



Marshmallow (Sock) Game and Discussion



To play the Marshmallow (Sock) Game, break into two groups (Group A and Group B). Then give the following directions:

Your goal is to get your opponents “out” by hitting them with marshmallows (if you don’t have marshmallows, you can use balled-up socks—though you may want to play outside if using socks). You must stay on your side of the room. When you’re out, you must lie still on the floor. When Group A is hit by a marshmallow once, they are “out.” When Group B is hit by marshmallows five times, they are “out.”

When one team has won (all the other team is “out”), ask the following questions:

1. Was this a fair fight? Why or why not?
2. Is there really a winner when fighting or violence occurs? Why or why not?

Now have everyone stand together on one side of the room. You will stand against them on the other side of the room. Then explain, “We’re going to play the game again, but this time you’ll be on one team, and I’ll be the other team by myself. It’ll take ten marshmallows to get me out, but only one to get any of you out.” When the game starts, stand in place without throwing any marshmallows. Once you are hit ten times, fall to the ground and pause for a minute.

The famous verse, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a foot for a foot...” (Lev. 21:24) is one of the most known verses of the Old Testament that is taken out of context. What this rule was trying to prevent was people taking additional action against the person who hurt them. Therefore, it is better understood as “if you knock out someone’s tooth, they can only knock out yours. They cannot do any more damage than a tooth.” But Jesus turns this passage around and says the following:

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Raqa’ [idiot], will be answerable to the Sanhedrin, and whoever says, ‘You fool’, will be liable to fiery Gehenna...You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on your right cheek, turn the other one to him as well.”
(Matthew 5:21-22, 38-39)

Jesus is telling us, even when we are angry with another person, we are still breaking the fifth commandment. We need to forgive one another before we stand before God. Jesus explains that part of the fifth commandment is not to fight back when someone harms us, but rather forgive him/her. In the Our Father (the prayer Jesus taught us to pray) we say:

“forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”
(Matthew 6:14-15)

Jesus tells us, the way we forgive others is the way we will be forgiven.

After explaining these passages, ask:

1. How did you feel when I didn’t fight back?
2. What does this game have to do with Jesus’ message of non-violence and the fifth commandment?