

The Mercy of God

Lesson for Sunday, July 6, 2025

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Pose a question: “Have you ever needed mercy—more than just a second chance, but real forgiveness and compassion?” (Try to think outside of our need for salvation.)
- ⇒ A classic story that powerfully teaches the value of mercy is "**Les Misérables**" by Victor Hugo. In this novel, the main character, Jean Valjean, is shown extraordinary mercy by Bishop Myriel.
 - After Valjean, a recently released convict, is caught stealing silver from the bishop, the bishop not only refuses to press charges but also gives him more silver and tells him to use it to become an honest man.
 - This act of unexpected mercy transforms Valjean’s life, leading him to become compassionate and merciful to others in turn.
- ⇒ These stories remind us that mercy has the power to change hearts and lives. Isn’t it wonderful that we serve the God of all mercy?

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Understanding God’s Mercy
 - a. Definition: Mercy is God’s compassion and kindness toward us, even though we deserve His judgment.
 - b. *Lamentations* 3:22-23 – “It is of **the Lord’s mercies** that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning.”
 - i. Some have defined grace as something we receive that we do not deserve, and mercy as something we do not receive but do deserve.
 - ii. This verse points out that it is God’s mercy that keeps us from being “consumed” (to be finished, to be destroyed completely).
 - c. *Ephesians* 2:4-5 – “But God, Who is **rich in mercy**, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.”
 - i. This verse teaches us that mercy is another one of God’s attributes. Mercy is not a random act of God; it is part of His character.
 - ii. To tie this in with Lamentations 3, His mercy is new (renewed, fresh) every single morning.
2. Biblical Examples of God’s Mercy
 - a. Utilize groups for this point. Have a group look up one of the assigned texts and report back how God’s mercy is on display within the text.
 - b. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32): The father’s response to his wayward son is a picture of God’s mercy—open arms, forgiveness, and restoration.
 - c. David and Bathsheba (Psalm 51): After David’s sin, he cries out for mercy. God forgives him, showing that no one is beyond mercy.

- d. Jesus and the Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8:1-11): Jesus says, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” Mercy triumphs over judgment.
 - e. As you wrap up this point, remind your class that as we read these biblical accounts, we are the ones who need God’s mercy! We are the prodigal son, David captured in our sin, and the woman caught in adultery (see also Romans 3:23 – we **all** fall short).
3. How Should We Respond to God’s Mercy?
- a. In light of what we have learned about God’s mercy, how are we to react?
 - b. First, we should receive God’s mercy.
 - i. Don’t let guilt or shame keep you from God. His mercy is greater than your mistakes.
 - ii. See James 2:13 – “mercy triumphs over judgment”
 - c. Second, we should extend God’s mercy to others.
 - i. Learn to follow God’s example and live a life characterized by mercy.
 - ii. We live in a world that focuses more on revenge than mercy. It’s not difficult to be salt and light in this area!
 - iii. See Micah 6:8 – “What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and *to love mercy* and to walk humbly with your God.” Learn to extend mercy to others.
 - d. Third, live in the mercy of God.
 - i. See Hebrews 4:16.
 - ii. God’s mercy is not just something we need for salvation. We need it for daily living.
 - iii. In this verse, the Bible reminds us that God’s mercy is available at the exact moment we need it. All we have to do is ask.

APPLICATION:

- ⇒ What are we to do in light of God’s mercy? Allow God’s mercy to transform your life. When we receive mercy, our hearts are changed. We are empowered to extend mercy to others.
- ⇒ Have your class look up these verses and determine the difference God’s mercy makes:
 - Romans 12:1-2. This passage directly connects the experience of God’s mercy with a transformed life—one marked by inward renewal and outward holiness.
 - Ephesians 2:4-6. God’s mercy takes us from spiritual death to new life in Christ, fundamentally transforming our status and identity.
 - Titus 3:5. God’s mercy is the basis for our spiritual rebirth and renewal, not our own efforts.
 - 1 Peter 1:3. God’s mercy gives us a new beginning and a living hope, transforming our outlook and future.
 - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. God’s mercy transforms us into agents of comfort and compassion for others.