

## Episode 385 – What Would Jesus Do for Classroom Management?

### 00:00 What Would Jesus Do in the Classroom?

Linda Kardamis (00:00)

If Jesus were a classroom teacher in today's day and age, what would he do for classroom management? This is a really interesting question, and I'm excited to talk about it with you today. Well, welcome back to the Teach 4 the Heart podcast, where we tackle teaching challenges from a biblical perspective. This episode is brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. I'm here today with Julie, our Teach 4 the Heart podcast manager. Julie, thanks so much for joining us for this interesting conversation.

Julie (00:25)

Interesting for sure. It's a fun take on the what would Jesus do question. So I'm excited to see where it goes.

Linda Kardamis (00:30)

Yeah, someone asked us this when they joined our Facebook group and I thought, man, we really, really got to talk about that. Because I think sometimes we, you know, don't think of Jesus as obviously a classroom teacher, but he really was a teacher. He was the best teacher, the greatest teacher. And I think there is just so much that we can learn from him.

Julie (00:54)

Yeah, you're right. When we think healer, messiah, Lord, of course, he is all of those things. But how many times was he called teacher? And so it may not be in the classroom setting, but we can learn, like you say, so much from the way he talked and walked and the lessons he taught. So I think we can probably hit some interesting points today. I'm curious to see where this goes.

Linda Kardamis (01:14)

Yeah,

for sure. Yeah. And Julie, you brought up a verse when we were talking earlier. You brought up 1 John 2, 6. Whoever says he abides in him or God ought to walk in the same way in which he walked, right? So we think about this in lots of areas of life, but hopefully we also apply it to our work in and out of the classroom. So I'm really interested in seeing what we can learn as we consider this question.

Julie (01:39)

Yeah, we might ask what would Jesus do in our personal lives or that's something we always threw around as kids to kind of antagonize each other, especially if we saw our friends weren't doing

something they were supposed to. But it really is a valuable question and it is something that we can apply to teaching in the classroom.

Linda Kardamis (01:56)

Yeah, and when we think about it, he actually did deal with a lot of quote unquote misbehavior, right? People were testing his boundaries, trying to get reactions out of him. He ran across all kinds of people, some of which ~ were not considered, you know, really good citizens as it were. Others who thought that they were doing everything right but weren't. People quarreling, fighting. So yeah, he dealt with some of the same things that we deal with in the classroom.

Julie (02:25)

Yeah, he did. And I feel like looking at those specific Bible stories really do tell a lot of how we can react similarly, especially if we are trying to walk as he did. So one of the stories that came to my mind was the woman caught in adultery, right? So they bring her to him, throw her at his feet and expect, okay, Jesus, the law says we're supposed to stone her. What do we do? And again, trying to catch him off guard, try to...

get a reaction or a rise out of him, but rather than doing that, he addresses the wrong behavior with truth, but then leads with grace and accountability, which those are things that we can absolutely do in our scenarios today. Very different scenarios, but however, looking at how he handles these situations are things that we can, you know, hide in our heart and pray that we would also react in the same way.

Linda Kardamis (03:19)

Yeah, I always love this story for many reasons, but as a wonderful example of how he married grace and truth, right? He was so gracious and kind to her, but yet also didn't—that doesn't mean that just he let everything go and just, it's all fine. No, he like very kindly but clearly confronted her sin and called her out of it. I thought that's just a beautiful, a beautiful story.

Julie (03:43)

Yeah, go forth and sin no more.

Linda Kardamis (03:45)

Yes,

exactly. ~ And then kind of on a different end of the spectrum, a lot of times he was very kind and gentle with people that knew they were in sin. But he ~ uses some of his harshest words against actually the religious leaders who interestingly thought that they had it all together, but they didn't. So I think of, for example, of him cleansing the temple. What stands out to you in that story, Julie?

Julie (04:13)

Yeah, Jesus has never wanted to shy away from the truth. Like you say, he's always very direct. He's not going to ~ say what you want to hear. He's going to say the truth, but he'll do it in a loving and

sometimes loving means a firm way. We may not think that way, but it's true. Sometimes showing you love means discipline. ~ We talk about that with, you know, your children that you raise or your students at school showing

consequences is because you care about them. ~ And so yeah, he's an immediate addresser of those and he always leaves with truth and letting them know, hey, you crossed the line here and that's not okay.

Linda Kardamis (04:55)

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, he's very direct a lot of times when confronting the Pharisees. I think one where he goes, whoa to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, and he goes on like a whole thing. So he's very clear and very direct with the truth. I do think though, just a slight caveat here, Jesus' example in cleansing the temple, if you're not familiar with the story, he gets out a whip and he physically dries people out of the temple. It's a really sobering display of God's righteous wrath.

