

2025-06-01 Merciful

Introduction

As we prepare to teach this lesson, let's pause and reflect on the incredible mercy of God. Somberly ponder these words:

Ephesians 2:1-3—And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

Dead. Sons of disobedience. Children of wrath. That is our identity by nature. Hopeless and helpless—were it not for these next words in verse 4...

But God, being rich in mercy...

That God is merciful to sinners who are, moment by moment, deserving of His wrath is truly amazing. More marvelous is His saving mercy extended to those whom He has called to be His people. It is a mercy that is a gift—unearned and unmerited by anything that we have done. How thankful we should be that we have a heavenly Father that seeks out wayward children, and then, in His great mercy, extends to us His steadfast love and forgiveness.

Pray that through the telling of the Bible story, the children would see their desperate need for God's mercy and forgiveness. May they perceive God as a merciful Father, running toward wayward sinners like themselves, with arms outreached welcoming them home. May God be at work, breaking down any notions of self-sufficiency and salvation by works.

References

- [The ABCs of God - Lesson 27 - Merciful](#)
- [The ABCs of God - Application Resources](#)
- [The ABCs of God - Classroom Handouts](#)
- [The ABCs of God - Optional Activities](#)
- [The ABCs of God - Review Activities](#)

Before Service

Ensure parents take their child to the **restroom** before bringing them to the children's area and use the **QR code** to sign in their child before the service.

Praise and Worship (15 mins)

Parents: The parent and child scheduled for this week will lead us in singing on Sunday. Please take time to practice the songs together at home, helping your child feel confident and joyful as they prepare to lead.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/qTx6gwc5sWo?si=l6oiH5vkAjjkFmCW>

https://www.youtube.com/embed/E7Uvg7_42fQ

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1GfOLpa3KK6Gffv_EfFbi-LZf4uNX57VHdAnT8nguxb4/embed?start=false&loop=false&delayms=3000

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CSDs6MqP1kyQ5NxTjDPcrTJTbGLiipDt/preview>

Prayer and Offering (5 mins)

Parents: Please encourage your children to bring an offering to church. You may help your child prepare by setting aside a coin for them to bring on Sunday. This is a great opportunity to teach them about giving to God with a thankful heart and trusting Him to provide.

“ What is Offering?

Offering is when we **give something to God** to show our love and thankfulness. In church, we often give money as an offering, but we can also give our time, talents, and kindness to God and others.

Why Do We Make an Offering?

1?? **To Thank God** – Everything we have comes from God! Giving back is a way to say, “Thank You, God!”

2?? **To Trust Others** – Offerings help the church teach about Jesus, help people in need, and share God’s love.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 9:7,
“God loves a cheerful giver!” That means God is happy when we give with a joyful heart!

Prayer for Offering

“ Dear God, thank You for giving us everything we need. We want to give back to You with joyful hearts. Please use our offering to help others and share Your love. Help us to always trust You. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

Review Verse from Last Week

2 Peter 3:9 NIV —*'The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.'*

Bible Story (10 min): God is Merciful

Introduction (1 min)

(Teacher stands in front of the class holding a small garbage pail with crumpled paper, banana peel, etc.)

“ "Okay, everyone—take a look at what I brought today. Yep... a garbage pail! Let's take a whiff... Phew! It smells awful, doesn't it? "

(Let the kids react—make it fun and dramatic.)

“ "Now imagine this: What if your best friend took your favourite toy—your most precious thing—and threw it right in here?"

(Hold the garbage can up high or pretend to toss something in.)

“ "How would you feel? Angry? Sad? Hurt?"

(Pause and let them respond.)

“ "Would you forgive them?"

(More responses—smile and nod as they answer.)

“ "Today, we're going to hear a story Jesus told about a son who did something even worse than that. He didn't just throw away a toy... he threw away his father's love and kindness. But what happened next might surprise you."

(Lean in, lower your voice a little.)

"The father didn't yell at him... He didn't send him away... Instead, he ran toward his son—with open arms. Just like this."

(Open your arms wide, smiling.)

“ “And do you know why? Because the father was merciful. That means he showed kindness and forgiveness—even when it wasn't deserved. And guess what? That's what God is like.”

"Let's find out how this story goes."

Story Telling (5 min) - The Merciful Father (Luke 15:11–20)

(Props needed: Bag of money, Picture of pigs, Garbage pail, Father visual or arms-wide gesture)

“ “Jesus once told a story to help people understand how kind and forgiving God is. It's not a real story—it's a parable, which means it's made-up but teaches us something true about God.”

(Hold up the bag of money.)

“ “There was a man who had two sons. One day, the younger son said something shocking. He said, 'Dad, give me my part of your money now.'”

(Pause and look surprised.)

“ “Now kids... how do you think that made the father feel? (Let them answer.)”

(Nod.)

“ “That's right—it was disrespectful. It's like saying, 'I want your stuff, but I don't care about you.' But guess what? The father gave him the money.”

(Hand the 'money' to an imaginary son.)

"The son took it, packed up, and went far, far away. And he didn't spend the money on good things. Nope. He wasted it."

