

**Mercy – Week 2**

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**HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS****GROUP PREP**

In preparation for group, [watch Emmanuel's weekend service message](#). Then answer the following discussion questions.

**SOCIAL TIME (10-15 minutes) - For Leaders**

Have an ice breaker ready, eat a snack together, or go around the circle asking your group members to share any news since your last meeting. Be intentional in helping your group members get to know one another during this time and make it fun.

Use the following ice breaker question, choose from one of the other ice breakers on Emmanuel's [leader tools](#), or create your own.

*As we prepare for a three week break to rest and refresh, how will you spend the time you normally meet in group for the next three weeks?*

**CHECK-IN (15-20 minutes) - For Leaders**

Ask your group what they learned after completing their action step.

**GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45-60 minutes)**

Do you believe that God delights in showing mercy and that his mercy triumphs over judgment? It's the truth! But this can be such a hard thing to swallow as we examine our past thoughts and behaviors.

1. Describe a time when you saw the goodness of God or experienced his faithfulness and felt like God safely had you in his grip of protection.

It's easier to accept the mercy and love of God when we feel like we are doing the right things and circumstances are going well in life. When we feel like we have failed or feel shame or guilt, it can be a totally different experience. We can see a wide gap illuminated between where God invites us to be and where we are.

Share a time in your life where the gap between where you knew God desired for you to be and the circumstances you were in caused you to walk away, settle for less or believe that you couldn't go to God for mercy.

**Mercy – Week 2**

2. Our most obvious source of understanding when it comes to the dynamics of relationships is through our own relationship experiences with other people. Because of that, we tend to project those same ideas on our understanding of our relationship with God.

What shortcomings are there in understanding a relationship with God if we use our human experience as the model?

Read [John 6:37-38 \(NLT\)](#) and [John 10:28-29 \(NLT\)](#).

Pastor Danny shared that we can easily *overestimate* our role in receiving God's mercy and *underestimate* God's grip of care and offering of mercy on us. Why might it be hard for us to believe that God will "never cast us out" or that no one can snatch us away from God?

3. In thinking about the image of God's tight grip as a fist that cannot be opened, how can an accurate view of God's mercy change the way you feel about the areas of life in which you struggle? Does it make it easier or harder to turn to him for mercy in times of weakness or failure when we have a correct view of his mercy?

4. Instead of walking away or giving up, we need to turn to God for mercy every time. Read [Isaiah 55:7-9 \(NLT\)](#). God is not like us. He doesn't tend to relationships like we do. He doesn't walk away or give up on a person. What would be different in your life if you turned to Him for mercy in areas that you are struggling right now?

This week, commit to memory one of the verses below as a reminder to turn to God for mercy when you fall short, instead of drifting away or giving up.

[James 2:13 \(NLT\)](#)

[Isaiah 55:7-9 \(NLT\)](#)

[Luke 6:40 \(NLT\)](#)

[John 6:38 \(NLT\)](#)

[Lamentation 3:22-23 \(NLT\)](#)

**Mercy – Week 2****ACTION STEP (10-15 minutes)**

Choose one of the following or create your own.

- **Memorize** a passage of scripture to remind you of God's mercy.
- **Read** the book, *Gentle and Lowly* by Dane Ortlund.
- **Daily time with God**. Determine the type of routine you'd like to have to spend time learning about what pleases God. Here are some ways to do this:
  - o [Download the Emmanuel app](#) and read the One Year New Testament daily.
  - o [Download the YouVersion app](#) and find a devotion you can do daily.
  - o If you recently placed your faith in Christ and texted SAVED to 65248, read the devotional provided in your starter kit.

**PRAYER (5-10 minutes)**

Give everyone in your group an index card. Ask them to write their name and action step on one side and a prayer request on the other. When finished, have everyone pass their cards to the left. Everyone in the group now has someone to connect with throughout the coming week for three reasons:

- 1) To build the relationship.
- 2) To encourage them to accomplish their action step.
- 3) To pray for in a specific way.

Ask them to place the index card on their nightstand or another place that would allow them to see it and use it every day.

**GROUP SERVING OPPORTUNITIES**

To determine how your group can serve together in the surrounding community, email Breanne Schafer, Emmanuel's Outreach Coordinator, at [bschafer@eclife.org](mailto:bschafer@eclife.org).

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

March 18 | [1824](#)

April 4 | Easter & [Baptism Service](#)

April 11 | [VERB](#)

*You can find more information on all of these events at [eclife.org](http://eclife.org).*

**Mercy – Week 2**

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**MIDDLE SCHOOL OBJECT LESSON & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

In preparation for group, watch Emmanuel's weekend service message and then answer the following discussion questions.

1. Imagine that you did something wrong and you are about to get in trouble from your parents, teacher, or maybe even the police. How would you feel?

You know that what you did was wrong and you know that you deserve to be punished for it. Instead of punishing you though, they forgive you and don't punish you at all. How would you feel about that?

That is mercy. We all love mercy, but sometimes we begin to wonder how much mercy God really has. Read [Lamentations 3:22-23 \(NLT\)](#).

**ACTIVITY:****Materials needed:**

Tub of water  
Eye dropper

**To play:**

Show everyone the tub of water. Ask: "How much water do you think is in this bucket?" (allow for some answers).

Now ask: "Let's not think in terms of gallons or cups." (Hold up an eyedropper). Ask: "How many drops of water do you think are in this bucket? Let's count them."

Start counting out drops and maybe get to 30 or so and the kids will see that counting them out is an impossible task. Say, "We have barely even taken any water out of this tub. There must be thousands of drops of water in here. God is able to give mercy more than there are drops of water in this bucket. Maybe we can get a clearer picture of His mercy if we think about how many drops of water are in the ocean.

Set the bucket aside and continue with the discussion questions.

2. That illustration showed us that God's mercy never runs out. He never gives up on us. Pastor Danny gave the illustration of God having a firm grip on us, not letting us go no matter what. How are relationships with other people your age different than a relationship with God?

**Mercy – Week 2**

People let us down, but God doesn't because God is not like us. (Give each student a small piece of candy and have them partner up. Have each student use hand sanitizer before the activity. If you have a student that is not physically able to participate, encourage them to be the timekeeper and judge of fair play.)

Without harming one another (Seriously, be sure to not hurt your partner!), have one partner hold the piece of candy in their hand and grip around the candy as tightly as they can. This partner should try to keep a firm, closed grip to keep the candy locked up tight for as long as they can. You have 30 seconds to try to break the candy free and try to get it out of your partner's hand.

Some of you might have been able to wiggle the candy out of your partner's hand, but imagine how tight of a grip God can have on your life. How can knowing that God will never walk away or give up on you change the way you feel about going to God for mercy in the areas of life in which you struggle? Does it make it easier or harder to turn to him for mercy in times of weakness or failure?

3. Give each student 5 notecards and a marker. Have students create a flashcard set for James 2:13. Memorize this scripture to remember that God's mercy never runs dry or walks away. Have them set up the cards as written below:

Card 1:	Mercy
Card 2:	Triumphs
Card 3:	Over
Card 4:	Judgement.
Card 5:	James 2:13

No matter how much you have messed up, God is never going to walk away.

So what do we do when we mess up? Do we walk away from God? Do we give up? When you do something that doesn't honor God, what actions should you take to seek God's mercy and restore your relationship with Him?

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

March 18 | [1824](#)

April 4 | Easter & [Baptism Service](#)

April 11 | [VERB](#)

June 14-18 | [Student Ministries Camp](#)

*Find more information on all of these events at [eclife.org](http://eclife.org).*

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