

STUDY GUIDE

BE: Week 6 11.9.14

[set up]

Can you remember a time you have been shown great mercy? How did it feel? Has it has marginal or significant impact on your life?

Can you remember a time where you extended great mercy? How did it feel? Was it a one-time event or have your grown in your ability to be merciful?

[digging deeper]

Can you (and/or lifegroup) say the first five Beatitudes found in Matt. 5:3-7 from memory? Try. A goal is to be able to say the entire beatitudes passage from memory when this series is over (of course the greater goal is to live them not just know them!)

Are we merciful to get something from God or from others?

Look again at Matt. 5:7 from this last weekend. What does it say? What does it mean? What doesn't it mean?

Does having mercy mean that a person never acts on justice? How is it true that you cannot divorce mercy from judgment? How is that lived out say, in a parenting context? Or perhaps a work context? How about with family, friends or neighbors?

The Bible is clear that God is both a God of mercy and a God of justice. Are His mercy and justice incompatible concepts? (Is. 30:18; Is. 61:8; Hebrews 8:12)

How is it that only merciful people will find mercy from God in the day of final judgment if salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone? (Here is a great link to get a snapshot of God's mercy and justice being compatible <http://www.gotquestions.org/mercy-justice.html>)

In Matthew 18: 23-35, Jesus tells a story to give a deeper understanding of justice. Read it and extract all the lessons you can from this passage.

How has God shown us incredible mercy (see Eph 2:4-6; 1 Peter 1:3)?

How does being merciful demonstrate that we truly have new life in Christ?

Why is it so hard for us to extend mercy to others at times when we have received such great mercy from God?

[living it out]

We are told to be imitators of God (Eph 5:1). How are you doing imitating God's mercy? How has the call of Jesus to "be merciful" challenged you personally?

Fill in the blanks based on what God has impressed on your heart:

- I can be more merciful to my family members by _____
- I can be more merciful to my Neighbors (LifeHouse) by _____
- I can be more merciful to the people I work with by _____
- I can be more merciful to my brothers & sisters in Christ by _____
- How else has God placed on your heart a way to "move" toward mercy with someone in your life this last weekend or even during this time? What's the next step for you if so?

Close in prayer (A) thanking God for His incredible mercy and His perfect justice, (B) asking God to help you be merciful to others, because the Lord knows we have plenty of opportunity! (C) ask the Lord that your merciful actions will showcase God's mercy and help anyone you know that doesn't know Christ come to the Lord.