(Pretend to throw the money around.)

“ "Parties, junk, wild living—until one day, he had nothing left. And then... a famine came. That means no food, no money, no help."

"He was so hungry that he got a job feeding pigs."

(Hold up the pig picture.)

“ "And kids, do you know what he wanted to eat?"

(Pause and whisper.)

“ "Pig food!"

(Make a gross face. Let the kids react.)

“ "That's how bad it got. He was alone, starving, and sad."

"But then... he remembered his dad. He thought, 'Even my dad's servants have food. I'll go home and say: Dad, I've sinned. I'm not worthy to be your son. Can I just be your servant?'"

(Point to the door or gesture walking.)

“ "So he started the long walk back home... probably nervous and ashamed."

"But while he was still far away, his father saw him. And what do you think the father did?"

(Pause. Let kids guess.)

“ "Did he yell, 'You're in trouble!'? Did he say, 'Where's my money?'"

(Shake your head.)

“ "No. The Bible says the father ran to him."

(Pretend to run in place.)

“ "He hugged him. He kissed him. He welcomed him home!"

(Hold out your arms.)

“ "Why? Because the father loved his son. He was merciful. He forgave him, even though the son had done wrong. He didn't give him punishment—he gave him a party!"

Wrap-up & Discussion (4 min)

“ "Kids, who do you think the son is like?" (Let them answer: "us")

"And who is the father like?" (Let them answer: "God")

"That's right. We all do wrong things. We disobey, we lie, we forget God. But when we come back to Him, truly sorry, God doesn't push us away. He runs to us."

"That's what it means when we say: God is merciful."

Memorizing Verse: Psalm 145:8

Psalm 145:8

"The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love."

“ "Alright, everyone! It's time to learn a special verse from the Bible about what God is like. This verse shows us why we call God merciful."

"Let's say it together once, and then I'll teach you hand motions to help you remember it."

? Break It Down & Explain

Let's say it together—repeat after me!

(Say in short phrases and have kids echo):

- “
- "The LORD" (Point both hands upward)
 - "is gracious and merciful" (Hold out your hands like you're giving a gift)
 - "slow to anger" (Move your hand slowly like a turtle)
 - "and abounding in steadfast love." (Put your hands over your heart, then stretch your arms wide)

“ Let's try the whole verse together with the motions!

Now close your eyes for a moment. Think about this: God is not quick to get angry with you. He is full of love and mercy—even when you mess up. Isn't that amazing?

Let's thank God quietly in our hearts right now.

Craft & Game (10 mins)

Craft: Mercy Sun Catcher (5 min)

Supplies Needed:

- Printed [Psalm 145:8 Sun Catcher](#) (one per child, preferably on translucent paper)
- Markers or crayons
- Tape (optional, to hang it later)

“ "Now we're going to make something beautiful that you can take home to remind you that God is merciful."

(Hold up a sample or show the blank sun catcher.)

“ "This is called a Mercy Sun Catcher. It has today's memory verse: 'The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.' —Psalm 145:8"

"As you decorate the border with bright colors, I want you to think about what that verse means."

(Pass out supplies.)

“ "God doesn't treat us as we deserve—He gives us love and forgiveness. That's His mercy. Just like the sun shines through the window, God's mercy shines into our lives!"

Optional prompts while they color:

- "Can you name a way God has shown you mercy this week?"
- "What part of the verse do you like the most?"
- "Where will you put your sun catcher at home?"

“ "When you hang this in a window at home, let it remind you: God's mercy is a gift. We can't earn it—but He gives it freely."

Game: "Mercy Tag" (5 min)

Setup:

- Clear open space
- Optional soft music or fun background track

“ "Now it's time for a game to help us remember what mercy feels like!"

Instructions:

1. "One person will be the Father—like in the story."
2. "Everyone else is a Son or Daughter who ran away and now wants to come home."
3. "The Father will gently tag someone. When you're tagged, stop and say: 'I'm sorry!'"
4. "Then the Father says: 'I forgive you!' and gives you a hug or high five to unfreeze you!"
5. "After a few rounds, we'll switch who gets to be the Father."

(Play the game for 3–4 minutes, rotate roles.)

“ "Did you notice something? When the Father forgave, he didn't punish or yell. He showed mercy!"

Ask:

- "How did it feel to be forgiven and welcomed back?"
- "What does that teach us about God?"

"Just like in our game, God is waiting with open arms for anyone who turns back to Him."

Response Song

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1F8Yca6JU6tYnIDn7tx8prWKB7tuMUH8Z/preview>

Closing Prayer & Snack Time (10 mins)

“ Dear God,

Thank You for being so merciful to us.
Thank You for always welcoming us back when we turn to You.
Help us to be merciful to others, just as You are merciful to us.
Help us remember that Your mercy is a gift we don't deserve.

Now, let us thank You for the snack we're about to enjoy.
We fold our hands.
We bow our heads.
We thank You, God,
for this daily bread.
Amen.

Free Time & Children Pickup (15 mins)

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