

ANSWERS: Who Is God?: Lesson 2 God Is Mercy

Learning to know and love God for who He is, His character, attributes and being

Lesson 2: God Is Mercy (Day One) Mercy Defined

The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. Psalm 145:9¹

1. Read Psalm 145:9. The LORD is good to all; He has compassion on all He has made.

Definition: Mercy is being good to people and helping them when they are in need, even though they do not deserve it.

Yet he was merciful; he forgave their iniquities and did not destroy them. Time after time he restrained his anger and did not stir up his full wrath. Psalm 78:38 (iniquity - sin, wrongdoing)

2. Read Psalm 78:38. What are four ways that God is merciful?

- (1) **Forgives iniquities or sin.**
- (2) **Does not destroy as sins deserve.**
- (3) **Restrains anger.**
- (4) **Does not stir up His full wrath.**

Read Psalm 86:6-7 and answer questions 3-4:

Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry for mercy.⁷ When I am in distress, I call to you, because you answer me. Psalm 86:6-7

3. Are you troubled and need to call out to God for mercy? Yes No (Circle One)

Personal Answer.

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4. If you answered "yes" in question 3, write out your request to God in the form of a prayer. If you answered "no," write a prayer of thanksgiving for how God has shown you mercy.

CLI Bible Minister: Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in making appropriate and helpful comments on this learner's personal need for God's mercy. Let your learner know that you are praying for this situation. If the learner answered no, praise God with him or her for how God has shown mercy.

Lesson 2: God Is Mercy (Day Two) *Old Testament Mercy*

Definition: Justice is the process of using laws to judge and punish crimes fairly.

5. How does God's justice and mercy blend together perfectly in Christ's death on the cross?

God was good to humans and sent Jesus to the cross to pay for our sins when we did not deserve it (mercy). While Jesus was on the cross, God judged and punished the crimes of humanity fairly (justice). There could be other similar answers.

Definitions from Lesson 2:

Justice is the process of using laws to judge and punish crimes fairly.

Mercy is being good to people and helping them when they are in need, even though they do not deserve it.

Read Acts 17:26-27 and answer questions 6-8:

From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. Acts 17:26-27 (Note: Adam is the one man)

6. All the people and all the nations came from how many people (v. 26)?

One.

7. Where should all these people live (v. 26)?

Over the whole earth.

8. Why did God make everyone from Adam, have them live over the whole earth and mark their time in history and the boundaries of their lands (v. 27)?

So people would seek Him and find Him.

Definition: Genetics is the study of heredity, or how the characteristics of living things are passed from one generation to the next when they reproduce. Every living thing contains the genetic material that makes up DNA molecules. The basic unit of heredity is the gene.

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Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him. Lamentations 3:22-25 (portion - inheritance share)

9. Read and meditate (think deeply) on Lamentations 3:22-25. How is God's mercy (compassion, forgiveness and goodness) new every morning *for you*?

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: please comment thoughtfully and appropriately.

Definitions: Sacrifice in the Old Testament is the offering of physical items to God through a priest to express loyalty, thanksgiving, or the need for forgiveness. Priests were people chosen to offer the sacrifices and perform other religious duties.

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught. Isaiah 29:13 (heart in this verse means mind, spirit and emotions)

10a. Read Isaiah 29:13. What did God want from the Israelite people in the Old Testament?

God wanted the Israelites to seek Him with their hearts. God wanted them to worship Him because they loved and desired a relationship with Him.

10b. What do you think God wants from people today?

The same. God wants us to love and seek Him with our hearts.

Reference: Matthew 22:36-38 - *Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"*

³⁷ *Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."* ³⁸ *This is the first and greatest commandment.*

You are to lay your hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on your behalf to make atonement for you. Leviticus 1:4

Recall from *Lesson One, God is Good*, atone means to bring together as one those who were enemies. Biblically, it is what Christ accomplished by His death and resurrection. We were enemies of God and Christ's death put us on the same team.

11. Read Leviticus 1:4. What outward sign showed a person's sins being transferred to the burnt offering?

A person was to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering.