But I think that we have to be careful. I've heard people sometimes take that as like an example to us. And I think there we have to be very careful because Jesus, because he is God, he is expressing God's righteous anger perfectly. Whereas we often mix righteous anger with our own agenda. Or it's actually like, I'm mad that you hurt me or I am my authority's question. Like we often don't get, we don't normally get that right when we get it.

So I think we have to be very careful about justifying our anger. We have to really, really ~ work and pray for wisdom in that. So slight caveat there. But yes, he was very direct. He confronted truth and he wasn't afraid of that. ~ And I do think sometimes, I know depending on your personality as a teacher, we can feel like, ~ I feel bad. I don't want to hurt their feelings. And like that is not.

what's really loving in a lot of cases, right? A lot of times God is calling us to be clear and direct.

Julie (06:26)

Mm hmm. Yeah, we can't start flipping tables like that. We can't, ~ you know, mimic that behavior for obvious reasons. But yeah, he was always so direct, never shied away from confronting. But it always came from a place of love. And so if we keep that in mind, as we're addressing these misbehaviors with our students, it won't steer you wrong.

Linda Kardamis (06:28)

Yeah.

Yes, absolutely. He was always seeking to do what was best for the person, right? And sometimes that was very gentle. And sometimes it almost seemed harsh. You know, it was very direct. But he knew that. And we might get into this more later, but I think it's helpful to remember, like, we as teachers, like, we don't have that perfect wisdom of exactly, like, he knew exactly what each person needed because he's God. We don't have that all knowledge. But we have

his spirit inside us. And we can pray to the one who does have all knowledge. And so we can always be asking God, I don't know what to do in this situation, help me. Like, I don't know what this student needs, help me. And he can guide us. I think that's really beautiful. There was a lot of other scenarios though, Julie, right? We were thinking about the disciples, we're arguing about who was the greatest. Peter denied him, Judas betrayed him, a thief on the cross.

And we kind of thought of some parallels. What are some of those parallels where we kind of noticed these patterns that he continually portrayed in his interactions?

Julie (07:49)

Right, yeah, so he was always forgiving, always forgiving. ~ Again, addresses the situation, addresses the misbehavior, didn't shy away from it, but came from a place of love. And like you mentioned, he saw the person for who they were behind the sin. ~ And so although he addressed the sin, he's really addressing their heart. And so, like we've mentioned even in a recent episode, why are we called Teach 4 the Heart? Because we know how important it is to address that part of a child.

not just their brains, but their hearts as well. And so in all of those scenarios, yeah, forgiving, loving, patient, concerned with their heart. And so if we can do that, if we can extend grace like he did, and we know Jesus loved a parable, he always turned everything into a teachable moment. And so if we can take that in our scenarios too, in our classroom, you're just really gonna grow your students in that way and probably speak to your spirit a little bit too.

Linda Kardamis (08:19)

Hmm.

Julie (08:43)

and making sure that we try to walk the walk and talk the talk as best we can as Jesus did.

### **08:50 Imagining Jesus as a Modern Teacher**

Linda Kardamis (08:50)

Yeah. Man, Julie, thank you for all those thoughts. That's really good, and I think it's so helpful to look back at what Jesus actually did do and what we can learn from that. Now let's turn a corner a little bit, and we're going to use our imaginations a little bit. And we want to imagine—this is crazy. I was trying to prepare for this episode, and I was thinking about this—imagine Jesus in your classroom, in a 21st century American or wherever you teach classroom.

Because that is a little bit difficult to imagine because I know the stuff that you guys are facing every single day. It is really challenging. And so I think it's interesting to imagine what would he do. And I think as we start to do this part of the conversation, we do need to be very careful, right? Julie and I were talking about this before. said, this is imagining. We will not presume to know exactly what Jesus would or wouldn't do ~ because we could get that wrong, right? The Pharisees thought they knew exactly.

what God would do, and they were way, off. So we want to be careful in what we say here, but I think it is helpful to imagine with humility, what do we think he would do? How do we think Jesus would apply these principles in a modern classroom? So let's dive into some of this. Julie, one thing I thought I really do strongly believe he would do is he would love each student deeply, right? That one's clear and obvious.

Julie (10:11)

Yeah, he already does, right? Even today. so if he was here in person, we know that's a nonnegotiable. Of course he would.

Linda Kardamis (10:13)

Yes.

Yeah.

And then we also talked about, also believe he would always do what was best for the student, right? Whether that's understanding and grace, whether it's the direct confrontation, he would always do what was best for them because he would know what was best for them. So that's once again, we're at a little bit of a disadvantage, but we do have his spirit in us and we can ask him for wisdom. And that is a big comfort.

