

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ::

WEEK THREE

CHANGED BY GOD'S MERCY



1. What impacted you from last week's message?
2. Which of these verses is the best description of God's mercy to you? And why does this verse speak to you?
3. In light of what you have been learning about God's nature during this study, why is His treatment of our sin (His mercy) so amazing?
4. Please read Psalm 103:8-14 again. Focus on the qualities of God's nature in these verses. Which of these are most difficult for you to demonstrate on a daily basis?
5. From these verses which qualities might be found:
 - a. In an unforgiving heart?
 - b. In a forgiving heart?
6. How does the word "therefore" connect Ephesians 5:1 to 4:32? What do you learn about imitating God by reading these verses together?
7. Please reread Ephesians 4:31-5:2. How could the sinful heart attitudes in 4:31 be a barrier to forgiving others?
8. Considering Ephesians 4:32, how could the qualities of kindness, tenderhearted, and forgiving work together in your relationships with others?
9. Based upon what you have learned this week about God's mercy, please share how He may be calling you to change to better imitate His mercy.
10. How does a more complete understanding of God's mercy impact your view of
 - a. God?
 - b. Yourself?
 - c. Your relationships with others?

II. My heart - _____ by _____ mercy.

HOMEWORK :: WEEK FOUR

CHANGED BY HIS HUMILITY AND SACRIFICE



DAY ONE

Pray: As you open this time in prayer, please tell the Lord one thing you're hoping to learn about today.

Memorize: Please write Philippians 2:3 on the following lines. (You may also want to write it on a notecard or on your phone so you can keep it with you and practice throughout the day.)

Study: Please read Romans 15:1-7 and answer the following questions.

1. In your life, how have you seen Jesus "bear with" your weak failings?

2. *How might it impact your life that the Lord is the:

a. God of endurance?

b. God of encouragement?

c. How would our lives be different if He was the opposite of endurance and encouragement?

3. *Think of the three years that Jesus had His ministry on earth. In what ways did Jesus welcome other people for the glory of God? (Some passages that may help in remembering are: Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 14:14-21, and John 4:7-30.)

4. In what ways does Jesus welcome you today? (If you need help to remember, some passages that may help are: Romans 5:8, Ephesians 2:1-5, and Hebrews 4:14-16.)

5. Please close this time in prayer. Tell the Lord what you see about Him in this passage that stirs your affection for Him. Talk to him about how that might help you with a current situation, attitude, or behavior in your life today.

DAY TWO

Pray: As you open this time in prayer, please tell the Lord one attribute about Him that you love deeply, and ask Him to show you something new about Him today.

Memorize: Please repeat Philippians 2:3 out loud several times, emphasizing different words each time. Is there a word that pops out to you and helps you understand the meaning a little deeper? If so, what is it, and how is it meaningful to you?

Study: Please read Romans 15:1-7 and, before answering the following questions, look back over what you learned about the Lord from Day 1.

1. Following Jesus' example, what is a way in your life today that you can "bear with the failings of the weak" in others?

2. What place does:

a. Endurance from God have in helping us not to seek to please ourselves?

b. Encouragement from God have in helping us not to seek to please ourselves?

3. *Romans 15:4 says that "the encouragement of the scriptures" can give us hope. Sometimes, it's hard not to see scripture as being just a list of do's and don'ts. Please read Psalm 19:7-9, a passage about God's word. What phrases from this passage give you hope and why?

4. *Please read Romans 15:5-6. What impact do you think the following phrases have on living in harmony with one another:

a. "In accord with Christ Jesus"

b. "Glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"?

5. Please choose one relationship in your life, and ask the Lord to give you wisdom on how you can grow in unity in that relationship. Please keep in mind, Romans 12:18 says, "Inasmuch as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." As you pray about this, remember that you're only responsible for your behavior, not the other person's.

DAY THREE

Pray: As you open this time in prayer, please tell the Lord one thing that makes it hard for you to study His word, and ask Him to help you overcome that.

Memorize: Please recite Philippians 2:3 out loud and pray the verse to the Lord.

Study: Please read Colossians 3:1-17 and answer the following questions.

From vs. 1-4:

1. If Jesus had not been raised and seated at the right hand of God, what would that mean for us?

2. *Why is it important that our life is "hidden with Christ in God" both in our present life on earth and for our future life in eternity?

From vs. 5-11:

3. What phrase from this passage shows you God's view of what is "earthly" in us and why does His view matter?

From vs. 12-17:

4. *All of the attributes that we're called to put on are modeled after "the image of its Creator" (vs. 10). Which attribute(s) from this passage impacts your worship of God at this time in your life and why?

5. Please close this time in prayer by telling the Lord which of His traits from this passage stir your affection for Him, and tell him what you would like to understand better about Him.

DAY FOUR

Pray: As you open this time in prayer, please ask the Lord to show you what relationship in your life you can be praying for as you study this passage.

Memorize: Please recite and review Philippians 2:3. Are there any parts of this verse that are harder to remember? Please go over those a few extra times.

Study: Colossians 3:1-17

From vs. 1-4

1. *What role does "setting our minds on things that are above" have on putting to death the earthly things listed in vs. 5-11. What role does it play in putting on the attributes listed in vs. 12-17?

From vs. 5-11

2. *How does holding onto these earthly things instead of putting them to death affect our relationships with others?

From vs. 12-17

3. *How does "putting on" the attributes listed in this passage affect our relationships with others?

4. Looking at the list of earthly things (vs. 5-11) and the list of attributes (vs. 12-17), what is your hardest earthly thing to “put to death,” and what is the attribute that is hardest for you to “put on?” What do you think makes them hard for you?

5. Please close this time in prayer, explaining to the Lord what you answered from Q4, and ask Him to help you overcome those things as you’re “being renewed in knowledge after the image of your Creator.”

DAY FIVE

Pray: Please open this time in prayer, telling the Lord one thing you’ve learned more deeply about Him this week and one thing you want to understand better.

Memorize: On the following lines, please write Philippians 2:3 from memory.

Study: Please review the passages we studied this week—Romans 15:1-7 and Colossians 3:1-17—to answer the following questions:

1. When are you tempted to focus on pleasing yourself rather than pursuing harmony with others?

2. What actions would you need to take, or what thoughts would need to be renewed, in order for you to turn to God and His word for endurance and encouragement?

3. *What truths about Jesus help you to turn to Him when your relationships with others need to be restored?

4. If there is a relationship in your life right now that needs to be restored, what step will you take in prayer and in action to bring unity back to that relationship “in one accord with Christ Jesus?” How can you be praying for other people’s relationships that are suffering?

5. As you close this time in prayer, please tell the Lord what you learned about Him, and share with Him how you’re going to apply that learning this week.

