

# GOD'S MERCY IS JUST AND LOVING

## STORY: REDEMPTION

### BIG TRUTH: GOD'S MERCY IS JUST AND LOVING

Exodus 34:6-7; Titus 3:4-6; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 2:1-2; 4:9-10

### BIBLE VERSE: 1 JOHN 4:10

*"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

### BIG IDEAS

- God is fully loving and fully just.
- God offers mercy to those who do not deserve it.
- At the cross God's love, mercy, and justice are on full display.
- God can offer us mercy because Jesus bore the just penalty for our sin.

### BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 18:21-35

A king's servant owed him an enormous debt. The debt was so great, the servant would never be able to repay it. The king chose to forgive the servant his debt out of his mercy. The servant received mercy, but he did not show the same mercy to another servant who owed him money. We have all been shown mercy by God and we should show mercy to others.

### STORY: REDEMPTION

Thankfully, God does not just leave us in the broken world, but is repairing the brokenness through His Son. From the very beginning of time, God promised He would fix creation, and He kept His promise by sending Jesus to rescue us from our sin. Jesus came to live on the earth and willingly died on the cross so that sin's power over creation would be broken forever.

### BIG AIMS



#### Every child should know that:

- God provides mercy and grace through Jesus
- Mercy is when God does not give us what we deserve; grace is when God gives us what we do not deserve



#### Every child should feel:

- Awe at God's goodness in His mercy and grace to us



#### Every child should:

- Give thanks because God is merciful and gracious to us



#### Every child should want:

- To accept God's gifts of mercy and grace that He extends to us through Jesus

### FAMILY DEVOTION: GOD IS JUST AND MERCIFUL

God is completely just and He is merciful. God chooses to forgive us a debt we owe out of His great mercy to us.

**BIBLE VERSE: 1 JOHN 4:10**

*"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

**Our sin brings divine wrath.**

- Man's sin is against God.
- God is holy and righteous and He has given us everything, yet we reject Him.
- Our sin is not against other people or ourselves.
- Our sin is against God who is holy and just.
- Because we have sinned against Him and broken His perfect creation, His wrath is against us.
- Sin is a rejection of God and His commands.
- It deserves God's wrath.

**God's wrath is justified, but He shows mercy.**

- God's divine wrath is justified.
- Because of our sin, we deserve to feel the wrath of God.
- God does not show wrath to us, choosing instead to show mankind mercy.
- God gave His Son that we might not experience His wrath.
- Jesus felt the wrath of God in our place.
- Jesus bore the penalty for our sins in our place.
- God's wrath is justified, right and true, yet He chooses mercy over wrath.
- He loves us and chooses to pour His wrath onto Jesus and not us.

**BIBLE STORY: MATTHEW 18:21-35**

*The Unforgiving Servant*

**Opening Illustration:**

Give each child a shield cut out of cardstock and crayons. Help the children write their name on the shield and then give them crayons, glitter, and stickers to decorate their shields. Talk with the children about how God rescues us and fixes our relationships with Him and others.

**BIG IDEA: GOD IS FULLY LOVING AND FULLY JUST.<sup>1</sup>****God is perfect and all He does is good.**

- Everything that God does is good because He is perfect.
- He does not make mistakes or have bad judgment.
- Because God is perfect, His law is just.
- God's judgment is just and true.
- He does not judge harshly or unfairly.
- He judges correctly.



Print off a gavel template for the children to use to make their own gavel. Use brown or black construction paper or cardstock to make the gavel. Print the words Mercy and Justice on the gavels. Talk with the children about how God is fully loving and fully just at the same time. He shows mercy and is just.

**Though God is perfectly just, He is perfectly loving, too.**

- The king was just and loving to his servant.
- He judged the servant's debt correctly, yet he chose to show mercy to the servant.
- God has judged our debt correctly.
- The penalty of death given to our sin debt is just and true because God is just and true.
- God is loving because He chooses to show mercy to mankind.
- God is perfect so His love and justice are perfect.
- The king was just and merciful at the same time.
- He forgave his servant's debt and yet, when the servant refused to show the same mercy to his friend, the king imprisoned the servant.

*How is God loving and just? (He is perfect and He judges our debt correctly and shows mercy perfectly.)*

1. Psalm 18:30: God is perfect and good. His way is perfect and good.

**BIG IDEA: GOD OFFERS MERCY TO THOSE WHO DO NOT DESERVE IT.****God's mercy is undeserved.**

- We are all sinners who owe a great debt that we cannot pay.
- God doesn't make us pay the debt if we have saving faith.
- The king's servant owed a great debt.
- The servant would have never been able to earn enough in his lifetime to pay his debt back.
- The king was going to sell the servant and his family to pay his debt.
- The servant begged for mercy and the king chose to show the servant mercy instead.
- He forgave his servant's enormous debt.
- The servant did nothing to deserve the king's mercy.
- We do nothing to deserve God's mercy.