So those are some things that we can pretty much know he would do. But let's go a little bit further into the realm of imagination. One of the things I was thinking about was would Jesus have a classroom management plan? Because that's something that we teach here at Teach 4 the Heart. If you've been listening to this podcast long, if you take any of our courses, we help teachers create a classroom management plan so that when you step into the classroom, you have a plan and you know what he would do.

And so I was kind of trying to think through these different aspects of the plan. And the first aspect is expectations. We tell teachers, you need to have clear expectations of what is and isn't allowed. And I think that Jesus would do that, right? Because it would be really doing a disservice to not have clear expectations. So I think he would know what is right and wrong and what is good. I think we struggle with that. We have to kind of sit down and be like, what do I think is good? What is gonna be helpful in my classroom?

~ and then making it clear to students. But I do think Jesus would be clear in what was good in teaching his students what is good, how should you act, how should you behave in various situations. What do you think about that piece, Julie?

Julie (11:50)

Right. I would say the same. Like you say, it's hard to know for sure. However, all we can do is look at the Bible. And all throughout the Bible, he clearly stated what is okay and what is not okay, what is sin

and what is not sin. And so, in this situation, yeah, I could imagine he'd probably have expectations for the classroom as well.

Linda Kardamis (12:10)

And then the next part that we teach is procedures and having well thought out procedures. And I tend to think that he would have good procedures too because God is a God of order. ~ You know, when we're recording this, the Artemis II has recently been doing its journey around the moon and all of this physics and order and precision that God has put in the universe is just incredible. He is definitely a God of order.

We also see in scripture, I particularly thinking of 1 Corinthians 14:40 where he's giving instructions to the church on the church services and he says, let all things be done decently and in order. So I do think Jesus would have some structure. I think he'd have some order and some procedures to help things run smoothly. That's just my speculation. Julie, do have anything to add to that piece?

Julie (12:57)

Yeah, as you were saying that my what came to my mind was the Lord's Prayer. He says, you know, when you pray, this is how you should pray and then structures it. And so, yeah, that's a procedure. I mean, it doesn't seem like it because obviously it's a prayer. It's personal for us. But yeah, it is kind of laid out there like a procedure. So I could imagine he'd probably have some pretty good procedures in place.

Linda Kardamis (13:04)

Hmm.

I think you'd have some pretty wise ones.

So the third and fourth area of a classroom management plan that we teach has to do with positive reinforcement, or you could think of it as rewards and then consequences. And this is an area that I think, my goodness, we could do like an entire series of podcast episodes just on this question, so we don't have time to go super deep. But I do believe that Jesus would not shy away from rewards or consequences. And the reason I say that is because

He doesn't in real life. sometimes we think of rewards and consequences as just the carrot and the stick, as if that's like all that's happening. And those don't get to the heart, right? So we just already talked about Jesus was all about getting to the heart. And that is what's most important. But you notice that God actually,

doesn't remove all rewards and all consequences because he only cares about the heart. He actually, I think, uses rewards and consequences to try to get to our hearts. Right? mean, God talks about heavenly rewards that we can earn, and there's clearly consequences for sin. These are things that are baked into who God is, how he operates, how he set up the world. So I can't picture Jesus artificially removing all rewards from his classroom.

artificially removing all consequences from his classroom. Now, I think the way he would apply them would be so much wiser than I ever would, or most of us ever would. But I do think it would be part of what he's doing, and I think he would use them really, really wisely. And maybe we can link in the show notes to an episode where we talk more about consequences and how God actually uses consequences in our life not to change us. They can't change us.

but to show us our sin and show us where we're wrong and actually show us our need of himself. But that's kind of a, I'm that's getting in a little bit too deep. Julie, are your thoughts on this piece? It's a very interesting thing to think about.

Julie (16:06)

Yeah, on the reward side, I was thinking about, well done, my good and faithful servant. And of course we all hope that's what we hear one day. And sometimes rewards aren't necessarily physical things. We tend to think that because that's what our students love. They love the Jolly Ranchers and the stickers, of course, but sometimes a reward is just that positive affirmation and like, Hey, great job. And a little bit like that does go a long way.

Linda Kardamis (16:17)

Mm-hmm.

Yeah, absolutely. So for sake of time, we're going to move on to the last piece of the classroom management plan. And that is when we work with teachers, so we have expectations, procedures, positive reinforcement, consequences, and then we have teachers actually think through. For every scenario in your classroom, how would you respond? What are you going to do when students are talking, when they're being disruptive, when they're rude to each other? And the reason that we have teachers do that is because I don't know about you, but me, like if I haven't thought about it ahead of time, I don't...

