

Following Jesus Study Guide – Resisting Evil

Main Idea: Jesus resisted evil in all its various forms, including demonic oppression, hypocritical leadership, injustice in society, and unbelief on the part of his disciples.

Living like Jesus: We can imitate Jesus by resisting evil wherever we encounter it. We can pray and stand against spiritual forces of darkness, lovingly confront hypocrisy, contend for justice for the oppressed, and, perhaps most importantly, walk with God ourselves. Overcoming evil with good will take plenty of wisdom and courage.

Key Scriptures: Here are some examples of how Jesus resisted evil:

- Resisting temptation (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)
- Standing against Satan and demonic forces (many examples in the Gospels)
- Refusing to take revenge himself (Matt. 5:38-48; Luke 6:27-36)
- Confronting false teaching (Matt. 7:15-23)
- Conquering death (Mark 5:22-24; 35-43; Luke 8:41-42, 49-56; Luke 7:11-16; John 11:1-45)
- Power over sickness (all the healing miracles)
- Dealing with unrepentance (Matt. 11:20-24)
- Confronting poverty (Matt. 14:13-21; Mark 6:30-44; Luke 16:9-31)
- Calling out hypocrisy (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15; Mark 7:1-23; Matt. 15:1-20; Matt. 23:1-36)
- Dealing with the unbelief of his disciples (Mark 8:31-9:1; Mark 9:14-29; Mark 8:14-21)
- Dealing with the arrogance and selfishness (Mark 10:35-45; Matt. 20:20-28; Luke 18:9-14)
- Confronting the abuse of power (Matt. 18:6)
- Absorbing the mistreatment, ridicule, and physical punishment of his arrest, trials, and crucifixion (in all four Gospels)
- Dealing with false accusations by religious leaders (Mark 2:13-28; 3:1-6, 20-30; John 7:14-24; 10:22-39)
- Avoiding the trap of wealth (Mark 10:17-31; Luke 16:19-31; 18:18-30)
- Warning against specific sins such as worry (Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-34)
- Resisting racism (John 4:1-42)
- Resisting injustice and promoting justice (John 2:13-17; Luke 18:1-8)
- Competition among disciples (John 21:15-24)

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you think of other examples of Jesus resisting evil?
2. What forms of evil do you find yourself needing to fight against the most?
3. What can we learn from Jesus about how to resist evil?
4. What have you learned about inappropriate or unproductive ways of resisting evil?
5. How can we help each other resist evil the way Jesus did?