

## LESSON 7: GOD IS MERCIFUL

This Sunday school lesson will teach children about God's mercy and why we should be merciful to others.

### TOPICS

Character of God, Knowing God, Mercy

AS KIDS ARRIVE (10 minutes)

Sticky Note Mercy (Activity)

### RICH IN MERCY

The children will create a Sunday school craft to remind them of God's mercy.

### TOPICS:

Character of God, Knowing God, Mercy

### MATERIALS:

Medium cardstock

Permanent markers

Glitter glue (various colors)

Baby wipes

Small paint brushes (for the Timesaving Option)

### DURATION:

Approximately 15 minutes



[See sample pdf on website](#)

### PREPARATION:

Neatly write "Rich in Mercy" with a permanent marker at the top of each paper. Place the papers at each seat with a marker. Equally disperse the glitter glue across the table(s) so the children may choose and share colors. Place the baby wipes in the middle of the table for easy access.

### WHAT YOU WILL DO:

Tell the children to trace one of their hands (or ask a partner to trace their hand) on the papers in front of them. Then allow students to carefully decorate their traced hands as a symbol of their ability to be merciful to others in view of God's rich mercy toward us. Encourage the children to use the artwork as a reminder to be merciful to others.

Timesaving Option: Bring small paintbrushes for quicker and easier application of the glitter glue.

Increased-Difficulty Option: After decorating the traced hand, children may use the markers to draw other shapes (e.g. hearts and crosses) and continue decorating their artwork.

#### OPENING PRAYER AND PRAISE (5 minutes)

[The Love of God](#)

[Every move I make](#)

[Focus](#)

[All I want us to be like you](#)

#### MEMORY WORK (12 minutes)

"You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy." Micah 7:18b NIV

Prepare ahead of time by writing each word of the verse on a separate index card. Hide the cards throughout the classroom. Read the verse out loud at least twice with the children before allowing them to search for the cards. Ask them to work together to put the cards in order. Once the verse is complete, and if time allows, take out words one at a time and ask for volunteers to complete the verse.

#### SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

Introduction:

Tell the children about a time when you were given mercy. Emphasize that a punishment was deserved, but the person in authority chose to give mercy instead. Ask for volunteers to share about a time when they did something wrong and were given a second chance instead of a punishment. Help the children understand that God expects us to give mercy to others because he is so extraordinarily merciful to us.

Read Micah 7:18 (God is incomparably merciful)

Read the passage out loud to the class. Then ask the children to state the words that describe God (merciful, forgiving, delightful, etc). Emphasize that God's mercy is not given out of obligation but because He "delights" in giving second chances. We should strive to be merciful to others because God is merciful to us.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is mercy? (The withholding of a deserved punishment.)

2. How is God's view of mercy different than our "human" view of mercy? (He loves to give mercy, He doesn't stay angry forever, He continuously forgives, etc.)

Read Ephesians 2:4-5 (Jesus is God's greatest display of mercy)

Ask for a volunteer to read the verses and comment on the main idea (God's rich mercy gave us Christ so we can be saved). Talk about the word "rich" to emphasize the endless, extraordinary reality of God's mercy, as displayed through His plan for salvation.

Discussion Questions:

1. How are we made "alive in Christ"? (Through repentance of sins and believing in Jesus as God's Son.)
2. How can we be "rich in mercy" as believers? (Forgiving when we want to hate, extending love instead of revenge, telling others about Jesus, etc.)

Read 1 Timothy 1:15-16 (God's mercy to us will draw others to Him)

Introduce the passage by explaining that Paul, who had once sought Christians to kill them and put them in jail, is the author of this letter. Ask for a new volunteer to read the verses and then tell the children to put their fingers on the words "I am the worst" in verse 15. Explain that God's mercy had so completely changed Paul's life that he thought of himself as the worst sinner in the world! Tell the class that humility is a product of understanding and thankfully receiving God's mercy in our lives.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the reason for God's mercy on Paul? (That others would see Christ's patience and also want to believe.)
2. In what specific ways has God shown you mercy? (Protection from a bad decision, the opportunity to receive salvation, forgiveness of our sins, etc.)
3. Why should we give mercy to others? (Because God gives us endless mercy!)

