

Small Group Discussion Guide



Ice Breaker: What flower do you enjoy most in spring? Did you enjoy spring as a child?

Instructions: If your group meets bi-weekly do 3 & 4.

1. Read Nehemiah 9:17b and Micah 7:18. Micah declares, "Who is a God like you..." What does Micah declare about our God? How has God's pardoning and forgiving affected your life? How does the fact that God delights to show mercy impact your daily life? Have you known someone who longed for forgiveness (from God or other people) but it was not granted or understood? How did it influence their life?
2. Read Romans 3:23-24 and Colossians 1:13-14. How do these verses show that God unreservedly forgives us? Pastor Tom gave two reasons why we struggle with this truth. He said that we don't believe it because it seems too good to be true, or we feel as if we don't deserve it. Have either of these reasons been an issue for you? How so? Have you been able to overcome that struggle? What enabled you to do so?
3. Pastor Tom said that God forgives *instantaneously* (see 1 John 1:9 and Isaiah 55:7b) and *totally* (see Colossians 2:13b-14, Micah 7:19 and James 2:13b). Pastor Tom further stated that "God could've exercised justice, but chose mercy to reign in Jesus Christ." Why would He do this? How should this affect our relationships with others? Review your response to the Forgiveness Quiz. What did you learn about your ability to forgive from this simple quiz?
4. What should be the extent of our forgiveness to others according to Ephesians 4:32? Pastor Tom stated that we start to heal from an offense not by repaying, replaying it, resentment, or revenge, but by releasing it to God. Have you found this to be true? Review the "Mercy is new every day" section in your notes. Which of these statements strikes you most? What must you do to safeguard yourself to be quick to forgive? How might your group help you accomplish this?

Personal Guide for Week of April 2nd

DAY 1 – Read Psalm 103:2-3, 12. What does David assure us about our sin?

DAY 2 – Read Colossians 1:3-14. How was forgiveness to us made possible?

DAY 3 – Read Colossians 2:6-14. To what extent were our sins forgiven and what did God do with them?

DAY 4 – Read Ephesians 4:17-32. What is our forgiveness to look like toward others?

DAY 5 – Read Matthew 6:14-15. What can hinder God from forgiving us?

NEW *every* DAY

MESSAGE NOTES &
SMALL GROUP GUIDES

How Mercy Works
4/2/17



“How Mercy Works”
[Tom Lundeen, Senior Pastor]

MESSAGE NOTES

Mercy is one of God's _____ attributes, but understanding how mercy works in our lives and in the lives of others is often challenging.

Because every human being has spiritually defective DNA, we constantly need mercy, and we're s_____ by people who also constantly need mercy.

Mercy works by bringing forgiveness and forgiveness brings _____ into all aspects of our lives including all our relationships (note Matthew 6:12).

_____ = undeserved forgiveness and unearned kindness.

Mercy Means:

1. God _____ Me

This is the greatest good news _____!

Problem is we “_____” to this gift.

Do you”_____” forgiven?

- A. God _____ to forgive me (note Nehemiah 9:17b; Micah 7:18b) - One of God's _____ things to do is forgiving us.
- B. God u_____ forgives me (note Romans 3:23-24; Colossians 1:14) - we tend to struggle with this truth for one of 2 reasons (either we don't _____ it because it seems too good to be true; or we feel we don't _____ it).
- C. God i_____ forgives me (note I John 1:9; Isaiah 55:7b).
- D. God _____ forgives me (note Colossians 2:13b-14; Micah 7:19; James 2:13b) - God could've exercised justice, but chose mercy to _____ in Jesus Christ.

2. I Forgive Others

FORGIVENESS QUIZ

- A person should not be forgiven until he or she asks for it. **T F**
- You haven't really forgiven until you've forgotten the offense. **T F**
- Forgiving includes minimizing the offense and the pain caused. **T F**
- Forgiveness includes restoring trust and reuniting a relationship. **T F**
- When I see someone hurt, it is my duty to forgive the offender. **T F**

Forgiveness is:

- A. Not C_____ (note Ephesians 4:32b; Colossians 3:12-14)
- B. Not F_____ (note Hebrews 8:12; II Timothy 4:14-15)
- C. Not T_____ - trust...is _____. Trust takes time and evidence of _____.
- D. Releasing it to God (note Colossians 3:13) - we start to heal not by repaying, _____ it, resentment or revenge.

Mercy is new every day:

- Unforgiveness creates an u_____ in your life that takes you places you don't want to go...
- Holding on to a hurt eventually turns it into a _____.
- Forgiveness = “to offer gift of _____...releasing/setting free”.
- Forgiveness is not a gift we give, but a gift God gives that we simply pass on to others.

Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey. You can also use the connect card to let us know about your commitment, too!



“How Mercy Works”
Tom Lundeen, Senior Pastor

MESSAGE NOTES

Mercy is one of God’s primary attributes, but understanding how mercy works in our lives and in the lives of others is often challenging.

Because every human being has spiritually defective DNA, we constantly need mercy, and we’re surrounded by people who also constantly need mercy.

Mercy works by bringing forgiveness and forgiveness brings freedom into all aspects of our lives including all our relationships (note Matthew 6:12).

Mercy = undeserved forgiveness and unearned kindness.

Mercy means:

1. God Forgives Me

This is the greatest good news ever!

Problem is we “get used” to this gift.

Do you “feel” forgiven?

- A. God desires to forgive me (note Nehemiah 9:17b; Micah 7:18b) – One of God’s favorite things to do is forgiving us.
- B. God unreservedly forgives me (note Romans 3:23-24; Colossians 1:14) – we tend to struggle with this truth for one of 2 reasons (either we don’t believe it because it seems too good to be true; or we feel we don’t deserve it).
- C. God instantaneously forgives me (note 1 John 1:9; Isaiah 55:7b).
- D. God totally forgives me (note Colossians 2:13b-14; Micah 7:19; James 2:13b) – God could’ve exercised justice, but chose mercy to reign in Jesus Christ.

2. I Forgive Others

FORGIVENESS QUIZ

- A person should not be forgiven until he or she asks for it. T F
- You haven’t really forgiven until you’ve forgotten the offense. T F
- Forgiving includes minimizing the offense and the pain caused. T F
- Forgiveness includes restoring trust and reuniting a relationship. T F
- When I see someone hurt, it is my duty to forgive the offender. T F

Forgiveness is:

- A. Not Conditional (note Ephesians 4:32b; Colossians 3:12-14)
- B. Not Forgetting (note Hebrews 8:12; 2 Timothy 4:14-15)
- C. Not Trusting – trust...is earned. Trust takes time and evidence of change.
- D. Releasing It to God (note Colossians 3:13) – we start to heal not by repaying, replaying it, resentment, or revenge.

Mercy is new every day:

- Unforgiveness creates an undertow in your life that takes you places you don’t want to go...
- Holding on to a hurt eventually turns it into a hate.
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- Forgiveness is not a gift we give, but a gift God gives that we simply pass on to others.

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