9).

Practice a Gentle Answer

5

A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare (Proverbs 15:1).

Anticipate the bullies taunt and practice a non-confrontational answer. Role-playing may feel weird at first, but practicing answers aloud with another person can powerfully prepare you for the next unavoidable confrontation, so ask a trusted adult for help. If you have truly offended someone, apologize! On the other hand, DO NOT accept lies about yourself. Therefore, a neutral answer when taunted, such as “that didn’t sound nice,” or “that sounded unkind (or seems bigoted, or racist, etc.) don’t you think?” Or, “are you bullying me?” may be the best way to deflect a bully’s hostility.

Leave with Confidence

6

A confident retreat is another strategy for dealing with bullies. Jesus told the disciples that if people wouldn’t welcome or listen to them to:

... shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town (Matthew 10:14b).

Telling bullies in a confident tone, “Excuse me, I need to leave,” (or “I’m out,” “see ya,” “gotta go,” “whatever”) communicates strength, an unwillingness to accept abuse and is non confrontational.

Do Something Nice

7

Most kids will feel guilty if they return meanness for help. So do something nice for the bully—but not in a moment of confrontation, rather do it unexpectedly so the bully will see your motivation as kindness and not fear. A sincere compliment can also be a game changer when the opportunity arises. And yet there is a line between toadying to get the bully off of your back and sincere compliments.

Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it (1 Peter 3:9c).

Get Adult Help

8

Bullies can't always be avoided. When bullying escalates, always appeal to your parents or other responsible adults for help. When confronted by a mob that was trying to trick Paul into an ambush, he appealed to the Roman authorities for help.

If I have done something worthy of death, I don't refuse to die. But if I am innocent, no one has a right to turn me over to these men to kill me. I appeal to Caesar! (Acts 25:11)

Stand Up to Bullies

9

Sometimes you might need to stand up to bullies. When Paul was confronted with a flogging, he simply asked, *“Is it legal for you to whip a Roman citizen who hasn't even been tried?” (Acts 22:25)* That was a game changer and extricated Paul from a terrible situation. Similarly, ask tormentors questions that indirectly confront. For example; “What would the principal/pastor say if someone was videoing you right now?” or “Did you know that the Internet and phone companies keep a permanent record of all texts and photos? And they always give it up to police when asked.”

Flee

10

If you can't get adequate adult help—run! Jesus said on one occasion to flee persecution. Exercise judgment, but fleeing a dangerous situation—and then reporting the threat to adults is usually the wisest strategy.

When you are persecuted in one town, flee to the next (Matthew 10:23).

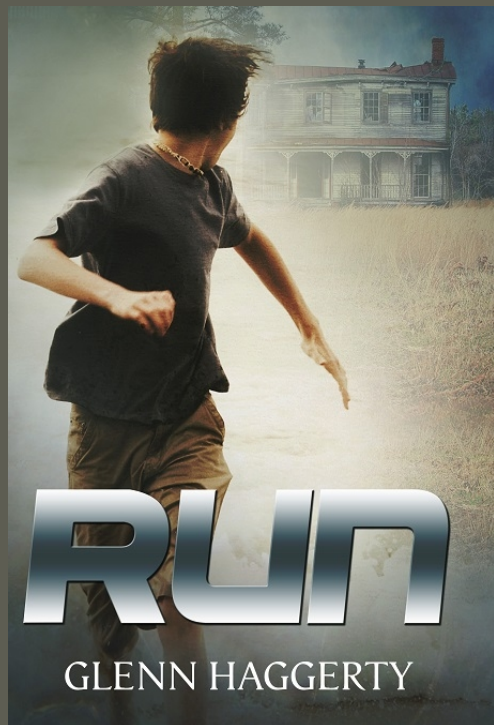


Learn More About Dealing with Bullies

For a more in-depth look at the problem of bullying from a Biblical perspective see, *Companion Bible Study for Run: Finding Friends & Handling Bullies* at www.glennhaggerty.com/my-books/run-companion-bible-study/

Self-defense is another action point for dealing with bullies. This controversial issue is addressed in the study. Spoiler alert. I believe that self-defense is appropriate for Christians in some situations.

[Get the study to discover why.](#)



Find out how 13-year-old Tyler dealt with bullies and learned to lean into his faith in God. *Run* (Intense Book 2) features high-octane action and characters with whom kids can relate.

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About the Author

Glenn has a Master of Divinity degree from Bethel Seminary. He is an award-winning author who combines his love for teaching God's word with his passion for writing exciting fiction.

In addition to the action adventure novel, *Run* (Intense Book 2), he has published two additional books in his Intense series, *Escape* (Book 1) and *Chase* (Book 3). Eight of his short stories have appeared in six magazines, including *Cadet Quest*, *Partners*, *Splickety*, and *Havok*.



Find out more about Glenn and his writing at his website, www.glennhaggerty.com

Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW LIVING TRANSLATION (NLT).

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