Conclusion:

God is extremely merciful with us, as evidenced through the death and resurrection of His son, Jesus. We should follow God's example and give mercy to others. Also, extending mercy in humble obedience has the power to draw others into a relationship with Christ.

ALTERNATE CLASS EXERCISE (15 minutes)

Parable of the Unmerciful Servant

### PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

The children will participate in a skit that teaches them to give mercy to others because God has given mercy to us. (A skit for six to seven people: 2 Narrators, King, 3 Servants, and 1 Prison Guard)

by Leah Pittsinger

TOPICS:

Character of God, Knowing God, Mercy

MATERIALS:

Crown (King)

Robe (Servant 1)

Belt (Servant 2)

Head Sash (Servant 3)

Plastic sword (Guard)

Handout [PDF] See website

DURATION:

Approximately 10 minutes



(The King sits down on a chair as Servant 1 approaches. Servant 3 and the Prison Guard stand near the King.)

Narrator 1

There once was a King who wanted his debts to be repaid. Therefore, a servant who owed him ten thousand bags of gold humbly approached him to beg for mercy because he couldn't repay his debt.

King: Where is my gold?

Servant 1

(Bowling at the King's feet.) I cannot pay my debt.

King: Then I order that you and your entire family be sold as slaves to repay me.

Servant 1 Please be patient and have mercy on me! I will pay back everything I owe.

King: (Rubbing his chin.) Very well. I will have pity on you and cancel your debt. You may go.

Narrator 2 The servant left with excitement because his debt had been cancelled.

(The Prison Guard and Servant 3 follow Servant 1.)

Narrator 1 As the servant left the King's presence, he met another servant who owed him money and suddenly became angry.

Servant 1 (Shaking his fist at Servant 2.) You owe me 100 silver coins! Give them to me now!

Servant 2 Please be patient and have mercy on me! I will pay back everything I owe.

Servant 1 (Motioning to the Prison Guard.) I will not have mercy on you! Throw this man into prison until he repays his debt.

Prison Guard Yes Sir.

(The Prison Guard takes Servant 2 by the arm and leads him away. Servant 3 is shocked at Servant 1's behaviour and speaks out.)

Servant 3 This isn't right! I'm going to tell the King.

Narrator 2 The other servants were angry when their friend was thrown into jail because the first servant was given mercy by the King but wouldn't give mercy to someone else.

Servant 3 (Arriving at the King's throne with Servant 1 and the Prison Guard following closely behind.) You gave this servant mercy and cancelled his debt, but now he has thrown someone into prison for the debt they owe him.

King Is this true?

Servant 1 Yes, it is true.

King You wicked servant! You begged me for mercy, and I cancelled your debt. Now, I hear that you put someone else in prison for the very same reason? Why didn't you have mercy on him like I did to you? Prison Guard, please take him away.

Prison Guard Yes, sir.

Narrator 1 So the servant was led away to be tortured because he had received so much mercy but would not give mercy to someone else.

Narrator 2 The Bible says in Matthew 18 that God will also judge us if we will not give mercy to others. Because He has done so much for us, we should be quick to give mercy and forgive.

Application:

Explain to the class that this skit is from a parable (an earthly story with a spiritual message) that Jesus told about mercy in Matthew 18:23-35. Practice reading the skit before acting out the parts and add input where needed. Then perform the skit and ask the following discussion questions:

1. Who does the King represent in this parable? (God.)
2. Who does Servant 1 represent? (Us.)
3. Who had the greater debt – Servant 1 or Servant 2? (Servant 1.)
4. So why should we give mercy to others? (Because God has given us even more mercy.)

APPLICATION (5 minutes)

Help the children evaluate their willingness to give mercy to others by thinking about the following questions:

1. How does it feel to receive mercy?
2. How does it feel to refuse giving mercy to someone else?
3. When was the last time I gave mercy to another person?
4. What can I do to have a more merciful heart?

Support the children by admitting that mercy is challenging because we are imperfect and sinful. However, when we pray, read the Bible, and rely on God's guidance, we will be better equipped and have an increasing desire to extend mercy to others.