Divide the children into small groups. Read different scenarios to the children and ask the children to decide as a group if the people in the stories deserve mercy or justice. An example scenario is a person gets caught speeding on the highway. Talk with the children about how we deserve justice, but God shows us mercy.

**God chooses to show mercy because God is good.<sup>2</sup>**

- Nothing we do causes God to show mercy to us.
- We are not good enough or work hard enough to deserve God's mercy.
- God chooses to show mercy out of His own goodness.
- The servant did nothing to deserve the king's mercy.
- The king showed mercy because he was a merciful man.
- God shows us mercy because God is merciful.
- We do nothing to earn God's mercy, just like the servant did nothing to earn the king's mercy.

*Do we deserve God's mercy? (No, we do not deserve it.)*

*Did the servant deserve the king's mercy? (No, he did not.)*

2. Psalm 119:68: God is good. Everything He does is good.

## BIG IDEA: AT THE CROSS GOD'S LOVE, MERCY AND JUSTICE ARE ON FULL DISPLAY.<sup>3</sup>

### God's love is shown at the cross.

- God is perfectly loving and His perfect love is seen at the cross.
- He accepts the perfect sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as payment for our sin.
- He chooses to separate Himself from His Son that we might be saved.
- His love is shown because He willingly made a way for our debt to be paid.
- He sent His only Son to the cross to pay for our sin.
- The king chose to forgive the enormous debt owed to him.
- He chose to completely forgive the servant though the servant owed a great debt.



Sing "At The Cross" with the children or play it so they can hear it. Talk with them about how God's love and mercy are seen at the cross.

### God's mercy is seen at the cross.

- We all deserve death, yet God chose mercy instead.
- God's mercy is seen in Jesus' death on the cross.
- God chose to kill His own Son instead of killing us.
- This is God's mercy.

### God's justice is seen at the cross.

- Our sin requires justice.
- God is just in that He accepted Jesus' death as payment for our sin.
- Jesus' death was acceptable to God.
- We do not owe a sin debt because God accepted Jesus' death on the cross in our place.

*How did God show us mercy at the cross? (He accepted Jesus' death in place of ours.)*

3. 1 Peter 1:3: God showed His mercy at the cross.

## BIG IDEA: GOD CAN OFFER US MERCY BECAUSE JESUS BORE THE JUST PENALTY FOR OUR SIN.

### Jesus made a way for our sin to be forgiven.

- God accepted the death of Jesus as payment for our sin.
- He allowed Jesus' death to count toward our sin debt to pay it in full.
- We do not have to pay our sin debt because God accepts Jesus' payment for our sin.



Bring in a small suitcase full of heavy books. On the front of the suitcase write "Our Sin". Next, ask the children to take turns carrying the suitcase from one end of the room to the next. When the children cannot carry the suitcase, talk with them about how God can show us mercy because Jesus bore our sin on the cross.

### God shows us mercy because of Jesus.<sup>4</sup>

- Because Jesus was perfect and His death paid our penalty, God shows us mercy.
- Just like the king showed his servant mercy, God shows us mercy.
- God can show us mercy because Jesus made a way.
- God is just and true and He accepts Jesus' sacrifice as payment in full for our sin.
- The king forgave the servant's debt and he no longer owed the king a debt.
- We can experience God's mercy because Jesus made a way for us to.

*How can God offer us mercy? (Because Jesus bore our sin penalty, God can offer us mercy.)*

4. 1 Peter 2:24: Jesus bore our sin on the cross and now we are shown mercy by God.

## HOOKS

**Mercy Charades**

Create a set of charade cards on index cards that involve people being kind to one another. Use printed pictures or write out the scenario to act out. Once everyone has a chance to participate, talk with the children about how God shows us mercy by sending Jesus to pay our sin debt.



- We do not deserve God's mercy.
- We are God's enemies and in need of His mercy.
- God sent Jesus to pay our sin debt and because of Jesus, God shows us mercy.

**How Many?**

Ask the children to take turns seeing how many different exercises they can do, such as push-ups, sit-ups, jumping jacks, etc. Give them a high number to try to do, one that will be impossible for them to get. After they try, talk with them about how God shows us mercy even when we fall short. God forgives us and we should forgive others.



- Because of Jesus, God shows us mercy.
- We do not deserve the mercy, but God chooses to show it to us.
- We should show others mercy because God has shown us mercy