The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-- not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Hebrews 10:1

12. Read Hebrews 10:1. Could the animal sacrifices take away a person's sins forever (make perfect)? Yes **No** (Circle One)

First he said, "Sacrifices and offerings, burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not desire, nor were you pleased with them"-- though they were offered in accordance with the law.⁹ Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will." He sets aside the first to establish the second.¹⁰ And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:8-10

13. Read Hebrews 10:8-10. Who sacrificed His own body to take away sins once for all?

Jesus Christ.

Lesson 2: God Is Mercy (Day Three) Nations and Individuals

Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. Micah 7:18

14. Read Micah 7:18. God does not stay angry forever but delights to show **mercy**.

And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Exodus 33:19

15. Read Exodus 33:19. Who does God have mercy on?

On whom He desires. It is God's choice.

Read Proverbs 28:13 and answer questions 16a-c:

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. Proverbs 28:13 (Confess - agree and come clean. Renounce - give up)

16a. Are you trying to hide secret sins from God? Yes No (Circle One)

Personal Answer.

16b. If you answered yes in a, will you confess your sins and give them up? Yes No (Circle One)

Personal Answer.

16c. If you answered no in b, what is keeping you from confessing and giving up your sins?

CLI Bible Minister: Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in making appropriate and helpful comments on this learner's unwillingness to confess (agree) with God about wrongdoing. Let your learner know that you are praying for this situation.

Some Bible verses to use in regard to confession:

Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." And you forgave the guilt of my sin. Psalm 32:5 (David praying)

Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43 (Jesus talking to the criminal on the cross next to Him)

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. 1 John 1:9-2:1

(The proud, self-righteous Pharisee was not forgiven (justified or made holy). But the humbled tax collector was forgiven and went home with peace in his heart. To justify is to declare righteous, to make one right with God.)

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people-- robbers, evildoers, adulterers-- or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'" But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Luke 18:9-14

Read Jonah 4:1-2 and answer questions 17-19:

He prayed to the LORD, "Isn't this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity." Jonah 4:2 (Relent - to give up or lessen a harsh intention or cruel treatment.)

17. What was the real reason Jonah did not want to preach against Nineveh?

Jonah knew God was merciful and might not punish the Ninevites.

18. How does Jonah describe God?

Gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

19. Is there someone or some group of people that you prefer would be judged and not to receive mercy from God? Yes No (Circle One) If you circled *Yes*, please explain your situation.

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: Please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in making appropriate and helpful comments on this learner's answer. Especially, if they prefer for someone or a group of people to be judged. Let your learner know that you are praying for this situation.

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Some Bible verses to use in regard to judging: (However, see how they respond to following questions. They may have a heart change during the lesson. We pray they do if they harbor unforgiveness, want others to be judged and not receive mercy.)

When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." John 8:7

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.³⁷ "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke. 6:35-38

You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.² Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth.³ So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Romans 2:1-3

20a. Who do you need to show mercy to?

Personal Answer.

20b. What good act will you do for this person(s) even though they do not deserve it?

Personal Answer.

20c. Explain what you did and how it worked out.

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: please comment thoughtfully and appropriately.

Read Psalm 86: 3-5 and answer questions 21-22:

...have mercy on me, Lord, for I call to you all day long.⁴ Bring joy to your servant, Lord, for I put my trust in you.⁵ You, Lord, are forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to you. Psalm 86:3-5 (Note: The shepherd and king, David, wrote this psalm.)

21. How does David describe God (v. 5)?

Forgiving and good, abounding in love to all who call to You.

22. Who does David put his trust in (v. 4b)?

God, the Lord.

23. In what area of your life do you need God's mercy?

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: please comment thoughtfully and appropriately.

24. Write a prayer to the Lord of mercy and ask for His help.

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: Join your learner in prayer.

Lesson 2: God Is Mercy (Day Four) New Testament Mercy

Mercy is being good to people in need, even though they do not deserve it. God *is* mercy. God is so good to undeserving people, He sent His perfect Son to die for our sins.

