

Small groups – Week beginning Monday 14th September 2020

Introduction/icebreaker

- How was your week? What went well? What were the challenges?
- What food do you love that a lot of people might find odd?

Recap from Sunday's teaching [Blessed life – Matt 5:1-12 esp v7]

- Mercy: Goodness/compassion to those in need. Reaching out, showing kindness. Choosing a different path even if we have the “right” or the power to hurt someone back.
- Stories of mercy: Good Samaritan (Luke 10), Jesus healing the soldier's ear (Luke 22/John 18)
- We can't receive mercy if we don't show it (James 2:13) – not because we earn God's mercy, but because we can't be truly repentant and dependant on God's mercy if we're still full of bitterness, pride etc.
- Know God's mercy & show God's mercy. Be the first to reach out!

Discussion questions

1. Did anything stick out or resonate with you from Sunday's teaching?
2. Can you think of a time when you experienced mercy? What happened? How did you feel?
3. On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is hard-hearted, keen for revenge etc and 10 is completely loving, kind, compassionate etc – where is your heart right now? Where would you fit in the story of the Good Samaritan?

Digging deeper

Read **Genesis 14:8-12**. Don't get caught up in the weird names – just a big battle between kings. Kings of Sodom & Gomorrah lost. Reality of war – winners and losers. In course of defeat, Lot & his family are captured – v12 he was living in Sodom. Shouldn't have been...see ch13-19. When he should have been living with his family, following God and staying clear of the God-rejecting city, Lot adopted the ways of S&G to the point where he was a leader of the city.

Read **Genesis 14:13-16**. Lot got the short end of the stick – the consequences of his choices. Abram(/Abraham) calls up 318 trained men and goes on an errand of mercy. He could reasonably have turned away, but instead he used his ability, power and means to rescue Lot, his family and all their possessions. Lot deserved to be captured and lose everything, yet Abraham went and saved him.

Read **Genesis 19:1** → WHAT WAS LOT DOING THERE?! Didn't learn last time. Do you see yourself?! → **v10-17** rescued once again, **v29** God's mercy a result of Abraham's prayer.

Gen 19:30ff → The rest of Lot's story isn't much more encouraging! Is Lot someone you would describe as being deserving of mercy?

There is so much in this worth reflecting on – Lot's gradual journey of compromise into Sodom, his rescue and subsequent return, the life-saving prayer of Abraham that he knew nothing about, the undeserved mercy of God and the unknown ending... How does this compare with your own journey?

Discuss – thoughts, takeaways, tangents...

Prayer

Take time to share prayer requests and pray for each other.