I don't have infinite wisdom in the moment. I am panicking. I don't know what I'm doing. I let it go. I'm inconsistent. It depends on my mood. So I don't know. When I thought about this, I was like, this is really interesting. Jesus has all wisdom, infinite knowledge. He would never be ruled by his feelings in any given moment. So I actually don't know if he would have thought through. I don't know if he would need to write down and think through all his responses ahead of time. I think he would always know, like you're talking about

exactly the best thing to do in this situation. What is uniquely best for this moment in this thing? I mean, we see him do that, right? He handles every situation just a little bit differently. ~ So I really wonder, I kind of feel like because he is God, he wouldn't need to do that. ~ But I think it could be a good tool for us who are not infinite. I don't know, what are your thoughts on this one, Julie? It's interesting to think about.

Julie (17:59)

Yeah, he's never caught off guard, right? But we are. We're humans. We get caught off guard. I get flustered when something happens in the classroom that I wasn't expecting and I did not prepare for. Yeah, just the human side. I don't know if Jesus would, ~ but I think in our case, it probably would be best for us, even though it might not be something that Jesus would do. I'm sure he would point us to do this because being prepared is always best.

Linda Kardamis (18:03)

Yes.

Yeah, and I think it is important to remember when for us when we're writing a classroom management plan, it's our plan. We are not a slave to the plan, right? We're not going to be legalistic about the plan. It is a place to start. It is a tool to help us be consistent and as fair as we can, but we can always be praying. And if God leads us in any given moment to deviate from the plan.

because he's giving us wisdom on what this child needs or what's going on, then we do. So I hope that never comes across that the plan is like, you must be perfectly, you know, adhere to it and even know it's a tool to help us have, it's basically a tool for us to try to think through and have wisdom ahead of time so that we have that space to think and bring that wisdom that we've pre-thought rather than that knee-jerk reaction. But yeah, it's just a tool. The Holy Spirit in us can guide us and adjust.

And I think it's actually easier to adjust when we have a plan and we can deviate than when we're just blank, blank, that kind of deer in a headlights blank, blank stare. So I think it's important.

Julie (19:29)

Absolutely.

## **19:31 The Importance of Spending Time with Jesus**

Linda Kardamis (19:31)

So I hope you guys have enjoyed kind of just thinking through. It really is a thought experiment. We would love your thoughts in the comments. Hop on over to our YouTube video or the page, the blog post for this episode and kind of share your thoughts. I'd love to hear how you think Jesus would handle various situations. But Julie, you were sharing one thing that I think would be a great place to end about how important it is to actually spend time with Him, right? So that we know Him better and that He can change us and make us more like Him.

Julie (20:02)

Right. You've heard the saying, you are who you hang around and well, the more you hang around Jesus, the more time you spend in prayer with Him, I feel like the more you will embody what He believes and what He wants for us. And so, yeah, the more time you spend in prayer, the more time

you spend in the Word, it won't be for naught. The more you'll be able to hopefully produce those fruits of the Spirit and just show grace and love to your kids as He did for us, that's ultimately

what we want to do is exactly that.

Linda Kardamis (20:34)

Yeah. So a couple resources for you guys as we wrap up. One, if you're like, yes, I want to spend time with them, but it gets lost in the business, we have a free 21-day prayer challenge. We just send you prompts to remind you to pray and give you specific things to pray for each day for yourself, your students, your school. That would be a great way to end the school year with that challenge. So you can get that at [teach4theheart.com / prayer challenge](https://teach4theheart.com/prayer-challenge). And then if you do feel like, man, this has been a rough school year, I want my classroom management to be better next year and I want

to learn about it from a Christian perspective, from people that are asking these questions, like what would Jesus do in classroom management? We have a couple resources for you. We have our complete Classroom Management 101 course, which is a fantastic resource to go through over the summer. You can find out about that at [teach4theheart.com / cm101](https://teach4theheart.com/cm101). ~ And if you use the code `podcast20`, that'll drop your rate down 20%. We also have just a free training if you wanna start there. You can get that free training, how to reduce disruptions.

at [teach4theheart.com / free](https://teach4theheart.com/free).

Well guys, thank you so much for being with us. We do hope this episode has been helpful. It's been brought to you in partnership with the Herzog Foundation. All views and opinions are our own and don't necessarily reflect those of the Herzog Foundation. We look forward to speaking with you again soon. In the meantime, teach to remember God is at work in you and through you, and he's using you to make a difference. Keep your eyes on him and teach for the heart.