Read Ephesians 2:1-7 and answer questions 25-28:

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions-- it is by grace you have been saved.⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:1-7 (v. 2 The spirit in the disobedient is Satan.)

Defintion: Grace is God's love in action to undeserving people. The height (pinnacle) of God's grace is Jesus Christ.

25. Were *you* dead in your wrongdoing and sins at one time (v. 1)? **Yes** No (Circle One)

26. Who were you following when you were *not* following Jesus (v. 2)?

Satan, the devil. Ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is at work in those who are disobedient.

27. Like every sinner, what do we deserve from God (v. 3)?

Wrath.

Note: The faster we train ourselves to see sin in ourselves, the faster we can have mercy on others. Self-righteous people look on other people's sin, but not their own. When we recognize all the wrong things we have done, we judge less and forgive more.

28. Fill in the blanks from vs. 4-5: *But because of his great _____ love _____ for us, God, who is rich in _____ mercy _____, ⁵made us _____ alive _____ with _____ Christ _____ even when we were _____ dead _____ in transgressions-- it is by _____ grace _____ you have been _____ saved _____.*

29. God raises up believers with Christ. Where are believers seated, that is, what is our spiritual position or place (v. 6)?

Believers are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. Our position is in Christ.

30. Why does God raise up believers and seat us with Christ in the heavenly realms (v. 7)?

So that He might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Lesson 2: God Is Mercy (Day Five) Kinds of Mercy

Read Luke 6:27-29 and answer questions 31-32:

But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn to them the other also. If someone takes your coat, do not withhold your shirt from them.
Luke 6:27-29

31. Jesus commands us to: ___ **Love** ___ our enemies, do ___ **good** ___ to those who ___ **hate** ___ you (v. 27).

Definitions: To bless another person means speaking well of him and praying to God for his good. To curse another person means speaking badly of him; criticizing or insulting in an angry manner.

32. Jesus commands us to: ___ **ble**ss ___ those who ___ **cur**se ___ you, ___ **pr**ay ___ for those who ___ **mis**treat ___ you (v. 28).

Read Luke 23:34 and answer questions 33-34:

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34

33. Jesus was nailed to the cross by His enemies and asked God the Father to _ **for**give _ them.

34. Did Jesus practice what He preached (taught) about loving enemies? **Yes** No (Circle One)

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, expecting to be repaid in full. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked."
Luke 6:32-35

35. Read and think deeply (meditate) on Luke 6:32-35. How will *you* apply these verses to your own life?

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: please comment thoughtfully and appropriately.

Read Matthew 18:31-33 and answer questions 36-37:

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.³² "Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to.³³ Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?'" Matthew 18:31-33

36. Why did the master call the servant wicked (vs. 32-33)?

Because the wicked servant was shown mercy when he asked, but not willing to have mercy on his fellow servant.

37. Is God like the merciful master who forgives our debts (sins)? **Yes** No (Circle One)

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"³⁷ The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise." Luke 10:36-37

38. Read Luke 10:36-37. When Jesus said, "Go and do likewise," what does He mean?

Have mercy on others like the Good Samaritan did in the parable.

39. Pray and ask God for someone that you can help. Write what happened and how you showed mercy by helping someone.

Personal Answer. CLI Bible Minister: please encourage your learner in his or her assignment to help someone.

40. Write your memory verse, Luke 6:36, without looking at the verse in your Bible or notes:

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 1 Peter 1:3-5

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace you have been saved.⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-7

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41. Read and meditate on 1 Peter 1:3-5 and Ephesians 2:4-7. What are some ways God has been merciful to you in Christ Jesus?

Personal Answer. But from 1 Peter 1:3-5: **New birth in Christ Jesus, an inheritance in heaven that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is secure through faith shielded by God's power until salvation is revealed in last days.**

Ephesians 2:4-7: **Great love, made us alive with Christ when dead in transgression, saved by grace, seated with Christ in the heavenly realms and incomparable riches of His grace and kindness.**

-End of Lesson Two-

Next Lesson 3: Who Is God? God Is Love

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